An Historical Review of Educational Policy for the Arab-Palestinian Population in Israel

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Introduction

Some of the most important issues in the history and sociology of education for minorities are the relationships between education and policy and between education and social change. In this context, a number of central questions frequently arise: Is education a factor in modernization or preservation? Is education a source of power for minorities, or an instrument for the dominant group to rule over the weaker groups? What is the function of colonial education? Do political and historical processes influence the educational system?

Some of these questions will be addressed by an examination of the Arab-Palestinian educational system from a factual, chronological perspective in order to understand the historical dynamics that have impacted this educational system. These influences are categorized by the following theoretical approaches: the positivistic, the conflictual and the colonial model. Hence, this paper aims to outline the components of these approaches and their relevance and importance to the research questions.

The Positivistic Approach

The positivistic approach claims that for a nation to develop its schools must be seen as agents of change and democratization. It champions secular, democratic education for all sectors of the population, not only for members of the dominant group. The underlying assertion is that the more a population becomes educated, the more it becomes able to influence social-political dynamics, hence education of the public can contribute to political consolidation and stimulate the development of educational leadership. Moreover, according to the positivistic approach education empowers the sense of individual self-worth and respect for others. Conversely, this approach decreases the tendency to identify with and be committed to tradition.

According to this approach, school curricula must give emphasis to the values of: personal freedom (with the corollary of freedom from the family and other traditional sources of authority), the importance of the scientific method, and the ability of human beings to determine their own destinies (Armer, 1970). The positivistic approach sees the educational system as a network of general institutions serving the entire populace, each working for the advancement of the society, with almost no attention paid to the issue of conflicts between varying groups within the larger society.

The Conflictual Approach

In contrast to the positivistic approach, the conflictual approach sees education as a mechanism of social control which dominant groups effectively use as a means of manipulating social and economic resources (Giroux, 1983; Apple, 1988). Researchers describing this viewpoint claim that in the majority of colonial societies (throughout history) the educational system was not a catalyst for progress among indigenous populations, rather, it was an impediment to their development. Indeed, the main beneficiaries of the educational system in this approach are the dominant groups, as they take advantage of education to fortify their economic and political rule (Johnston, 1985). Moreover, the conflictual approach emphasizes the importance of state control and the power relations in the society as the determinative factors impacting schools and curricula (Apple, 1982; Giroux, 1983). It is only the ruling group that decides upon the content of the school curricula, and hence it utilizes education as a tool for preservation and control.

The Colonial Model

      The colonial model can effectively describe the historical-educational development of the Arab-Palestinian. The goal of all colonial powers is to preserve the existing, traditional lifestyle among the subjugated populations and maintain control over potential social/political changes. This strategy reduces the cost of colonization to a minimum (Bude, 1985). For the 400 years surveyed in this study, the colonial powers in the region imposed a policy of measured cultural suppression by selectively filtering information about Arab-Palestinian heritage that was passed on from one generation to the next, and insinuated the heritage of the ruling society within the school curricula. This policy assured that the message transmitted through the educational system stressed the cultural superiority of the colonial powers versus the inferiority of the local society (Ball, 1983). Indeed, the heritage of the Arab-Palestinians was either ignored or given new interpretations. Hence, the colonial education in the region discussed herein, led to a loss of national-ethnic identity among the local peoples (Copty, 1990, pp. 323).

      Among its many educational consequences, the Colonial Model in this region implemented a covert policy of exacerbating the gaps between urban and rural Arab-Palestinian populations. This served the purpose of educating cadres of individuals in the cities who could then work for the colonial administration. Very little was invested in rural education (Cogan, 1981).

      The Arab-Palestinian minority in Israel is an ideal group for investigating the above-described theoretical approaches as they are applied to education over three contiguous, but separate, periods: the Ottoman period, the British Mandate, and modern Israeli sovereign, democratic governance. One major difference in the status of the Arab-Palestinian population immediately following the establishment of the state (as a result of the 1948 war) is that, in contrast to the situation prior, the Arab-Palestinian sector became a numerical minority within the state of Israel. The establishment of Israel did not put an end to the Arab-Zionist struggle; indeed, it exacerbated the situation and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict became even more of a central issue than it had been before. The Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel were, from the very beginning, outside of the national consensus, and did not participate in the great undertaking of creating a country and "inventing" a new Israeli culture.

      Drawing upon the above theoretical background, this author will analyze the Arab-Palestinian educational system from an historical perspective; what characterizes each period, how the different ruling nations perceived Arab-Palestinian society and what type of education they tried to confer, and how the various educational policies impacted this sector, positively and negatively.

Historical Overview

      The area of the Middle East referred to in this paper (now the State of Israel, exclusive of the West Bank and Gaza), was under Turkish rule for four centuries, from 1517-1917. Prior to 1846 there was no educational policy in the Empire and a child's education was solely the responsibility of the family. Then, between 1839 to 1876 the Ottoman Empire promulgated a series of reforms given the name Tanzîmât (reorganization), among them educational reforms. These called for establishing a system of primary and secondary schools under a Department of Education. Then, in 1869 a law entitled the Regulation of Public Education (*Maârif-i Um□miyye Nizâmnâmesi*), was enacted that provided for free and compulsory primary education. The law also set up a hierarchical system of schools from primary grades through university, prescribing a relatively Westernized curriculum for each stage of schooling, which remained the basis for education in the empire until it itself came to an end. But implementation of this plan was slow, because of lack of money and an abundance of bureaucracy, and indeed in 1923, at the establishment of the modern state of Turkey, 90 percent of the empire's population was illiterate.

While the 1876 constitution designated Turkish as the official language of the Ottoman Empire,[1] the new system of educational reforms aimed at uniformity in education throughout the Empire while simultaneously trying to meet the needs of local non-Turkish communities. Thus, every population within the empire was de facto free to promote its own language as it saw fit. For example, Greek and Armenian continued to develop as they were taught in the patriarchates, churches, and religious community schools. Nevertheless, Turkish did slowly became the preferred language for everyday communication, because it was the language of the ruler and of the administration. It was also the language used to denote the various titles of respect and expressions of social etiquette among the wealthy and powerful, and these Turkish terms percolated down (in various formats) to the masses.

It must be noted that formal education in the primary grades was only four years. Initially, the goal was Turkish as the language of instruction in all the schools of the Empire. with Arabic considered a second language even in Arabic-speaking regions. The secular curriculum in the schools was a copy of the French educational system, as the Ottomans never developed any curricula of their own.[2] French textbooks and syllabi were simply translated into Turkish and implanted into the schools administered by the Turks throughout their Empire. By 1908 there was a standard secular elementary school curriculum imposed by the Department of Education in Istanbul to which minor modifications were made yearly and published in an annual government report. During the second constitutional period of the Ottoman empire (from 1908-1918), when the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) - also known as the 'Young Turks' – were in power, the authorities in Istanbul decreed that teaching of Turkish in elementary schools be obligatory (Somel, 2001). This was strongly objected to by Arabic speakers, and there was a great deal of tension between the Arabs and the ruling Turks over this issue, including mass demonstrations in Damascus, Beirut and other major Arab population centers protesting this situation. In 1913, the Empire finally succumbed to the pressure and agreed to make Arabic the language of instruction in primary grades and in any new secondary schools in the region under discussion; Turkish remained the primary language in existing secondary schools.

The official Ottoman Empire schools served Moslems exclusively, and even at the end of its rule the level of education in these schools was poor, with most lacking adequate facilities, equipment and teachers. In contrast, the private schools established by the Christian and Jewish communities often flourished. Many Christian schools were established by missionaries and were funded and staffed by Europeans. Most of the instruction in these schools was in Arabic, and the curricula adhered to more modern Western standards. Overall, school attendance of Moslem Arab children was low throughout the area that is now within the boundaries of the State of Israel (not including the West Bank or Gaza); in 1911 only 34 percent of the boys and 12 percent of the girls were enrolled in school – official government and private schools combined. In other words, out of a total population of over 73,600 school-aged children, 25,000 boys and 31,400 girls did not attend school at all.

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1. No changes in this status were made in the 1908 modifications to the constitution nor thereafter. See Erol Ülker - Contextualising 'Turkification': nation-building in the late Ottoman Empire, 1908–18 in Nations and Nationalism 11 (4), 2005, 613–36.

2. Originally, the language of instruction was French as was the curriculum, but it was changed to Turkish following protests by students in the lycée of Galatasaray, the most westernized of Ottoman Turkey's schools, which was founded in 1868 under direct influence of the French Minister of Education, Jean Victor Duruy, who acted as foreign educational advisor.

Arab Education during the British Mandate 1917-1948

One of the outcomes of World War 1 was the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan and Palestine. During the British "mandatory administration" in Palestine, Arab education underwent significant growth and development for the better. Government (i.e., Moslem) schools fell under the mandate's administration, including some of what had been private schools, while some remained private. The number of Moslem schools increased from less than a hundred in 1917 to 550 in 1947, when it was calculated that fully a third of school-aged children attended school, if not for the full seven years (another improvement under the British), then at least for a few years. The language of instruction was Arabic with English as a second language – Turkish was dismissed. Original textbooks in Arabic were written that better reflected local culture than the former Turkish translations of French schoolbooks. However, despite this significant progress, the educational status of the Moslem community was much worse than either the Christian or Jewish one, among each of which some 80 percent of the children attended school. The number of private Christian schools grew to exceed the government schools and as their level of education was considered higher, many Moslem children attended them, as well. These schools were maintained and funded by European countries – France, Germany, England, Italy, Sweden, and the United States. In addition, three Christian churches in Palestine also had their own schools – Protestant, Eastern Orthodox, and Catholic. The British also established two Moslem secondary schools in Jerusalem and a high school education became the key to acquiring a white collar job, usually within the mandate's civil service. This not only afforded a better financial status, but also a higher social status as these workers associated more with the rulers than the agrarian populace. Two schools for teacher training were also established, one in Ramallah for women and the other, for men, in Jerusalem.

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER OF PUPILS IN THE PUBLIC (GOVERNMENT) SYSTEM	NUMBER OF PUPILS IN PRIVATE SYSTEM	TOTAL
1921/22	16,442	14,239	30,681
1928/29	21,259	18,843	40,102
1931/32	24,837	23,227	48,064
1938/39	50,020	33,233	83,253
1941/42	56,558	35,003	91,561
1944/45	71,662	36,673	108,335
1947/48*	103,000		150,000

Table 1. Changes in School Attendance Among the Arab Population in Palestine[3]

However, the educational policy conducted by the British served to increase the gaps between rural and urban Arab populations. Only in the villages were communities required to build their own schools, and the education offered in the countryside was inferior to that available in the cities; e.g., English was not taught in village schools, they rarely offered the seven years of elementary education, there were no secondary schools at all, there were only 20 schools for girls, and out of a total of 780 Arab villages only 293 even had schools. This, in face of the fact that fully 70 percent of the indigenous Moslem population lived in

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3. Table copied from: Education, Empowerment and Control: The Case of the Arabs in Israel by Majid Al-Haj (1995).

Source: Tibawi, Abd al Latif, 1956. Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine: A Study of Three Decades of British Administration. London, Luzac and Co., Ltd

rural living during the mandate, at the end of the mandate (1948) over two thirds of the Arab population still lived in small villages (or were nomadic Bedouin). There were no institutions of higher education specifically for Arab-Palestinians during this period. The only options were the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Institute for Technology in Haifa, both of which were maintained by the Jewish community and conducted instruction in Hebrew. Most Arab Palestinians seeking higher education thus attended the American University of Beirut, which had a majority of Christian Arab students, as well as a very small number of Jews and a few followers of the Bahai faith.

Not surprisingly, the newly educated Arab elite soon became politically aware. Frustration with an educational system dictated by others began under Turkish rule and did not mitigate under British rule. This indignation was exacerbated as the Arabs saw that the Jewish Zionist educational system, while serving a small minority that then made up less than ten percent of the Palestinian population, was entitled to develop its own curricula and did not need to "answer to" the British. Moreover, the 1917 Balfour Declaration further increased Palestinian Moslem resentment of the British Mandate, in general, including its control of their education. This document was conveyed by British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour to Baron Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community, to be promulgated among the Jews of the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland, and stated as follows:

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

The feelings of the Moslem Arabs towards British control of Arab education and, in particular, British support of Zionism as expressed in the Balfour Declaration, was astutely articulated by Khalil Totah, who was headmaster of the Friends Boys School in Ramallah in 1937:

> It would seem that Arab education is either designed to reconcile Arab people to this policy [of the Jewish National Home] or to make education so colorless as to make it harmless and not endanger the carrying out of this policy of the Government. Jewish education has an aim. It is not colorless. Its aim is to establish Zionism, to establish a National Home and revive Hebrew Culture….the Arabs in Palestine feel there is no such aim behind their education (Palestine Royal Commission 1937).

Arab-Palestinian Education in the State of Israel: from 1948 to Present

Due to changes in political sentiment in both England, Europe and the United States (a discussion of which is beyond the scope of this paper), Britain decided to relinquish its rule of Palestine and place the issue of its future before the United Nation which, in turn, formed the Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). This committee formulated a resolution stating that the territory of Mandate Palestine be divided into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, with Jerusalem under international supervision. Pursuant to this, the UN passed the Partition Plan in 1947 with a 33 to 13 approval. This outcome was accepted by the Zionist entity, but not by the Palestine Arab Higher Committee nor by the Arab League, who then attacked the nascent state. As a outcome of this war, only a small number of Arabs remained within the resulting borders of Israel (which were much smaller than the Partition Plan had allotted).

Within months of the conclusion of the 1948 war, the Israel Ministry of Education convened a committee to address issues of education among minorities. The State maintained the longstanding status quo of separate schools for the different religious groups – Jews, Moslems, Christians, Druze, Armenians, etc. Already in 1949 Israel passed a compulsory education law and all schools were ordered to reopen forthwith. The Arab population flooded to the schools, which, however, were not equipped to handle such numbers, neither in terms of physical infrastructure nor in terms of the number of qualified teachers available. This was especially acute as many of the teachers and administrators left (or were made to leave) the area during the war. Consequently, far too many unqualified teachers were hired, and it is estimated that during the early 1950s some 70 percent of the teachers in Arab schools were under-qualified.

There is no doubt that Arab-Palestinian education in Israel began with clear disadvantages relative to Jewish education, numerically and qualitatively. However, this situation was ameliorated within the first

decade of Israel's existence, with change noted already by 1949. While in 1948 there were only 454 Moslem elementary schools, one high school and only one superintendent for Arab schools, within one year there were three superintendents, one of whom was an Arab. Within a decade the number of elementary schools tripled, 74 new middle schools were opened, as well as 90 secondary schools. In 1959 a private special education school opened in Nazareth and in 1974 the Ministry of Education opened 25 classes for handicapped Arab children; by 1990 there were 25 schools for special education in the Arab sector.

The Military Administration: 1948 - 1966

In spite of the improvements of Arab education in Israel, from 1948 to 1966 all Arab-Palestinian communities lived under a strict military administration. The military governor enforced many regulations that limited mobility of the Arab population, imposed curfews, and required Arabs to obtain special permits to leave their home villages for work, education, etc. This governance also served to separate the Jewish and Arab populations and thus contact between the two peoples was minimal, even in mixed Jewish/Arab cities such as Haifa, Acre, Lod, Ramle and Jaffa where the two populations lived in separate neighborhoods. The restrictions placed upon the Arabs led to a situation wherein even though the Arab educational system was desperate for teachers, no one could be hired without the approval of the military administration. During this 18 year period Israel's security concerns took precedence over educational needs, making the hiring of new school staff difficult and time-consuming, as each candidate's security profile had to be thoroughly investigated.

Despite the oppression caused by the military administration, the situation of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel presents an interesting and atypical case of how majority nations tend to treat ethnic minorities. In most countries, one of the primary aims of education is to assimilate and make minorities more cultured, i.e., more like the how the majority perceives itself. This is endeavored by official edicts to replace minority languages, cultures, religions, and ethnic identities with those of the rulers. In Israel, however, no attempt was ever made to eradicate the Arabic language, or any religion, and Arab children were never removed from their homes to be raised by families of the majority (as happened to the Aborigines in Australia or in the United States with Native American children, for example).[4] This difference in policy is owed to the fact that the Jewish state was not interested in integrating non-Jews into its society. The downside is that despite having full civil rights, the Arab minority would seem to be forever considered an outsider in Israel.

Israeli Policy towards Arab-Palestinian Education

In the first years of the State of Israel the thinking in the government was that the thrust of the effort to improve Arab education should be at the primary grades, and secondary education could wait for development until compliance with compulsory primary school was achieved (including developing the physical infrastructure, training teachers, etc.). By 1955 there were five secondary schools that were fully maintained by parents and the local authorities – with no direct support from the central governmental. Shmuel Salmon, then Director of the Division for Arab Education noted that "…we can see a very interesting phenomenon that the Arab sector is ready to sacrifice a lot for secondary education while it still far from understanding the value of elementary education." This growth in secondary schools continued and by 1990 there were 90 Arab high schools. In 1952 a Council for Arab Education was established as part of the Israel

4. Before 1978, as many as 25 to 35% of the Native Indian children in some parts of the United States were removed from their homes and placed in non-Indian homes by state courts, welfare agencies, and private adoption agencies because child-rearing practices in these cultures were deemed no in the child's best interests. But in fact, they were just different from those of the majority culture. The Institute for Psychological Therapies.

http://www.ipt-forensics.com/journal/volume10/j10_10_13.htm.Accessed Sept. 25, 2011.

Ministry of Education's Section for Arab Education. However, until 1958 no goals or defined aims were set for Arab education. In this year the Section was renamed the Division of Arab Education and its stated goals defined as follows (Israel Government Yearbook 1959, 215):

      1. Handle elementary education for minorities" children from the ages of 5-14.

      2. Prepare curricula and textbooks for elementary and secondary schools.

      3. Supervise the teaching of different subjects.

      4. Conduct teacher training for elementary schools.

      5. Hold matriculation exams and grant stipends for secondary education (which was not free at this time in Israel).

      6. Examine the organization of cultural activities in minorities' settlements.

      7. Maintain permanent contact with local authorities in regard to educational affairs.

In 1970 then Minister of Education Yigal Alon made far-reaching changes in an attempt to integrate the Arab educational system into the larger, general education system. Unfortunately, the result of the restructuring he implemented was that the administration of Arab education became even more cumbersome and unclear, with roles and authority among the various departments of the Ministry being blurred. Since then several committees have been formed to look into the system and make recommendations. The 1985 report of the Committee for the Examination of Arab Education clearly elucidated the complex and unsatisfactory situation that had evolved by that time. Hence, there was a decision that the Department of Education and Culture for Arabs would have an organizational structure equivalent to that of the general (Jewish) Ministry of Education, with a large degree of autonomy so it could develop an appropriate educational system for the Arab population. But over time, this department was perceived by the other departments in the Ministry as a separate entity, and was administratively and financially discriminated against, despite the original intensions of the planners.[5] The Palestinian Arab leadership continuously claimed that the plethora of departments and divisions for Arab education were used as tools of discrimination and ways of excluding them from equal access to educational opportunities. The fact that all the senior positions in the ministry, including those responsible for Arab education, were—and still are today—invariably held by Jews further outraged the Arab population.

In summary, while there has been enormous change and progress in education since the days of the Ottoman Empire and also the British Mandate, education of Arab-Palestinian children/youth today still lags behind that of their Jewish-Israeli counterparts, and many deficiencies and lacks exist within the Arab educational system. While much of this situation can be squarely pinned on discriminatory governmental policies, there are also challenges inherent in the clash between traditional Arab and Moslem culture and the values and structure of modern Western education.

The Status of Arab Education in Israel Today: Changes and Challenges

Since its establishment the Israeli government has not allocated equal funding to the Arab and Jewish educational systems. The Central Bureau of Statistics disclosed in 2000 that the government invested an average of 534 NIS per Arab student in education while 1,779 NIS was invested per Jewish student.[6]

Another manifestation of the lack of evenhandedness in educational policy is that the Jewish school system offers its students little, if any, exposure to the Arabic language and culture. Although Arabic is one of the two official languages in Israel, it is not a required subject in Jewish schools, while Arab students are required to learn Hebrew as a second language, and English as a third. As of 2003 it was calculated that less

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5. Ministry of Education and Culture, 1985b, 61.

6. Central Bureau of Statistics, New Survey – Investment in Education 2000-2001, Press Release 3, August 2004 (Hebrew).

than four percent of Jewish students even chose to study Arabic in high school. This situation serves to perpetuate the separateness between the two populations and marginalize Arab culture.

In August 2007 the Committee of the Heads of Local Arab Councils, the Follow-Up Committee on Arab Education and the Ministry of Education jointly decided to identify the educational needs of the Arab community and formulate recommendations to be presented to the Minster of Education, who at the time was Dr. Yulie Tamir. Subsequently, four committees comprised of representatives of the Follow-Up Committee and the Ministry were set up. They concluded their tasks and presented their recommendations in 2008. Since these committees presented their recommendations there has been a change of government in Israel and the current Minster of Education - Gideon Saar - has not implemented any of the reforms that were accepted by his predecessor. Moreover, the Committee on Curriculum has not continued to meet as was then directed. The recommendations of a second committee also established by Yulie Tamir during her term "to advance shared life between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel" have also not been acted upon. This committee was jointly chaired by Dr. Mohammed Issawiye, Director of Al Qasmi College (in the Arab town of Baka Al-Gharabiya) and Prof. Gaby Solomon, recipient of the Israel Prize for Education and Founding Director of the Center for Research on Peace Education at Haifa University. A recent initiative under the present government was the establishment in July of 2010 of a professional pedagogic council for Arab education. Its stated goals are to address three central issues:

1. The lack of consensual goals and priorities for Arab education;
2. The lack of a formal, legal framework for Arab education;
3. The need for a professional, representative and autonomous body empowered to establish pedagogic and curricular policies in Arab education.

The formation of this council, along with the activities of social action groups, Arab-Palestinian leaders, and academics, are beginning to create positive change. Abdullah Hadib, head of the Ministry of Education's Arab Department says there is at last ample impetus to really improve Arab schools. According to him "new investment and commitment are being seen on the ground." He reported that in 2009 the government committed additional funding for all Arab third graders to receive supplemental hours in arithmetic, science and Arabic. There will also be more funding for Hebrew language classes and programs to reduce violence in the schools and decrease drop-out rates in secondary schools. The Ministry of Education will be funding construction of 3,200 new classrooms, about half what is needed, but this is a sign of progress and improvement. The thorny issue of content within the Israeli Arab school system is also being tackled at some level: new curricula are being developed that include topics such as "Arab World" culture, Islamic history in the context of Israeli and world history, and more.

In 2010 Prime Minster Netanyahu of the right-wing Likud party signed a bill allocating an additional $214 million to Arab towns for infrastructure improvement, including the schools. "The Arab population's potential is not being realized," he said. "it is vital to us that there be equality of economic opportunity in employment, infrastructure education and quality of life in the non-Jewish sector."

Another level of change is within Israeli Arab society. Awareness that true change can only come from within is beginning to take hold. Traditional ideas that valued rote learning over interactive learning and discussion are beginning to change, as well as the old system in which school principals were selected because of their family ties rather than merit. Khaled Abu-Asbah, head of the Project for the Advancement of Arab-Israeli Citizens in Israel at the Jerusalem-based Van Leer Institute says, "…we are now being taken in by a sense of empowerment. Parents are more active, the teachers are better."

The Impact of the Israeli-Arab Conflict upon Palestinian-Arab Education

While the aim of this paper is to provide a broad historical overview of education for the indigenous Arab-Palestinian people living in what was once the Ottoman Empire, then the British mandate and now the State of Israel, no such review is complete without making note of the impact of the Arab-Israeli conflict upon the educational policy towards this sector. The educational system, as all civil-administrative systems, is funded and implemented by the Israeli government, and its policies are manifestly influenced by the complex and conflictual political realities that exist in Israel, and the Mideast as a whole. While historical

facts clearly demonstrate that the educational status of Arab-Palestinians has improved under Israeli rule (in comparison to either the Ottoman Empire or the British Mandate), the situation today is far from satisfactory. The stated educational goals for the Arab-Palestinian sector have not been fulfilled, and in specific, there is almost no recognition of the special national-cultural-religious needs of this population in the educational curricula. There is deep tension between the national/personal identity aspirations of the Arab- Palestinian sector and Israel's political and educational goals. A study of the curricula and goals of Arab and Jewish schools in Israel (Peres et al., 1968) found that while the educational authority attempted to create curricula that would reconcile these contradictory goals, such a policy was never implemented. The Arab-Palestinian minority in Israel essentially has no identity within educational policy. The State Education Law, first enacted in 1953, defines the goals of public education only in terms of the Jewish majority, stating that education in Israel is to be based upon "…values of Jewish culture… love of the homeland and loyalty to the state and the Jewish people…" in addition to "…striving for a society built on freedom, equality, tolerance, mutual assistance, and love of mankind."

No parallel autonomous educational system was ever established for the Arab-Palestinian minority that took into consideration its existence as a distinct group with a "common language, culture, history, and national identity" (Al-Haj, 1995). Even the amendment of the law in 2000 only acknowledges the existence of minorities in Article 4 by stating that "…in non-Jewish educational institutions, the curriculum shall be adapted to the special conditions thereof" (Jabareen, 2010). However, the reality is that while there has been progress, as described throughout this paper, the Israeli government has done little to adapt school curricula to the Arab-Palestinian population, and even well-meaning new programs and education reforms are often introduced "as is" to Arab schools, with dismal results. A prime example is the failure of SBM in Arab-Bedouin schools in Israel's southern region, as noted in the author's research (Author, 2009). Another blatant example is the "Education for Democracy" initiative of 1985.[7] Designed for Jewish schools, this program was "transplanted" to the Arab educational system, inundating its educators with reams of information about teaching citizenship and democracy, both highly sensitive issues in Arab schools. Since the historical narratives of Jewish-Israelis and Arab-Palestinian are essentially mutually exclusive, the Arab-Palestinian sector cannot even relate to the symbols of Israeli citizenship, e.g., the flag, the national anthem extolling the return of the Jews to Zion, Israel Independence Day.[8] Moreover, traditional Arab culture and its hierarchical, authoritarian school climate was not conducive to education for democracy (Ichilov, Salomon, Inbar, 2005). The Ministry of Education made no adaptations nor did it provide teacher guidance on how to relate the lofty ideals of democracy and citizenship to the reality of Arab-Palestinian life as a minority that is de facto discriminated against in almost all areas of civilian life, and which harbors mixed feelings about its Israeli citizenship (Al-Haj, 1996).

Any discussion of the Arab-Palestinian educational system cannot be detached from the issue of the political status of Arab-Palestinian citizens in Israel. All the above clearly establishes how throughout their history Arab-Palestinians have never controlled their own educational system, a situation that has created a time-honored subjugation. This long-standing rule by others in general, and in specific outsider dictates of educational policy, has made it difficult for this population group to formulate an educational and national identity, and made it even more challenging for it to set educational goals and aims. This stasis can be called "Education on Hold." The Arab-Palestinian population always believed their lack of self-determination was

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7. This policy instructed educators to teach students that when faced with dilemmas emanating from the clash between national and universalistic values, citizenship rights that are derived from fundamental democratic principles and procedures should gain precedence [over national values] and provide behavioral guidance'. The central theme for the academic years 1986 and 1987 was education for democracy. See Citizenship Education in Israel–A Jewish-Democratic State by Orit Ichilov, Gavriel Salomon an Dan Inbar..

8. This day is seen as a *naqba* – disaster – in the Arab-Palestinian narrative

temporary, and this was reinforced by seeing the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the withdrawal of British rule. This belief has continued to the period of Israeli rule, but with an added spanner in the works: the state of Israel has been in conflict/war with large swathes of the Arab and Palestinian peoples since its inception. This state of affairs has presented many difficult dilemmas for Arab-Palestinians in Israel, as well as for policy-makers in the Israel Ministry of Education. These issues have led to the creation of a plethora of committees over the years to investigate and evaluate the Arab educational system, to maintain its separation from the Jewish educational system, and sub-divide it into further into education for Moslems, Druze, Bedouin, and the tiny Circassian sect. This policy has not boded well for minority education which has been strongly tainted by politics.

The Israeli government has not, apparently, learned how educational systems elsewhere in the world have handled minority populations, such as in Switzerland, Belgium, Canada, and others. Therefore, as long as there is no clear policy that will improve the system, Arab-Palestinian education in Israel will continue to worsen. In order to improve the Arab educational system in Israel and preclude conflict, it is necessary to allow the Arab-Palestinian community to administer its own schools. This means to allow educational and cultural autonomy, i.e., to implement the principle of education in accordance with the world view and aspirations of Arab-Palestinian society. It is important to note that this kind of educational autonomy has been in existence for many years in Israel for two Jewish sectors: the ultra-orthodox and the religious Zionist communities. Hence, this is not a precedent. Moreover, the existence of a completely separate ultra-orthodox system of education has not led to the creation of a separate political "State of Ultra-orthodox Israel."

This model should inform policy makers, and reassure them that the provision of educational cultural autonomy to the Arab-Palestinian population will not inevitably lead to demands for political autonomy. Indeed, by transferring some of the responsibility for improved Arab education to the community, this change has the potential to spur initiative and positive reforms, changes that will be in line with the culture and values of the Arab-Palestinian without necessarily being a threat to the sovereignty of the state of Israel.

Discussion

This article deals with the changes and development of educational systems for the Arab-Palestinians living in Israel over the past 400 years under three consecutive rules: the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate and the state of Israel. The focus has been on the historical perspective as it is informed by theoretical frameworks described in the professional literature (positivistic, conflictual, and the Colonial Model), which enable an understanding of ethnic educational systems in ruling class-indigenous population relationships. During the historical periods described in this paper, the Arab educational system was controlled and supervised in a way that enabled the elitist rulers to maintain control over the colonized population (as was the situation under Ottoman and British rule), or over the minority (as the Arab-Palestinians are now in Jewish Israel).

The above historical review brings to light the conflict between the expectations that Arab-Palestinians have of their educational institutions and the expectations of the various governing establishments. Specifically, throughout the periods discussed, the Arab-Palestinians anticipated that education would be a means of empowerment for them as a national-ethnic group, while the ruling powers used education as a tool for social/political management and control. Education has been a means to make the Arab-Palestinian population an "adapting society," i.e., a colonized people/or an ethnic minority that adapts itself to the norms of the rulers/majority. This serves to maintain a social/economic/political status quo that does not endanger the regime. None of the ruling entities in this region ever conceived of education as a means of advancing minority or indigenous groups, and never utilized education to promote social change. Indeed, over the centuries there was a concerted effort to remove any intimations of national identity or attempts at self-expression from the Arab-Palestinian educational system. In this situation of conflicting

expectations, the rulers saw any expressions of national/ethic consciousness as threats to their authority because such stirrings could encourage social/political instability.

It is possible to conclude that during the different periods outlined above that education for the Arab-Palestinian population was conducted according to the Colonial Model. However, there are differences in how this model operated during the Ottoman and British periods, and between the latter and the establishment of the state of Israel. Prior to Israeli rule, the local educational system was elitist, especially in the upper grades. Although the British Mandate had a stated goal of attaining literacy among the Arabs, in fact, it acted to thwart education for the masses and preclude any significant increase in the number of institutions of higher education (Al-Haj, 1995). The Mandate invested almost exclusively in urban education, and hence the rural populace remained with very limited access to educational opportunities. In order to maintain the traditional way of life, the British also did nothing to encourage education for Arab women.

In contrast to both the Ottoman and British governments, the establishment of Israel led to an expansion of Arab-Palestinian education and its transition from a selective system to one that provided education for the masses. This change came about as a result of the end of colonial rule and its replacement with a sovereign, national government largely based upon a western, democratic model. Despite this, a number of vestiges of colonial-rule remain within the Israeli educational system that keep educational institutions for Arab-Palestinians dependent, separate, and cooptative. This situation is the incentive to the present struggle for resources and political independence for Arab-Palestinian education.

The analysis of the Arab-Palestinian educational system since the establishment of the state of Israel is congruous with the conflictual approach, as it is clearly demonstrable that education is not a politically neutral system aspiring to provide minorities with opportunities for personal growth and access to positions of power within the educational administration, and as developers of curricula with control over the subliminal messages they encode. The state plays a central role in directing the inputs and outputs of the educational system, but the legacy of the preceding colonial periods continues to have a significant measure of influence even in the democratic state of Israel. This influence is manifest as wide gaps (social/educational/employment/political/economic) between differing ethnic groups in Israeli society, between urban and rural communities, and between the Arab and Jewish educational systems.

The above analysis leads to the conclusion that the study of education must take historical processes and impacts into consideration. Education must be perceived as a dynamic system that is influenced by cumulative historical impacts.

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