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CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND
MUTUAL IMAGES BETWEEN THE WEST
BANK AND AREAS IN ISRAEL

BY

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I. INTRODUCTION:

The topic of this paper came to my mind shortly after I arrived in Israel in October 1975 and started working at Birzeit University and commuting weekly between the West Bank, and the Galilee where my family has always lived. People in the West Bank, when they knew that I was from Galilee asked questions, and expressed views about Israeli Arabs whom they called "'Arab Juwa" the inside Arabs, "Ikhwana Arab Israel" Our brethren the Israeli Arabs, or "'Arab et-Thamani-Wa-Arbacien" the Arabs of 1948. The Galilee people, when they found out that I worked in the West Bank, asked questions and expressed views about West Bank people whom they called "Arab el-Daffi" The Bank people, "Arab el-Saba-wa-sitteen" the Arabs of '67. From these remarks and questions it was clear that each of the two groups perceived the other as quite distinct and different from itself.

On March 30th the Arabs in Israel went on a strike protesting Arab land expropriation by the Israeli government. The day was declared a "Day of the Land". The response of Israeli authorities was violent; within few hours there were six Arabs dead and several hundred wounded. The Israeli response came as a surprise and a revelation to the Arabs both within Israel and in the West Bank. It made members of both groups wonder whether they did not have a lot more in common than they had thought; may be they had a common enemy and even a common destiny. A sense of unity and solidarity started to emerge. At this time the following hypothesis suggested itself; that the images the two groups carry of each other were mainly determined by the circumstances under which they came to re-discover each other after the 1967 war. Data bearing on this hypothesis and presented in this paper was collected, with the help of some of my students at Birzeit University, after March 30, 1976.

I will, thus, attempt to do two things in this paper: 1. Describe the channels through which, and the conditions under which, contact between the two groups was re-established. 2. The impressions and images members of the two groups formed of each other, through these channels and under these conditions.



II. IMAGES:

Content analysis of interviews carried out in the West Bank shows the following images and characterizations to be most often explicitly expressed about the Arabs in Israel:

1. Make a lot of money; concerned mainly about money, food, material goods; gamble, drink, go to prostitutes; selfish and materialistic;
2. all construction laborers, no education, no "culture";
3. apathetic about the Palestinian cause; lack political awareness and national consciousness; assimilated in Israel, cooperate with Israeli authorities, serve in Israeli armed forces;
4. young people uneducated, ignorant, illiterate, deprived, lost, degenerate, imitate Jews, speak Hebrew, drink, cause trouble, loud, like to fight, no respect for adults;
5. generous, hospitable, real Arabs - stick to Arabic heritage and traditions;
6. stick to old-fashioned, worn out Arabic traditions, have not progressed, stagnant, backward;
7. Desperate, hopeless, oppressed, have given up, pitiful, miserable, unhappy.
8. Day of Land proves they hate Israel, they have national consciousness, political awareness just beginning as a result of West Bank influence.

A group of students at Birzeit University were asked to write down the first sentence that comes to their minds using the phrase "like an Israeli Arab". Here are all the sentences given by those who cooperated:

- Silly like an Israeli Arab,
- empty-headed like an Israeli Arab,
- has a lot of leisure time like an Israeli Arab,
- irresponsible like an Israeli Arab,



- money minded like an Israeli Arab,
- lacks self-control like an Israeli Arab,
- lacks intellectual awareness like an Israeli Arab,
- has a lot of money like an Israeli Arab
- has no moral values, like an Israeli Arab
- has long hair, carries a knife, wears tight pants, opens the front of his shirt, wears no undershirt, like an Israeli Arab.

Another group of students were asked to make up a story taking place in a West Bank bus, where one of the characters of the story uses the phrase "like an Israeli Arab." Here are some of these stories:

I happened once to be on the Hebron-Jerusalem bus, returning to Hebron. The bus was crowded with passengers young and old. Some of the young men stood in the aisle. Two young men attracted my attention. They had long hair and wore skin tight clothes. They were kidding and teasing each other in a loud voice without any consideration to other people's feelings. Their Arabic manifested some strange accent and they mixed with it some Hebrew expressions.

Then I noticed an old man sitting close by who was watching the behavior of these two young men with an expression of extreme disgust on his face. Finally, the old man could not take any more of them and exploded screaming and shouting curses and insults and telling them that they were as bad as young Israeli Arabs.

When he quieted down I moved close to him and asked: Sir, what did you mean by comparing these young men to Israeli Arabs? He answered me sharply: Son, these people have been living with Jews, and have started to dress like them and talk like them. And don't forget that some of them are in the Israeli Armed forces and others work as prison guards. As a matter of fact one of them, just the other day, tortured my son in prison.

Can you believe it, an Arab torturing another Arab!
When did such a thing ever happen before?

I can almost still hear his words. How I wished I had more time to find out why this old man had such bad - and mistaken- ideas about our brothers in Occupied Palestine!

Two ladies on a bus:

First lady: What is going on with the uprising in the West Bank?

Second lady: I don't know and I don't really care!

First lady: Why so apathetic like Israeli Arabs!

Two Men in bus:

First man: I am thinking of leaving the West Bank to Kuwait.

Second man: I don't like the sound of that.

First man: Why?

Second man: I would like to see you stay on and keep our land like the Israeli Arabs did.

First man: Don't forget that the only Arabs who stayed in Israel were the needy ones, who did not have enough money to leave!

Two men were on a bus having a conversation without being aware that I was listening. The first man says something about the Palestinian problem getting worse and worse every day. The other answers him saying that he could not care less as long as he and his family are able to live comfortably. The first man says: how could a Palestinian have such an attitude? The other says: Oh! there are lots of people fighting for Palestine, they'll do it. I am not willing to sacrifice my life for Palestine. The first man snaps You are like Israeli-Arabs!



Two men having an argument on a bus travelling from Jerusalem to Ramallah:

First man: You are using dirty language like Israeli-Arabs, you are a traitor like them, too.

Second man: What is wrong with them? recently they have shown great courage by frustrating Israeli projects in Galilee.

First man: Well, yes, they are no cowards, they still have some Arabic blood in them.

Second man: But we notice that they accept Israeli ideas easier than West Bank people.

First man: This is your opinion and you cannot generalize about all of them. For example the people of Nazareth seem to dislike the Israeli occupation.

Second man: Well, yes, but these are only a very small number among our Arab brothers in Israel.

Two men 'A' and 'B' were travelling in a bus and having a conversation. 'A' was trying to show that he was superior to 'B', that he was more civilized and modernized, that he was richer, knew a foreign language, and generally bragging about himself. Suddenly 'B' said: Who do you think you are bragging like that? You are really acting like an Israeli-Arab. 'B' really meant that Israeli-Arabs think that they are richer and more modern and that they try to distinguish themselves from West Bank people by speaking Hebrew in the presence of West Bank Arabs, although they can speak Arabic very well.

Images held by Arabs in Israel about West Bank people are no more flattering than those held by West Bank people about the Arabs in Israel.



Content analysis of interviews made with the Arabs in Israel. show the following images to be most widely held about the Arabs in the West Bank:

1. Lack social intelligence and ability to interact with others, get offended and mad easily, quick to fight and insult others.
2. Thick skull stupid, lack enough native intelligence to learn a new job at work.
3. Simple, good-hearted, happy go lucky, easy to deceive and manipulate.
4. Dirty, filthy, untidy, poor worn-out clothes.
5. Accept sub-human work conditions and wages.
6. Timid and docile.
7. Love to make money and keep it, tight with their money, would take any humiliation to make money.
8. Stick to backward, old-fashioned, ancient style of life.
9. Real Arabs, live according to authentic Arabic ways.
10. Cooperate with Israeli authorities, squeal to secret police.
11. At home generous, hospitable, sharing, giving, helpful.
12. Strongly patriotic, defend their country, do not sell land to Jews.

The following are excerpts from interviews with people from the Galilee area:

" One of the manifestations of their backward mentality is that no matter how much money they make they insist on spending just one Lira a day. They bring their blankets with them, sleep at construction sites and eat bread and tomatoes for days at a time."

" I sympathize with them but condemn them for being so stupid and backward. For example, at one time there were about eight of us living in our house in Jaffa. The house had a big yard



and the landlord brought about twenty of them (West Bank people) to sleep in the yard. We used to see what they had for dinner. They would buy two or three kilos of tomatoes, a few onions and a few loaves of bread; make a big salad and eat all together out of one plate. They would pay one Israeli Lira each and that takes care of that. In the morning when they wanted to go to the bathroom, they would not wait in turn. One of them would be in the hut house and the others would take a shit in the yard. In one week the yard was filled up, it was impossible to get to the rest house. And, of course, they did not know how to use modern bathrooms, the ones with the high seats; they would get up on the seat and squat and make a mess all over it; and they would never remember to flush it. And you should have seen the place where they slept: each brought his own blanket from home and they slept right on the dirt.

One time Saïd hit this West Bank laborer. He asked for a higher wage than he deserved, so Saïd hit him. He fell flat on his back and looked completely dead. Our Jewish boss, and the rest of the gang (i.e. Arabs from Israel) started to say, 'Just throw him in the shelter and ignore him if he comes to, fire and if he dies no big thing.' But my brother Othman rubbed his chest and told him to wake up but he wouldn't. There was an old mattress lying on the sand next to the construction site. We put him on it, brought the hose and hosed him down with cold water, but he still showed no signs of life. So our Arab (from Israel) boss asked his Jewish boss to take him to the hospital in his car. This guy refused because he did not want to get the seats of his car dirty. I said, 'O.K. you guys, put him in my car, I'll take him;' and I took him to the hospital. The doctor checked him and said that he was going to be all right. It wasn't too bad. The guy had had a recent operation, and the blows fell exactly on the spot where the operation had been done.



The joke happened around 12 noon and it took us until four in the afternoon to get back to work. We gave the doctor the man's salary, explained to him the whole story, and told him to give him his money when he gets better. We never gave the guy an extra penny..."

"When it comes to cooperating with the police, we are a lot better than West Bank people, and they themselves admit that. They have been under Israeli occupation for only six or seven years and already sixty to seventy percent of them work for the Israeli Intelligence Service, while, after all this time, no more than ten percent of us do it. This is a definite sign of their stupidity and backward mentality, that they can be easily deceived and manipulated."

"Money is very important to them; how to make money, tie it in his hankie and take it home. With us, we care about how we look, money is not everything in life. Dignity, human dignity is meaningless to them. They care about how to make money even if their dignity and self-respect was to be insulted."

"Take the case of the Fedayeen, this is a good indication of how much they cooperate with the Israeli authorities. You don't hear about Fedayeen in the West Bank any more. Why? because they squealed on them and they were captured. One guy (an Israeli Arab) who had a high rank in the (Israeli) army and is retired now told me how informants from the West Bank used to come to him with information about the Fedayeen, and he would tell them to go away because he did not want to hear about it."

"Each of us, Israeli Arabs, costs his employer twice as much as a West Bank worker. But Jewish contractors still prefer us because our brains are better suited to handle the work than theirs...Some of



Some of them are first grade skilled house painters and they accept working for 50 Israeli Liras a day. This created problems for us, we couldn't find work any more, and we started to accept low wages like them because we have to work and feed our children."

"Jews do not trust them, because they (West Bank people) are not trustworthy. And they, of course, do not trust Jews and do not trust us (Israeli Arabs). We often hear them say: If things take a different turn we are going to kill you, the Israeli Arabs before the Jews. They really think of us as if we were Jews."

"Shortly after the 1967 war it was very easy to tell who was from the West Bank by their clothes. Their clothes were old, worn out and filthy, and they used to work, sleep, and do everything in the same clothes, never change them. We used to get very disgusted with them because of that. Jews would say: Look at your Arabs! these were supposed to liberate you! This used to get us very mad and disgusted but we would **swallow it and keep quiet**. Sometimes we used to argue with them. One time I argued with one of them and convinced him that those were not the ones that were supposed to liberate us, there were much better people in the West Bank but they left to the Arab Countries because of the Israeli occupation, the ones that stayed are the garbage of the West Bank."

"Look at the ones that come here to sell goods out of their trucks, some of them are millionaires but they are so filthy and untidy. They look so poor but have lots of money. Their clothes and their appearance are worse than we were fifty or even seventy years ago during the Turkish days."



III. CIRCUMSTANCES:

The two groups were separated from each other for almost twenty years, during which they had no communication and each group knew very little about what was happening to the other.

This complete separation ended in 1967 when Israel occupied the West Bank from Jordan and the two groups started to rediscover each other gradually and slowly. The period since the establishment of Israel can be divided, in terms of the mutual perceptions of these two groups, into three fairly distinct periods: 1. Pre-1967 2. 1967-March 30, 1976 3. Post March 30, 1976. For each of these periods I shall discuss the channels through which and the circumstances under which, they came to rediscover and redefine each other, and then discuss the mutual images and perceptions formed under these contact situations.

1-Mutual perception shortly before the 1967 War:

Before 1967 the channels of communication between the two groups were very few. Israeli Arabs thought of all Arabs outside Israel as basically one large homogeneous group. For one thing they knew very little about what was going on in the Arab World. There was no mail telephone or telegraph communication with any of the Arab countries. There were no Arabic movies, books, magazines or newspapers coming in from the Arab countries. There were no television sets. About the only way of finding out what was happening in the Arab world was through listening to Arab radio broadcasting stations and through Israeli news media. These channels usually did give the image that the relevant world was divided into two groups: Israel and its supporters on one side, Arabs and their supporters on the other.

A second important consideration in this respect is that they did not only lack enough information to make any fine distinctions among different groups of Arab peoples, but they also had no need nor wish to do that. The kind of nationalism they had known before they became isolated from the rest of the Arab world in 1948 was Arab nationalism and not Palestinian nationalism.



We should remember that Palestinian nationalism crystallized only after 1948 as a result of the experiences to which the Palestinians were subjected as refugees in the Arab countries. A strictly and uniquely Palestinian group identity emerged as a corollary to the process of distinguishing themselves from other Arab peoples such as Jordanians, Syrians, Lebanese, etc.; and proving that they were not just refugees but a distinct and coherent group, a people on their own.

Palestinians in Israel did not share these experiences nor did they even hear much about them and thus needed to make no such distinctions. The only distinction that was significant to them was that between an Arab and a Jew: they needed to defend their self-image, their identity and their integrity against infringement from the Jewish state, Jewish identity and Jewish culture, and not against other Arab groups. In short, their identification with the Arab people as a whole was much more significant for them than their identification with other Palestinians. Thus, from listening to the propaganda over Arabic radio stations, and possibly partly due to wishful thinking, the Palestinians in Israel, shortly before the Six Day War, thought of the Arab nation as one large more-or-less homogeneous nation. They believed this nation to have undergone a great deal of change since 1948, to have become a modern, powerful nation. And they waited to be saved from Israeli rule by this powerful, modern nation.

West Bank people in their turn knew very little about the Arabs living in Israel. This little knowledge came basically through two very poor channels: one was the Arabic programs on the Israeli radio station, and the other was the few Christian visitors "pilgrims" that crossed the border to East Jerusalem during Christian holidays. Israeli propaganda, supplemented by their imagination of what it may mean to live such a long time under Israeli rule, gave them the impression that the Arabs in Israel have made a great adjustment to life in the Jewish State, that they have become very well off economically and have become so acculturated that they have almost ceased to be Arabs. Christian visitors to some degree confirmed this image.



They usually took enough money with them, and went on a shopping spree, getting things that were not available in Israel, or trying to take advantage of the much lower prices in Jordan at the time. Being afraid of the very effective Israeli intelligence service, and of possible punishment when they returned to Israel, in addition to the fact that those who were allowed to cross the borders were a selective group, made those visitors very hesitant to get into political discussions, to say things critical of Israel or to express anti-Israeli sentiments. Sure enough the picture they presented was that of a prosperous group of people who care mostly about material goods and show no enthusiasm for the Palestinian cause.

2- 1967-March 30, 1976:

During the "Six Days War" Israel occupied, among other things, the West Bank of Jordan, the Palestinian section annexed to Jordan at the end of the 1948 Israeli-Arab War, and contact was re-established between the two Palestinian groups after the complete separation which lasted almost twenty years. At the beginning, movement between the two sections was restricted, but gradually the restrictions were eased and the two groups began to rediscover each other through a wide variety of channels and under a wide variety of circumstances. Some of the earliest and most decisive contacts in terms of the formation of mutual impressions took place through three channels:

1. Israeli-Arabs visiting and shopping in West Bank.
2. Druze and Bedouin soldiers in the Israeli Army and
3. Laborers working in Jewish towns.

1. The earliest contact was when Israeli-Arabs shortly after the end of the war flooded the markets of West Bank cities like East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, and Tulkarem. They came first of all out of curiosity. The young ones under the age of thirty who were born in Israel or shortly before its establishment had never been to an "authentic" Arab town. The older ones driven by nostalgia for the good old days.



A second motive was shopping. Prices in the West Bank were then much cheaper than in Israel and goods were available in the West Bank that were not in Israel.

For the Israeli-Arabs the "Six Day War" was a bitter let-down and a deadly blow to their hopes and expectations. Not only did the Arabs, on whom they had placed their hopes, fail to liberate them, but they were decisively and very easily defeated by the Israeli forces within a very short time, and the Israeli Arabs found all their hopes, expectations, and wishes disappearing like a mirage. Their early visits to West Bank towns only increased their sense of being let down and disappointed. They looked at the West Bank people and could not see in them the modern strong nation that was supposed to defeat Israel and liberate them. They found only the traditional, poor, powerless Middle Eastern peasants, artisans and storekeepers, and their frustration and disappointment with the Arab nation as a whole turned into scorn and despise for the West Bank people whom they considered to be ignorant, poor, and backward in every respect. On top of all that, as the West Bank merchants and storekeepers sensed the strong demand for their goods, and the availability of good amounts of cash in the pockets of the Israeli Arabs they started for much higher prices for their goods, giving the Israeli Arabs the impression that the West Bankers were taking advantage of them. This image still persists to this day about the nasty and greedy West Bank people who treat Israeli Arabs as if they were Jews and make them pay prices higher than those paid by West Bank people for the same goods.

This contact situation resulted in West Bank people also getting negative impressions about Israeli Arabs. To start with, Israeli-Arabs did not come to the West Bank alone, together with them came a flood of curious and bargain-hunting Jewish people. West Bank people saw both in similar light: they were all Israelis coming to satisfy their curiosity about the newly conquered people and to buy some of



their exotic goods and they felt totally justified in taking advantage of them whenever they could.

The West Bank people also, one would assume, sensed the scorn that the Israeli-Arabs felt for them and they reciprocated. The impression was made much worse by some of the teenage Israeli-Arabs who wore clothing in styles not previously known in the West Bank and identified by them as Jewish clothes. Worse yet, these young men mixed some Hebrew words in their conversation and occasionally used Hebrew among themselves to impress the West Bank people or to prevent them from understanding the conversation. Some of these young people even pretended to be Jewish with the hope of intimidating the West Bank people in order to obtain from them what they did not think they could obtain as Arabs.

All this only confirmed the negative image the West Bank people already had of the Israeli-Arabs as a result of the Israeli propaganda.

2. A second early impression came through Druze and Bedouin soldiers who formed a significant part of the "Israeli Border Police Force" known for their capacity for violence and viciousness and which were brought into the West Bank towns shortly after the occupation to keep things under control. Arabs of both groups accuse Israel of sending these forces, which they still do whenever there are demonstrations or riots in the West Bank, intentionally in order to create hatred between the two groups and keep them separated. Whatever the truth of this may be, the results of the presence of Druze and Bedouin soldiers in the West Bank resulted in a great deal of hatred, despise, hostility and suspicion among West Bankers toward Israeli Arabs. More recently they have, however, learned to make the distinction between Druzes and Bedouin tribes, both of whom serve in the Israeli armed forces, on the one side and the rest of the Arab population in Israel on the other.

These soldiers, on the other hand, brought back with them and spread among the Israeli Arabs some very unpleasant images of West Bank people. They had, and still have, lots of stories about some



West Bank people who cooperate willingly with the Israeli authorities, police informants and spies of Israel. Israeli-Arabs listen to those stories and exclaim "We have been under Israeli rule for thirty years and we are still holding up. We have not become traitors, we have not become Israeli spies. Why couldn't the West Bank people be like us!"

3. Laborers in Israel: A very, and maybe the most, important channel for communication between West Bank people and Israeli-Arabs is through Laborers from both groups working in Jewish towns. This channel is so important because of the large number of people in each group who get their impressions of the other group through it, which, in turn, is due to the fact that the great majority of breadwinners in both groups are laborers in construction, industry, or agriculture in Jewish cities and towns.

Again the images and impressions formed through this channel were from the beginning, and still are, very negative on both sides.

The Israeli Arabs had been working in Jewish towns for almost 20 years when West Bank laborers came on the scene. Compared to themselves newly arriving West Bank laborers were totally green and unskilled. They could not speak Hebrew, were scared and easily intimidated, coming into unfamiliar and hostile environment. Both Israeli Arabs and Jews looked down upon them. Jews discriminated between the two groups: the Israeli Arabs whom they called "Aravim Shilano" i.e. "our Arabs" and whom they looked at as somewhat civilized and refined by having lived and worked in Israel for twenty years, and on the other hand West Bank Arabs whom they simply called "Aravim" i.e., Arabs, and whom they considered to be very crude and backward.

Israeli Arab laborers accepted this definition of the situation and over-reacted in their scorn for the West Bank laborers in an attempt to distinguish and disassociate themselves from them.



The hostility grew as large numbers of West Bank laborers flooded the market and started to compete for the jobs by accepting much lower wages and worse work conditions than was accepted at that time.

As time went on the hostility and the scorn did not abate. West Bank laborers have continued to appear stupid, ignorant and unskilled. The reason for this is that the West Bank is still defined as an occupied territory. Its people ~~do not expect~~ do not expect to continue to live in Israel. They are living on a day-to-day basis, with no long term adjustments or arrangements, waiting for the day when somehow a solution for their problem will be found. This being the case they have shown a great deal of resistance for learning the Hebrew language or even acquiring the kind of skills needed for working in Israel. A large number of them still refuse to accept any kind of permanent or long term work arrangements preferring to stand in the morning in some known public places, and wait to be hired to do odd jobs on a daily or hourly basis.

Many of those who work on more or less permanent basis surprise and irritate their employers by demanding to get paid daily rather than bi-weekly as the rest of Israeli laborers do. Israeli Arab laborers and Jewish employers look at this situation as a proof that West Bank people are just too stupid to learn a new language and new skills.

From the viewpoint of West Bank laborers coming to work in Israel shortly after the 67 war, Israeli Arabs appeared, as they very often phrase it "worse than Jews." At work the person immediately in charge was usually an Israeli Arab and represented Jewish business and the Jewish employer to them. Israeli Arab workers used Hebrew most of their time at work, and all of them all the time used Hebrew, Yiddish, German, or some other non-Arabic terms for the tools, materials, and activities related to work, for which they do not know the proper terms in Arabic. Many Israeli Arabs turned into sub-contractors, and tried to get rich fast by hiring laborers from the West Bank at very low wages and getting out of them the largest possible amount of work. Israeli Arab laborers made fun



of them, looked down upon them, disassociated themselves from them, exploited them and showed hostility toward them. In general the Israeli Arabs they met through work in Israel treated them no better- if not even worse- than did the Jewish people. Up to this day West Bank people in general tend to consider young Israeli Arabs and they specifically refer to those born after 1948 as a confused, lost, and corrupt generation.

There were other channels for contact and communication which developed as time went on but were not as significant as the ones mentioned so far. One of these channels is visits by members of one group to relatives or friends in the other group. This channel is generating ambivalent feelings and impressions. Each group is discovering that the other is still really "Arabic" in its values, outlook, and traditions such as those related to weddings and death, hospitality to guests, attitude toward women and many others. On the one hand they praise each other on being "authentic" or "real" Arabs. On the other hand, however, there is a tendency to consider everything typically and uniquely Arabic or Middle Eastern as backward, which leads each group to accuse the other, for the same reasons they praise them other times, of being backward, not modern enough, and not trying to keep up with the times.

Another channel is through travelling salesmen from the West Bank selling their goods in Israeli Arab villages. Depending on what it is they are selling they may carry their goods in small trucks or on their backs and they usually spend many days or weeks on the road without returning to their homes.

Such salesmen are usually shabbily dressed, dirty and uncouth. Many are the Israeli Arab housewives and children who have never been to the West Bank and have seen no other example of West Bank people than these salesmen. Naturally the picture such individuals have of West Bank people is that of dirty, shabby and poor people.



Another channel is marriage between West Bank and Israeli Arab individuals, of which only a very limited number have taken place. Some of these are marriages among relatives and the majority of cases are those of older, well-to-do Israeli Arab men marrying the young daughters of poor West Bank families. The images inferred from this exchange are not hard to guess. West Bank people talk about how West Bank women are so much better than Israeli-Arab women to the point that even the worst of them, those that could never find husbands in the West Bank command such high prices among Israeli Arabs. Israeli Arabs on the other hand talk about the horrible West Bank people who sell their daughters as if they were cows to the highest bidder and claim that even the worst among Israeli Arab men could marry the best girls of the best Bank families if they happen to have enough money to pay the high prices.

Because of the nature of these marriages many of them have been breaking up soon after they take place, further confirming to both groups the negative impressions they already have of each other.

Another encounter takes place when, very infrequently, West Bank people venture to Israeli bars, movie theatres, beaches and resort areas, and prostitution houses in Israeli cities. They usually find the Israeli Arabs already there, and feeling somewhat at home. This confirms to West Bankers their suspicion that Israeli Arabs have become a hedonistic bunch who care about nothing except the pleasures of the body.

The last channel we will discuss here is the news media. What West Bank people usually get from the Israeli news media generally confirms the image they already have of the Israeli Arabs namely, that they have given up any sort of national or political struggle, are well reconciled to life in Israel, generally well-off materially and are concerned only with their immediate pleasures.

The news that Israeli Arabs get from newsmedia, Israeli and otherwise, is usually full of stories about resistance to Israeli rule, about strikes and demonstrations and sabotage; about being arrested,



detained, sentenced, tortured and killed. This is an image which they definitely admire, respect and even envy, and would possibly like to emulate, and to some degree did on the "Day of the Land" to which we shall turn next.

3- March 30, 1976 to the present:

The Israeli government has been confiscating Arab lands and turning it over to Jewish settlers, since 1948. Recently the process was greatly intensified under what is known as the Galilee Development Program, which really meant taking the lands of the Arab villagers in the Galilee area and establishing on it new Jewish settlements. Leaders of the Israeli Arabs conferred and decided to protest the expropriation of Arab lands. The protest was in the form of one day of total strike of all laborers, all business and all activities for one day. Protests and demonstrations were planned for that day in all Arab villages and towns. The premeditated response of the Israeli authorities was to teach the Arabs, especially the villages whose lands were to be immediately expropriated, a lesson, and when the day came the response was violent. Within a few hours it left six dead, scores of people injured, and several hundreds in jail.

This day is a landmark in the history of the Palestinian people because it introduced a new dimension in the way the Israeli Arabs looked at themselves and at their relationship to the rest of Palestinian people. They became convinced that they are not, never were, and will never be, part of, and full citizens of Israel, that they did not belong there and are not wanted. They realized all of a sudden, and for the very first time, that they were in the same boat with other Palestinians in the West Bank, in Jordan, in Syria, in Lebanon and everywhere in the world. Their struggle, their future, and their destiny is one and the same.

West Bank people, on the other hand, realized as a result of the "Day of the Land" that the Arabs in Israel were not a total loss to the Palestinian cause, that underneath what they thought to be all cold ashes, there was still some fire burning.



Only the future will be able to tell whether the mutual respect and admiration and the vision of a common struggle will grow and mature and give fruits or will it be killed at a tender age by the unified forces of evil now converging on the Middle East.

IV. CONCLUSION:

This paper has dealt with the channels of communication and mutual perception of two Palestinian groups: the Arabs in Israel and the West Bank people. The two groups were almost completely separated for about twenty years. During this period each group went through experiences which were not shared by the other. This resulted in each having its own unique self-definition. Ten years after the contact was reestablished, the two groups still maintain these unique and mutually exclusive self-definitions.

The way each group perceives the other seems to be conditioned by the circumstances under which members of the two groups come in contact and the channels through which they communicate. It appears from our study that most of the images they have come to hold of each other are, to varying degrees, negative. A distinct exception is found in the mutual admiration and appreciation of each other's efforts in what they are beginning to perceive as a combined struggle for a common cause namely, to resist Israeli occupation and domination.

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