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The Arab Citizens of the State of Israel: The Arab Media Perspective

HAIM KOREN

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The Arab citizens' status in the state of Israel demands clarification both in respect of definition of terms and by a review of issues arising out of a chronological sequence of events. The phrase 'Arab media' also requires definition for the parameters of the discussion in this article. The main intention of this article is to deal not only with continuity and change within a certain sector of a given society, but also to try to analyse how this continuity and change have been perceived by the Arab media, over a period of about 50 years (since 1948). The lines of these two main strands of discussion are not necessarily parallel. Most of the insights from the media are retrospective, and the Arab media itself has gone through tremendous changes in various respects.

Arab citizens of Israel are defined as those Arabs who remained within the boundaries of the newly born state of Israel in 1948, and their descendants. After the 1948 war they were recognized as Israeli citizens, holding Israeli identity cards and passports. Under the heading 'Nationality' in the ID card is written 'Arab', while Jews are described as 'Jew'. Over the years there have been many changes in the self-determination of Arab citizens in Israel, both in the way they see themselves as well as how they are seen by others. Most of the time, scholars like to focus on the identity problem,[1] but there are of course other issues too. The decision of a state, which was just recovering from a bitter war of independence (against five Arab countries), and had just started absorbing Holocaust survivors (only a few years back), to adopt as its citizens a big Arab population whose own brothers were fellow Arabs living around Israel's borders in countries that were in a perpetual state of war with Israel, was based on two Israeli assumptions:

1. The Arabs in Israel would be loyal to the state in spite of the fact that they had relatives (sometimes brothers and sisters) across the border in

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a state of war with their own country (where most of the population was non-Arabs).
2. Arab citizens would go through a process of integration with Jewish citizens, which would enable them in time to be a living bridge for peace with the state's neighbours.

Those assumptions dictated the relationship between the state and its Arab citizens from then on. From the Arabs' point of view it was strange to be part of a Jewish state that was in a permanent state of war with their Arab neighbouring brothers. At the same time, the Arabs across the border were very suspicious of their brothers who had stayed under the Zionist regime. These intense inter-Arab feelings had ups and downs during the years and underwent many changes on both sides. The Arab media has dealt extensively with such issues, as has other literature. Later on, this article will elaborate on the role of culture in the Arab media.[2]

The identity problem is emphasized because it cannot be considered in the usual majority–minority paradigm but rather in the 'circle system': namely, a minority (Arab citizens in Israel) inside a minority (Jews of Israel inside the Arab Middle East) inside a majority (Arabs in the entire Middle East). Culturally, this phenomenon is extremely important because it impacts directly on the inner minority as well as the outside majority while the bigger minority (the Jews of Israel) are in between. There are two main implications:

1. The Arab minority within Israel is influenced by the outer 'circle' of the region (*vis-à-vis* political–cultural–social affairs) and not only by the immediate circle (Israeli domestic affairs).
2. The Arab majority (outside) relates to the Arab minority (inside) according to their mutual interests, which are not necessarily based on relations with the state of Israel as such.[3]

There is a historical sequence of events that the Arabs in Israel consider as crucial (or at least very important) from their point of view. First, there was the *Nakba* ('disaster') of the 1948 war, which brought them to be a minority in a Jewish state. In their eyes the elite ran away or were expelled and therefore they were left without leadership. Between 1948 and 1956 they had to stand firm in order not to lose their houses and lands and to cooperate with the government in order to preserve their rights. From the Israeli point of view there was a humane element in not forcing the Arabs to join the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) as the Jews (and later on Druzes and Cherques) are required to do, since it would put Arabs in an impossible position, with relatives on the other side of the border during a state of war in the area. Because of these circumstances there was Martial Law in the heavily populated Arab areas (Galilee, the Triangle) until 1966. By that date

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the economic situation and educational developments had enabled the Arabs to be more integrated into Israeli society; moreover, they were cut off from their fellow Arabs across the border.

Then came the tumult of the Six Day War (1967). The major Israeli victory over three leading Arab countries, and the occupying of new territories, opened up the possibility for Israeli Arabs to revisit ties with their Palestinian Arab brothers. But the period between 1948 and 1967 is very significant in the relations between the Arabs inside and those outside, a significance that was expressed in the Arab media and literature. The 'Outsiders' view of the 'Insiders' was that they were cowards who were afraid to leave in 1948 and remained as traitors and collaborators with the Zionist authorities, or (in the kinder interpretation) ignored them.[4] According to Sahlieh's terminology, these were 'the decades of indifference and neglect'.[5]

The Insiders felt very uncomfortable with their Outsider brothers' attitude. Because of this embarrassment, the so-called '48-Arabs developed ways to persuade fellow Arabs from outside that they *had* to 'play the game' as a minority and to be considered by the Israelis as 'the moderate camp'.[6] One way of achieving this was to emphasise their links with the land and to write about this. This genre of writing came to be called 'the land literature'.[7] The more extremist Insiders had founded the political group known as al-Ard ('the Land') in the late 1950s. Later on some of this group's leaders became well known: Muhammad Mi'ari – member of Knesset (MK); Sabri Jiryis – the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) research centre in Beirut. In the early 1970s the Insiders developed other ways to deal with their situation: they retaliated against the criticism of the Outsiders, or even attacked them for their lack of criticism.[8]

One criticism by Outsiders against the '48-Arabs or 'Israeli Arabs' (Arabs *fi-dakhil* – from within) was that they lacked leadership. During the 1950s and 1960s that situation created some local leadership, such as the organization known as Abna al-Balad ('Sons of the Village') as well as al-Ard and other '48-Arabs, based on their deep links with the land. That was the beginning of new leadership-building by poets, writers and intellectuals.[9] The process of leadership-building came into political being in the mid-1970s.[10]

After the end of military rule in 1966, as the Arabs came to know their role in the Israeli democracy, they saw the possibility of expressing their views. The events of 1967, the war and its results regarding the relationships between Arabs within and outside, increased the self-confidence of the '48-Arabs. There was a burgeoning of writers, poets, journalists and political leaders.[11] When Emile Habibi, a communist activist, a writer and for many years MK, established the literature section of the daily *al-Ittihad* newspaper, which he called *al-Jadid*, all the leading writers got their first chance to publish there. Besides Habibi himself there were Mahmoud Darwish, Samih al-Qasim and others.

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The combination of great talent in literature and the commitment to the Arab cause created an important showcase for national journalism with a high quality of writing. Habibi himself edited *al-Ittihad* for many years. Since the Communist Party was considered an 'Arab national' party (by both Jews and Arabs) and *al-Ittihad* was affiliated to the party, it was considered the Arab national newspaper of the Insider Arabs.[12] (It is still the only daily in Arabic affiliated to the party, but is no longer the authentic representative it was till the mid-1970s.)

Fouad Ajami's analysis pays careful attention to the special symbiosis between culture and journalism in the Arab world.[13] According to Ajami this symbiosis is not merely a utopian ideal, but part of the reality that existed in the media patterns of the Arab world. It's vital to be aware of these patterns in order to understand how this particular media operates. Ajami gives some interesting examples, for instance the sharp criticism and protest by the famous poet of Syrian origin, Nizar Qabani, against the Arab world as a consequence of the death of his beloved wife Balkis in an explosion at the Iraqi embassy in Beirut, where she had worked.[14] Another example is the Kuwaiti poet, Dr Suad al-Sabah, who protested on several occasions in the Arab international daily *al-Hayat* (4 December 1990, 4 January 1991 and 6 February 1991).[15]

Ajami goes into details describing the implications of the Arab–Israeli conflict, which involved Arab families with members on both sides of the border. Majdi Abu-Warda, who was blown up in a bus in Jerusalem (25 February 1996), was the uncle of Fatima Abu-Warda, a poet – who lives near Wadi Qelt (West Bank), the family originating from Haifa. In that regard he mentions also Fawaz al-Turki from Wadi Nisnas (Haifa), the Jewish–Arab terror network (with the Israeli Udi Adiv),[16] and the overall perception of inter-Arab relations by the Arab media in a new light, totally different from the one of the 1960s and 1970s.

In this article, instead of describing in detail the events since the mid-1970s, we will concentrate on some milestones that are significant to our discussion.[17]

The new element that started to penetrate in the early 1980s was the Islamic factor.[18] The terminology of the 'land' (poets of the land – like Muhammad Nafa' or the al-Ard group) reached its peak in the 'Land Day' on 30 March 1976. At the beginning of the 1980s, identity issues were emphasized, and by the 1990s the leading slogan was 'peace and equality' – peace with the Arab neighbours outside and equality for the Insider Arabs with the Jews.

The main chronological milestones since 1967 are: the War of Attrition; the 1973 War; the 'Land Day' 1976; Sadat's visit, 1977, and the peace with Egypt; the invasion of Lebanon, 1982; the *intifada* since 1987; Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait; and the peace process since the early 1990s.[19] The last stage and a significant one is the *intifada al-Aqsa* which started in

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October 2000, and has had dramatic influence on the Insider Arabs. The fact that there were 13 Arab victims in Israel during the events of October 2000 has had a major impact on the Arab–Jewish discourse in Israel. All these events were covered very closely by the Arab media.

Apart from the 'Land Day' all the events listed above are the impact of the 'outside' circle on the domestic Arab sector in Israel. From 1967 onwards the '48-Arabs were concerned with their own issues within the state and focused on identity issues; demands of equality *vis-à-vis* the Jews;[20] and protests against Jewish immigrants – a subject which later on became an overall Arab issue.[21] Here we find the Arab media represents the various Arab opinions regarding the Insider Arabs.

For the purposes of this article the Arab media is categorized into four groups that contain all components of the media – electronic, broadcast and written – in the Arabic language. They are all considered mass media:

1. The domestic media – all communications that operate within Israel's borders.
2. The Palestinian media – the immediate media ring around the Arab citizens of Israel.
3. The Arab media – the media in the Arab neighbouring countries in the Middle East.
4. The Arab international media – Arab media that is based outside the Middle East but originated first and foremost for the Middle East media consumers.

THE DOMESTIC MEDIA

The oldest newspaper published in Israel (founded before the state's independence) is the daily *al-Ittihad*. As stated above, this Arabic-language newspaper has always been identified with the Israeli Communist Party (under all its names during the years: Maki, Rakah, Hadash, etc), and its platform is mainly political–social–economic. The principle focus at first was the domestic problems of Arabs in Israel. Since the Communist Party was considered an Arab national party (both by Jews and Arabs in Israel) this newspaper was a very authentic representative of these Arab national views till the mid-1970s.[22]

The development of mass media in Israel during the 1980s brought the establishment of two new papers: *al-Sinarah* and *Kul al-Arab*, both published in Nazareth. Alongside a big improvement of the Israeli economy, these newspapers covered factual information with interpretations that emphasized Arab sector issues, namely political, social and economic. An important dimension was the Arab world and its connection to the Arabs in Israel.

The commercial side is important. Both papers play a large part in publicizing all types of products to consumers – *al-Sinarah* has its own

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publicity section while *Kul al-Arab* works with the *al-Bustani* office in Tel Aviv. Their approach, which is to be both commercial and profitable as well as put forward the newspapers' opinions, is different from that of *al-Ittihad* which – being affiliated to the Communist Party – is committed to a well-defined editorial viewpoint. Since the mid-1980s *al-Sinarah* has taken the lead by providing truly informative 'freedom of expression' within the Arab sector, which has provoked many people in that sector as it has dealt with delicate political–social issues.[23] Most Arab readers read at least one or more Hebrew newspapers on a daily basis or listen to Israeli radio and watch Hebrew TV. In that way, the Arab reader or viewer in Israel receives his information from both Jewish and Arab Muslim sources with all their ideologies. The nature of papers such as *al-Ittihad* is different from *al-Sinarah* and *Kul al-Arab* in the sense that the latter two want to succeed and be profitable, while *al-Ittihad* always follows the party line – whatever political situation the party faces.

The openness of, and easy access to, the Hebrew media caused the Arab newspapers continually to update their perspectives in order to deal with somewhat delicate issues, even somewhat sensationalist ones. This, together with the commercial side, might make Arab readers feel that those two (*Kul al-Arab* and *al-Sinarah*) papers could get to a point of 'yellow' journalism. The Arab reader in Israel, who is basically highly educated with a very sharp political and social awareness, does not like seeing the newspapers deal with scandals that revolve around sex or corruption merely for the principle of 'the right of the public to know'.

As stated earlier, part of the criticism of the Arab minority came during the 1950s and 1960s when they lost their political–cultural leadership. Only during the 1970s did the Arabs *fi-dakhil* (from within) or '48-Arabs start to build their leadership.[24] Usually editors and leading writers were intellectuals or leading figures in the cultural field, mainly writers and poets. When Emile Habibi established *al-Jadid*, all the leading forces in literature, including Samih al-Qasim, Mahmoud Darwish, and later on the poet Siham Da'ud and others, contributed articles.[25]

The combination of great talent in literature and the commitment to the Arab cause had created an important showcase for national journalism with high-quality writing. As well as Habibi editing *al-Ittihad* for many years, Samih al-Qasim still edits the newspaper *Kul al-Arab*.[26] These circumstances help explain why two established newspapers, *al-Yawm* and *al-Anba'a* discontinued publication at the end of the 1970s. Party pamphlets also ceased after their writers' political activity ceased (either in the Knesset or extra-parliamentary) for example *al-Watan* of the 'Progressive Movement for Peace' led by Muhammad Mia'ri or *al-Sirat* of the Islamic Movement during the 1980s. The same is true of a very small fraction of the Islamic groups like *al-Wa'i* centred in Jat village.

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During the 1990s the communications market in Israel was opened to cable TV, satellite and local radio stations. Since Israeli TV has a few hours in Arabic (according to the Arabs too little and too biased against them) every day (including news) and Israeli radio has a special broadcast in Arabic, the new Arab consumer can choose his favourite source (in Arabic, as well as in Hebrew). Through the cable system, the viewer can gain access to the channels of the Syrian, Egyptian, Lebanese or Jordanian TV and newspapers. (There used to be local radio in Arabic, 'Radio 2000', which, however, closed down owing to a failure to fulfil the requirements of the local radio authority in Israel.)

Intellectuals who are political leaders and play a role in the field of media have been influenced by the example of the newspaper *Fasal al-Makal*. This newspaper was established by Dr Azmi Bisharah (later on MK) as a cultural–political pamphlet that later formed his political platform's mouthpiece. It was intended to be a newspaper for the intelligent Arab reader, dealing with daily life issues and the socio-political arena as well as inter-Arab relations in the pan-Arab tradition. Bisharah is still one of its supporters.[27] The growing success of the Islamic Movement in neighbouring societies was felt across the spectrum, from the Rakah Communist Party to the Islamic Movement in Israel. During the 1980s *al-Sirat* was their representative newspaper. However, since the 1980s *Saut al-Haqwa al-Huriyya* has become the formal mouthpiece of the Islamic Movement in Israel.[28] There are few other small Arab papers with a local character, such as *Panorama*, but none of them is daily.

Having stated that the status of the Arabs has changed during the last 50 years or so, and also the status of the Arab media, it would be interesting to look at a central issue for the Arab sector in Israel, through the eyes of the media: the behaviour of the Arabs in Israel during the *intifada*.

As the only daily newspaper, *al-Ittihad*, the mouthpiece of the Israeli Communist Party – pictured in the consciousness of Israeli citizens (both Jews and Arabs) as an 'Arab' party – has been an authentic representative for the socio-political platform of the Arab citizens, expounding their agenda and expectations.[29] The mid-1970s was a watershed for Arabs with regard to fundamental issues such as identity and their role in the state, as well as with regard to the process of Arabs moving from marginality to influence.[30] Such a process cannot be ignored by the media. 'Palestinization' grew stronger,[31] and had consequences for Arabs' relations with the Palestinians.

The coverage of events such as the *intifada* or the 'Land Day' demonstrates well the workings of the Arab media in its different categories. Having dealt with the Arab media within Israel (the first category), this article now turns to the three other categories of Arab media.

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THE PALESTINIAN MEDIA

Traditionally, in the past, the Palestinian media has consisted of periodicals such as *al-Hadaf*, *Filastin al-Thawra*, *Dirasat Filastiniya* and *Shu'un Filastiniya*. During the 1980s the leading newspapers were *al-Fajar* and *al-Quds* (which is still being published today). The newspapers affiliated to the Palestinian Authority are *al-Ayam* and *al-Hayat al-Jadida*. In addition there are the Palestinian radio and TV stations and the Palestinian news agency WAFA.

The Palestinian media used to be a 'recruited' one,[32] serving national goals. When the decision was made to view Insider Arabs as part of the Palestinian people, the Palestinian media urged the Insiders to exercise their voting rights in order to increase their parliamentary representation in the Knesset.[33]

The events of the 'Land Day' (30 March 1976) had demonstrated the link, which grew stronger, between Arabs from both sides of the 'Green Line'.[34] That was the time when the Palestinian media started to become very involved in 'domestic' Arab issues. The Palestinian *Filastin al-Thawra* called on its readers 'To prepare our people in the Galilee, in the Triangle and in the Negev, in order to incorporate them into the national effort and in the struggle of the National Palestinian Revolution to free the lands of the occupied homeland' (28 March 1976).

In return, the first category (domestic Arab media within Israel) supported the Palestinians in 1980 after the explosion involving the three mayors who were part of the 'Committee for National Guidance'. The '6 June' document quoting Israeli Arabs as 'a live, conscious and active organism of the Palestinian People', was published fully in *al-Ittihad* (13 June 1980). The most significant role of the Palestinians is in initiating and carrying on the *intifada al-Aqsa*. All categories of the Arab media cover this *intifada* and comment not only on the '48-Arabs, but also on the direction of the Arab–Israeli peace process that started in the early 1990s.

THE ARAB MEDIA IN NEIGHBOURING ARAB COUNTRIES

When 12 Arab members of the Knesset visited Cairo in October 1998 they were on the front pages of all the Egyptian newspapers. This is the way the third category, namely the Arab media in the Arab world, seeks to influence the Arabs in Israel. The editor of *al-Aharam*, Ibrahim Nafa', published his editorial based on data from the Tami Shteimnitz Center at Tel Aviv University, emphasizing Arabs' feelings towards the Palestinians and the establishment of a Palestinian state. His conclusion states that '48-Arabs or the Insider Arabs are truly the same Arabs as they were at the time of the establishment of the state of Israel and during the years since then.

Al-Akhbar (21 October 1998), also discussing the same topic, praised the Arabs for keeping their national identity in spite of all the difficulties.

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Ali al-Din Hillal was amazed at the ability of the Israeli Arabs to give their children this proud inheritance. *Al-Gumhuriyya* (22 October 1998) carried interviews with Abd al-Malik Dahamshe and Azmi Bisharah, who were described as Arab representatives in the Israeli Knesset. *Al-Mussawar* (22 October 1998) carried the following headline: 'Israeli Arabs Have Asked President Mubarak to Break the Isolation that Has Been Placed on Them'. Hassan Fuad in *al-Aharam* quoted Abd al-Wahab Darawshe (23 October 1998) when describing their visit, and included the following lines in an article he wrote: 'The Arab countries as well as the state of Israel punished us for decades for sticking to the land (Samidun) and not leaving it, and they are still doing so. But we represent the missing line of the Arab nation and we are not the agents of Israel but we are 'Samidin' to the land, to the identity and to the homeland.'[35]

In a way this view is quite similar to that of the status of the Arab citizens in the Israeli Hebrew media. Most of the time, the Arab issue is not a central one (as it is in Egyptian media) but in certain circumstances it now has more prominence, for example, the 'Land Day' in Israel, or the visit of the Arab MKs to Egypt. The view of the Insider Arabs in the Israeli Hebrew media is a perspective from a different angle – a multicultural one. From research of the image of the Insider Arabs in the Israeli Hebrew media,[36] it is notable that they are perceived as different from the Jews, and have the stereotype of the 'other'. Category four of the Arab media (see below) is the most interesting in regard to the Arab citizens of Israel. On the one hand it is the Arab leading media in terms of quality (recruiting the best writers, TV and radio personnel) and facilities, and on the other hand its centre is outside the Arab world. Although culturally and in terms of language this category is purely Arab,[37] it is heavily influenced by the immediate media it faces, namely the Western one.

The Jordanian media is heavily involved in Israeli Arab affairs. Newspapers such as *al-Ray*, *al-Dustur*, the *Jordan Times* (in English), *al-Arab al-Yawm*, in addition to the Petra news agency, are constantly reporting on the '48-Arabs, while also writing opinion and interpretation columns on the same issue. The Jordanian angle concentrates not only on the ideological aspect but also on practical matters regarding the mutual relations. There is a small fraction within Jordanian public life that totally respects normalization with Israel (including its Arab citizens) but this tendency, to overcome the feelings against the '48-Arabs during the 1950s and 1960s and see them as full partners of the Arab cause is, however, against the general trend within the Arab media as a whole. The *Jordan Times* carried a story of the 'Committee of Labour Unions' which has an agenda of opposition to normalization, considering Israeli Arabs as traitors who might be a bridge for peace and normalization between Outsider Arabs and Jews in Israel and therefore they, the '48-Arabs, are collaborators.[38] In July 1999 at the Mo'ta Festival, the organizers succumbed to pressure not to invite one of the

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prominent Palestinian (and also Israeli) poets, Samih al-Qasim, owing to his being a collaborator with the Jews.[39] Muhammad Bakri, a '48-Arab, very successful in both Israeli and Palestinian theatre in Israel, was also banned from entering Jordan for the same reason.

In 1996 an Arab citizen of Israel was nominated to be a freelance reporter for the *al-Sharq al-Awsat* international Arab daily newspaper. The man, Nazir Magali, was the editor of the Arab daily *al-Ittihad* and as such was the first to report from Israel within its boundaries about domestic Israeli affairs. This was the first direct link between the first (domestic) category of the Arab press in Israel with the fourth category, the Arab international media. When the Arab entertainment media, which comments on the other categories of the Arab media, decided to give the floor to a journalist who is an Arab citizen of Israel, it meant that their coverage was fully recognized in the Arab surrounding world. (There are reports from the Arab journalist that there is a demand from the newspaper to refer to strictly Israeli domestic news, but that is beyond the scope of our research.)

Finally, the Arab satellite TV company MBC, based in London, sent a special team to interview Jews and Arabs in Nazareth after the Hebron agreement, and broadcast this interview during prime time, thereby allowing Israelis to demonstrate their point of view through meetings with Insider Arabs.[40]

THE INTERNATIONAL ARAB MEDIA

This media is located mainly in Europe. Most of the leading newspapers, radio and TV stations operate from London. MBC satellite TV broadcasts to the entire Middle East, Asia, Europe and the USA.

The best quality is found in the Arab international daily *al-Hayat*, also based in London, with branches all over the Arab region and in the main centres elsewhere in the world. Intellectuals, writers and poets have their opinions and editorials printed when an important issue arises. This includes leading Palestinian figures too: Mahmoud Darwish (who used to work at the Israeli daily *al-Ittihad* till the beginning of the 1970s) had some of his sharpest poems against the Oslo accords printed in *al-Hayat*. When Edward Sa'id commented on political–national Palestinian issues, pointing out the mistake of connecting the Holocaust to the Arab–Israeli conflict, his article was published in *al-Hayat*.[41]

The tendency of Arab journalists in the international Arab media to work according to the same liberal standards as their British (or other European) colleagues and neighbours has helped shape a special kind of journalism, one that reflects on the Arab world as a whole: this can be seen not only in *al-Hayat*, but also in *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, MBC TV, *al-Waset* and others. Israeli issues and particularly issues dealing with Israel's Arab

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minority are high on the agenda of the fourth media category; some of their reporters and writers are '48-Arabs who work side by side with Palestinians. In a way these liberal Arab media representatives are truly interested in the Insider Arabs. The editorial of *al-Hayat* on 15 August 1999 was about the necessity of peace for the Arabs.[42] The editorial clearly stated that the highest price for this status quo situation is being paid by the Palestinians ('including Insiders'). This explains the slogan 'Equality and Peace'.

An issue that is analysed in all four categories is the 'right of return': a basic demand and a Palestinian myth about the right of the refugees to return to their homes. Abu Ala' from the Palestinian Authority quoted in *al-Hayat al-Jadida*: 'The Palestinian right of return is based on UN Resolution 194, from December 1948' (21 December 1998). Asad Abu al-Rahman, the chairman of the refugees committee, said the same thing (*al-Ayam*, 16 August 1997). A book review column in the Egyptian paper *al-Aharam* reviewed Salman Abu Sata's book on the right of return. The book expresses strong opinions regarding Israeli responsibility for Arab refugees and their mutual relations with Israeli Arabs.[43]

The fact that the international Arab media has flourished since the mid-1990s has several consequences. The first is the creation of a common Arab language that is understood by Arabs everywhere. The second is that the predicament of those who are illiterate (in pretty high percentage in Egypt and Morocco, for example) is ignored. A mediating Arabic (*Wusta*) has been created, which is not 'High Arabic' in terms of literature (*Fusha*) and not a local dialect – (*Amiyah*).[44]

CONCLUSION

The perspective of the Arab media within all four categories is different from that of the Israeli media on the issues of Israel's Arab citizens. Naturally the first priority of each media representative is its own loyalties, with its second priority being its own stand (emotionally or otherwise) towards Insider Arabs. The various media categories are clear but contain some exceptions. *Al-Hayat* is generally more liberal and demonstrates relatively brave attitudes considering its readership. This newspaper is in the process of having a reporter (or at least a freelancer) within Israel, unlike the neighbouring newspaper *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, which has one journalist (Nazir Majali) covering the Arab society in Israel.

The second exception is the Qatrain TV station 'al-Jazzira'. This station demonstrates a special phenomenon in the Arab media (and the Arab world) in the way it covers all kinds of issues. Since it is state-run Qatari TV – and it has ambitions to create new criteria for journalism in the Arab world – it has been criticized by most of the governments in the Arab world as it has created political tensions (with Egypt, Iran, the

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Palestinian Authority and others), owing to its free criticism of events. It gives full coverage to '48-Arabs. The senior reporter on al-Jazzira is Walid al-'Umari, a '48-Arab from the Palestinian Authority who works for an international Arab TV station.

The third exception is MBC TV and radio. MBC is an international radio and TV station that covers '48-Arabs through its journalist in the West Bank. Being an international media representative, MBC has a basic tendency to be fair in its coverage of the Insiders as well. The head of the MBC office in Jerusalem is Nabil al-Khatib, a Palestinian who works for Arab international TV and covers also Israel and particularly the Insider Arabs.

The importance of the above three examples is that they demonstrate the ethics and the values of freedom of expression on the Arab media stage. Another example is Sa'id's article on the implications of the Holocaust.[45] The complexity of the issue illustrates the daily difficulties that the Insiders are faced with. Sa'id, a bitter opponent of the Oslo accords and their implementation, tries to explain what brought him to deal with the Jewish Holocaust in the Arab arena (*al-Hayat*):

> In the West where many Arabs live, a lot of material is distributed on the issue and therefore, we are referring to it. I've read many articles on Nazism, on World War II and on the Holocaust and I feel that every Jew, anywhere in the world, is connected somehow to it.

Referring to the Holocaust denial:

> As someone who knows the inconsistent history of Garudi (a French Holocaust denouncer) who shifted from Catholicism to Communism, returned to Catholicism and then became a Muslim, it is hard for me to see him as a protector of Arabs.

An Insider Arab who lives within Israeli – mostly Jewish – culture is experiencing it daily. In that regard the Insider feels closer to the full Outsider, sharing his views through the more remote fourth (international) category, rather than the closer Palestinian media category, and alienated by the dissension of the Jordanian media who denied the invitation of the Insider poet Samih al-Qasim to the Mo'ta Festival (later on the organizers apologized for this rebuke in the *Jordan Times*[46]). The Egyptian media for instance is largely supportive and tends to identify itself with Insider Arab problems.[47]

The complexity of the Insider issue, which is epitomized in the famous saying 'My country is in conflict with my people',[48] has sharply become the focus of the overall Arab media in the last decade and a half.

During the 1950s and 1960s the identity problem had started to emerge and, alongside their uncertainty about their future, the Insiders were almost totally ignored by their Outsider fellow Arabs (a fact that was reflected in the Arab media – in all its categories). Apart from the Insiders

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themselves (mainly via the *al-Ittihad* daily newspaper) nobody really cared about their status within the state of Israel.

Since that time the Insiders' growing integration within Israeli society on the one hand, and their increasing self-confidence on the other – both a consequence of historical developments (mainly moving from a state of war to a state of the regional peace process) since the late 1970s – has caused a big change. There was huge interest by Outsiders as well as Insiders in seeing the Insiders as the 'head of the bridge' in any development between the Arab world and Israel.

One of the interesting signs of the tighter linkage and growing cooperation between Insiders and Palestinians was the establishment of a common newspaper. This newspaper will be published in conjunction with the Palestinian daily *al-Ayam* (in Ramallah) and will be called *Ayam al-Arab* ('Days of the Arabs').[49] It will be published simultaneously in the Palestinian Authority and Israel. At the moment the offices are located in Shfar'am (Israel). The main editor will be Salim Salama (an Insider who worked until recently at *al-Sinarah* from Nazareth). The director-general will be another Insider, Faisal Jbeili, who was until recently the director-general of *al-Ittihad*.

Both *al-Ittihad* and *al-Sinarah* congratulated the new newspaper, while the editor of *al-Sinarah*, Lutfi Mashur, was reported in *Ha-aretz* as saying: 'I hope the newspaper won't be financed by the same sources in the Palestinian Authority that had tried to bribe more than one Arab journalist and various newspapers in Israel to support the goals of the senior officials of the Palestinian Authority.'[50] As a response, the same paper[51] denied any linkage (financial or otherwise) between the Palestinian Authority and the newspaper. During the *intifada al-Aqsa* the relations between Arabs on both sides of the 'Green Line' became closer. If the Insiders' 'Land Day' was adopted for the overall Palestinian symbol, then the events of October 2000 represented a much more active involvement of the Insiders with the representatives of the Palestinian Authority. For example, al-Jazzira correspondent Walid al-Umari (an Israeli citizen) read the list of 'Shahids' on satellite TV. The Arab Israeli radio station, 'Radio 2000', broadcast the list of wounded and dead in Israel (in Nazareth, October 2000). These phenomena reflected directly on the identity issue of the Insiders. It became a more Palestinian issue– one of nationality – and more protesting in terms of equality *vis-à-vis* the Jews in Israel. There was more readiness to attack verbally the Jews and identify with 'others', sometimes the enemy. (The fact that a matter which is strictly Arab creates an interest in an Israeli Hebrew paper has its own significance, but that is a matter for further study.)

The line that has been taken within all media categories ('48-Arabs who work at international Arab press, Arab journalists who cover domestic Arab issues in Israel), brought the attention of the Arab media to '48-Arabs. Unlike 50 years ago where '48-Arabs were ignored, the situation today is quite different and illustrates a tendency towards Arab integration and solidarity.

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NOTES

1. Much has been written about this identity issue. See for example Sammy Smooha, 'Minority Responses in a Plural Society: A Typology of the Arabs in Israel', *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol.67, No.4 (July 1984), pp.1–21; idem, *The Orientation and Politicization of the Arab Minority in Israel*, Haifa, 1984; Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel's Control of a National Minority*, Austin, 1980; J.E. Hofman and B. Beit Halahmi, 'The Palestinians Identity and Israel's Arabs', *Peace Research*, Vol.9 (1977), pp.13–22; Nadim Rouhana, 'Accentuated Identities in Protracted Conflicts: The Collective Identity of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel, *AAS*, Vol.27 (1993), pp.97–128; Y. Peres and N. Yuval Davis, 'Some Observations on the National Identity of the Israeli Arabs', *Human Relations*, Vol.22 (1969), pp.219–33; Aharon Layish (ed.), 'The Arabs in Israel between Religious Revival and National Awakening, *Hamizrah Hahadash* (The New East), Vol.32 (1989), pp.1–9 (in Hebrew).
2. Ami Elad-Buskila, *Arab Literature in Hebrew Dress*, Jerusalem, 1995, pp.38–45 (in Hebrew); Eli Reches, 'Arabs in the Jewish State: Images and Realities', *Middle East Insight*, Vol.7, No.1 (Jan./Feb. 1990), pp.4–5; Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity – The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*, New York, 1997, pp.119–44.
3. Eli Reches, 'Israeli Arabs and the Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza', *AAS*, Vol.23 (1989), pp.120–21.
4. Elad-Buskila, *Arab Literature in Hebrew Dress*, pp.38–40; Reches, 'Israeli Arabs', p.120.
5. Emile Sahlieh, 'The PLO and Israeli Arabs, *AAS*, Vol.27 (1993), pp.85–6.
6. Reches, 'Israeli Arabs'.
7. Elad-Buskila, *Arab Literature in Hebrew Dress*, p.42.
8. For example, Emile Habibi, *Al-Mutashai'il*, trans. Anton Shamas, Tel Aviv, 1995 (in Hebrew).
9. See George Kanazi, 'Ideological Bases in the Arab Literature in Israel', *Hamizrah Hahadash*, Vols.25–8 (1989), pp.129–38.
10. For details, see Majid al-Haj and Henry Rosenfeld, 'The Emergence of an Indigenous Political Framework in Israel: The National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities', *AAS*, Vol.23 (1989), pp.205–44.
11. Benjamin Neuberger, 'The Arab Minority in Israeli Politics 1948–1992: From Marginality to Influence', *AAS*, Vol.27 (1993), pp.5–7, 144–70.
12. For details, see Eli Reches, 'Between Communism and Nationalism – Rakah and the Arab Minority in Israel', PhD thesis, Tel Aviv University, 1986 (in Hebrew).
13. Fouad Ajami, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation's Odyssey*, New York, 1998.
14. Ibid., p.316.
15. Ibid., p.318.
16. Ibid., p.264.
17. For more details, see Joseph Ginat, 'Israeli Arabs: Some Recent Social and Political Trends', *AAS*, Vol.23 (1989), pp.183–204; Sahlieh, 'The PLO and the Israeli Arabs', pp.85–94; Alexander Bligh, 'The Final Settlement of the Palestinian Issue and the Position of the Israeli Arab Leadership', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.35, No.1 (Jan. 1999), pp.134–64.
18. Eli Reches, The Resurgent Islam in Israel', *AAS*, Vol.27 (1993), pp.189–206; Thomas Mayer, 'The "Muslim Youth" in Israel', *Hamizrah Hahadash*, Vol.32 (1989), pp.10–20 (in Hebrew).
19. See specifically, Bligh, 'The Final Settlement of the Palestinian Issue', p.136, who defines the stages of the Arab leadership emergence as follows: 1974 – the Council of Arab Mayors was established; 1982 – the Monitoring Committee was established; late 1980s–90s – during the *intifada* a two-tier leadership began to develop: an established leadership, based on the Monitoring Committee; and a pragmatic leadership lead by MK Darawshe. This two-tier political structure was supported by a burgeoning set of internal and external relations. As with the established leadership, pragmatic leadership also developed ideologically and, ultimately, Israeli Arab leaders were acknowledged as the main reservoir of political support for Palestinian national aspirations.
20. Uzi Benziman and Atallah Mansour, *Subtenants, the Arabs of Israel: Their Status and the Policies towards Them*, Jerusalem, 1992 (in Hebrew). For a Palestinian view on equality, see 'The Educational Committee of 1948 Threatens to Strike', *al-Hadaf*, 8 April 1990 (in Arabic).
21. See for example 'The Palestinians of 1948 Demand the Cessation of the Emigration of the Soviet Jews', *al-Unsurt al-Huriyyah*, 4 March 1990.

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22. For details on the party, see Reches, 'Between Communism and Nationalism'.
23. See for example on the issue of establishing autonomy for '48-Arabs in connection with the Palestinian *intifada*, statements that Dr Azmi Bisharah made in *al-Sinarah*, 3 Jan. 1992. *Al-Ittihad*, keeping to the party line, emotionally described the activities of the IDF in the territories as 'barbarous, bones breaking' (4 Jan. 1988) and in an editorial called upon its readership not to put Palestinian flags in the Galilee and the Triangle villages. In contrast *al-Ittihad* also included a condemnation of Abna al-Balad for encouraging the Israeli Arabs in the Galilee and the Triangle villages to copy the conflict patterns of the territories inside Israel. This *al-Ittihad* (Rakah) line was condemned for example by *al-Quds* (Palestinian) 13 Feb. 1988.
24. For details, see Majid al-Haj and Henry Rosenfeld, 'The Emergence of an Indigenous Political Framework in Israel: The National Committee of Chairmen of Arab Local Authorities', *Asian and African Studies*, Vol.23 (1989), pp.205–44.
25. On this phenomenon see Elad-Buskila, *Arab Literature in Hebrew Dress*, pp.42–5.
26. On the role of writers and poets in politics, see Menahem Milson, 'Najib Mahfuz and Jamal Abd al-Nasir: The Writer as Political Critic', *AAS*, Vol.23 (1989), pp.1–22.
27. Interview with Bisharah, *Ha'aretz*, 29 May 1998 (in Hebrew).
28. Background in: Aharon Layish, 'The Status of the Sharia in a Non-Muslim State: The Case of Israel', *AAS*, Vol.27 (1993), pp.171–88 and Reches, 'The Resurgent Islam in Israel', pp.189–206.
29. For details, see Reches, 'Between Communism and Nationalism'.
30. Neuberger, 'The Arab Minority in Israeli Politics', pp.149–70.
31. See Reches, 'Israeli Arabs', pp.119–54.
32. For example, at Arafat's speech in Stockholm on the issue of Jerusalem, the headline in *al-Hayat al-Jadida*, 6 Dec. 1998, was 'Jerusalem – Open and Individual City'.
33. For example, Ahmad Said, 'The Zionist Racist Practices in Occupied Palestinian, 1948', *Shu'um Filastiniya*, 18 Oct. 1988 (in Arabic).
34. See for example, *Filastin al-Thawra*, 22 March 1986, p.4: 'The Message of Revolution: Land Day is a Shining Land Mark And a Turning Point' (in Arabic). Arafat referred to the Palestinians' external rights on the land 'in the time of intense Arab darkness' in 'Risalat al-Qa'id a-am', *Filastin al-Thawra*, 7 April 1984. For an explanation of the issue, see M.A. Tessler, 'Israel's Arab and the Palestinian Problem', *The Middle East Journal*, Vol.31 (1977), pp.313–29.
35. It is interesting to compare this quotation from the end of the 1990s with the writings of Emile Habibi in his *al-Mutashai'il* during the mid-1970s. The Arab media (including category three) accepted the main claim of the '48-Arabs regarding the ignorance of the Arab world about them. See my 'Reflection of Social and Cultural Aspects of the Arab in the Palestinian Authority in the Arab Media', *Judea and Samaria Research*, Vol.10 (2001), pp.273–82.
36. Isam Abu-Raya, Gadi Wolfsfeld and Eli Avraham, *The Way of Representing and Imaging the Arab Population in Israel in the Written Newspapers*, Beit Berl, 1998 (in Hebrew).
37. For example, Walter Armburst, *Mass Culture and Modernism in Egypt*, Cambridge, 1996.
38. *Jordan Times*, 24 Oct. 1999.
39. See above for background on Samih al-Qasim (who is also the editor of the newspaper *Kul al-Arab*).
40. 12 Dec. 1998.
41. See for example, Edward Sa'id 'Bases for Co-Existence', *al-Hayat*, 18 Dec. 1997.
42. Salah Bashir and Hazim Serayah, Editorial, *al-Hayat*, 15 Aug. 1999.
43. *Al-Aharam*, 11 Dec. 1999, p.6.
44. Koren, *The Arab Media in the 90s* (forthcoming in Hebrew).
45. *Jordan Times*, 27 July 1999.
46. *Jordan Times*, 27 July 1999.
47. See for example, *al-Aharam*, 23 Oct. 98.
48. Attributed to former MK and Deputy Minster (Labour Party), Abd al-aziz Zo'abi from Nazareth.
49. *Ha'aretz*, 1 Nov. 1999, front page (in Hebrew).
50. Ibid.
51. *Ha'aretz*, 7 Nov. 1999 (in Hebrew).

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