(18) Both Wardi and Bennabi were well received and reviewed in Arabic. Actually some of Wardits books created quiet a roaring response and several books were written to refute them!

(19) Cf. George Sabagh and Iman Ghazella "Arab Sociology Today: A view from Within", *Ann. Rev. Sociol.*, 1986, 12, pp.389-397.

(20) Recently many anthropological studies are published on the Arab family in English, such as Ziba Mir-Hosseini, *Marriage on Trial: A study of Islamic Family Law*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1993; Amira El Azhary Sombol, (ed.) *Women, The Family and Divorce Laws in Islamic History*, N.Y. : Syracuse University Press, 1996, etc..

(21) Cf. Mustapha Soueif et al. *Studies on Drugs Addiction*, Cairo, National Centre for Sociological and Crime Studies, 1990-1993. (in Arabic).

(22) Cf. Muhammed Al-Ghohari, "Sociology in Egypt and the Objectives of this Journal", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Cairo, 1998, 1, pp.7-16. (in Arabic).

CHAPTER 4
SOCIAL RESEARCH ABOUT PALESTINIANS IN ISRAEL: HISTORY, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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Preface

An inevitable state of uncertainty and bewilderment awaits the Palestinian researcher living in Israel every time he wants to expose, explain and analyse the experience of this part of the Palestinian people. This experience is so complicated that outsiders find it extremely hard to understand in all of its aspects. The state of uncertainty appears when the researcher asks himself what details can best convey this experience in all of its complications and contradictions in such a straightforward manner as to make it comprehensible to the reader or listener. For there are too many details about a socio-political reality so complicated and contradictory that ignoring or abridging any part of it may cause a total or, at best, partial miscomprehension. So, a reader wanting to expose the experience will always wonder: will the outsiders understand what he tries to convey? Along with this enquiry he lives moments of tension for fear that outsiders might not grasp what he wants to say, and at certain moments he is overwhelmed by the feeling that nobody especially his Arab and Palestinian brothers, can understand what he really means, to the point that he may decide that giving up the attempt is better for everyone.

Experience has taught me that the task of exposing the situation of the Palestinians in Israel becomes even more difficult when we look at it from the angle of the situation of other Arab peoples.

The Arab brothers had fostered well-established visions of this situation which are sometimes not based on good knowledge of it. No wonder that changing well-established visions is extremely difficult and sometimes impossible, adding new difficulty to the job of conveying the experience.

When we come to the question under consideration, the task of conveying the experience may become far more difficult because we are considering a unique situation : first, because it concerns the experience of a limited number of specialized social researchers and not the experience of everyone in society; secondly, it is a new experience that had taken shape inside the Israeli academic institutions and flourished on their tradition; and, thirdly, it is an experience which is independent of the Arab experience and has little in common with it.

Therefore, it becomes clear that the Palestinian researcher in Israel is, in terms of his background and experience, a product of the Israeli academic

institutions, and when he advocates the concerns of his own society, he virtually defies the academic traditions he had been brought up with and the institutions he desires to be part of, as well as the people who taught him. Taking this stance almost always will mean paying a heavy price. That is why the term "challenge" has various connotations in social science, as the academic and scientific defiance is inseparably inter-woven with the political challenge and national militancy. In this situation the questions Arab researchers ask themselves acquire different meanings. The questions of research subject matters and approaches and the results yielded by research publication along with the theory used in research are far different from the results realized in other experience, especially that of other Arab researchers. In this situation, the questions raised about objectivity, scientific level, accuracy and soundness of research procedures are integrated within the national political attitude, with all the repercussions resulting from this attitude at the individual and collective levels.

Therefore the challenge in this situation is not exclusively directed towards the social problems and their solutions, but also towards how successful the researcher has been in understanding given phenomena and proposing certain solutions. For any decision taken in relation to the research subject matters may yield results that concern the future of a whole people. That is why a researcher has to be extremely accurate and to heed even the smallest of details. These issues are important not only for their political, national and societal repercussions but also because the researcher is under constant observation by, and accountable to the Israeli academic institutions, represented as they are by specialized researchers, who are keen on proving that a certain researcher is unqualified and/or lacks credibility, and/or forfeits scientific norms, although keeping the Palestinian researcher under surveillance by his Israeli counterpart helps to maintain reasonable level of accuracy and research acceptability.

The particularities characterizing the status of scientific research have dictated the subjects of this study. Exploring the Israeli research traditions, approaches and achievements is a necessity. Therefore I have devoted part one to reviewing this tradition because of its role in shaping the scientific background of the Palestinian researchers. Part II is devoted to reviewing the beginning and development of the social research and the factors that contributed to the shaping of its approaches and contents. Part III is devoted to the characteristics of these researches and in Part IV I have tried to pinpoint the challenges confronting social sciences with emphasis on the question of facing the challenges at theoretical level and developing a social science armed with appropriate analytic and explanatory capability to contribute to the strengthening of societies in the fact of internal and external challenges.

Part I: The Israeli Social Research About Palestinians

In this part I shall review the development stages of the Israeli social research about Palestinians with emphasis on the content, aims and utilization of research results and their impact on the development of the independent Palestinian research. The Israeli research has gone through three phases :

Phase 1: From the beginning till the 60s. This phase was characterized by the prevalence of a sociological trend that represented the Israeli labour and the Zionist movement and was closely linked to the political establishment. This trend served the purpose of building up the state, and the Zionist consensus.

This trend, which, is based on the structural functional thinking, had excluded the Arab population in its definition of society. It used the term "Israeli society" to mean "the Jewish society in Israel". In the very few cases it mentioned the Arabs, it had devoted an independent chapter that focussed on the problem of national identity. This trend was best represented by Sh.N. Eseinchtein, who, in his reference to Arabs, contended himself with quoting an article from "New Outlook" titled "My name is Ahmad". Researchers of this trend also promoted the idea of the Arabs being "Schizophrenic" as a result of the conflict between their Arab nationality on the one part and living in Israel on the other.

During that phase, two other groups were active in studying the situation of Arabs in Israel: the first group was of Anglo-Saxon Origin which identified with the mainstream trend, although with some reservations.

Prominent among them was Henry Rosenfield who emphasized on the family structure and the modernization and urbanization processes. His writings became the main source for researchers in his field.

A good example of his influence was the study of Abu Ghosh (1966) and of Ibner Cohen (1965).

The second group, which kept away from the mainstream trend, included some radical researchers who, by reason of developing their attitude outside the Zionist consensus had to live outside Israel. This group described Israel as a state of immigrant colonizers ruled by a colonial system that persecuted the indigenous population.

The number of researchers who studied the situation of Arabs in Israel was very small during this phase. So the gap was filled by orientalists. These, along with researchers in social sciences, strove to prove the distinction of Arabs and Arab villages and focussed on studying national identity, ignoring the role of power and hegemony relationship which shape the identity on the basis of excluding others, which is the same as excluding self from the other in order to assert the self identity as Western identity. In this way this group contributed to enhancing the mainstream trend argument that Israel was a modern democratic Western state.

Phase II of research development started after 1967 with the new trends taking shape after the 1973 war. In this phase there was no tangible and clear-

cut renewal at the theoretical level, while the prevailing character of research work represented a revised brand of functionalism fostered by the mainstream trend. It represented an attempt to bridge the gap between the one-dimension theory which emphasized the state of consensus on the one hand and coherence between the changing reality and the clear diversity present in it on the other.

The same structural analysis approach continued to be applied, with the concept of struggle at the level of micro added as represented in the problems of assimilation and adaptation, along with new levels of analysis such as reference to the level of secondary and local centres. Criticism of bureaucracy, corruption and military shortcomings was conspicuous in this research.

Major developments in the field of research about Arabs was absent in this phase only to appear in the following one.

Phase III which began with the political change of 1977 was characterized by three major developments : first, the mainstream trend in Israeli sociology embarked on a revision of its theoretical as well as analytic approaches. Provoked by the failure of the Israeli labour movement, researchers of this trend joined efforts to find an explanation to this failure and to other political, social and economic developments. A most outstanding example of this change in theoretical approach was manifested in the forsaking of the structural functional analysis by some prominent researchers who now sought to analyse civilization and culture through seeing Israel as an embodiment of Jewish civilization, arguing that the struggle within society reflected the tension between universalism and particularism. This trend was developed by Horowitz and Lisak who considered Israel as a socio-political structure that may collapse under pressure from hemispheric secondary powers.

Second

During the seventies, a new generation of American-born researches emerged. These focussed on studying the Israeli society with some of them devoting considerable effort to studying the Arabs. This group was free from self commitment to state building. A prominent representative of this group was Ian Lostick. The importance of this group, especially Lostick, emanated from their emphasis on studying the means of surveillance and control that Israel practised to subdue its Arab population. However, Lostick and his colleagues avoided the fundamental question of why Israel should use these means, in other words, they avoided the question of the main contradiction between the Jews and Arabs, which resulted from both struggling with each other for control of the same land.

Meanwhile an important change was noticed in the nature of the studies published by Henry Rosenfield as he started to study the Arab economics in Israel and its position in the class structure. He considered the Arabs of Israel as a national minority suffering from an ethnically and class motivated persecution

at the hand of the Jewish Ashkenazi elite, especially in the field of employment. Although Rosenfield severely criticized the Israeli policy considering it the actual culprit for demeaning the status of the Arab in society and in the political and economic system, he gave little importance to the role of immigration and settlement in causing such a state of affairs. Thus he accepted the Zionist arguments on the right to immigration and creation of a state which he considered as a natural process, although for him the state deserved an amount of criticism.

On the other hand it was clear that Rosenfield ignored the Arabs in his study of the Israeli society, and thus he put himself in the ranks of researchers who excluded the Arabs in their studies.

Third

Since the early eighties there started to appear in the academic circles critical opinions of society and the prevailing theory.

Meanwhile the theoretical analyses that evolved during the previous decade started to take root. These new approaches in research did not manage to budge the functional trend from the position of hegemony it had occupied, although they put it in a state of self-defence.

These approaches were independent of the political centre and contributed considerably to the creation of a new atmosphere of cultural, intellectual and academic dialogue. In the midst of this, new trends appeared which focussed on the situation of Arabs and the oriental Jews in Israel using totally new approaches. Most outstanding of these trends were those manifested in the analyses that focussed on the class structure, struggle, pluralism and the colonial situation.

The emergence of these new approaches resulted in the direction of research towards untrodden paths in describing reality. A prominent renovator was Sami Smoha who rejected the old arguments and focussed instead on the state of pluralism inside Israel using the concept "Sectoral Pluralism" to mean a society divided into groups on the basis of their cultural background, their social organization and the degree of access to the society's basic resources. During the eighties, Smoha started to use the concept of "Conflictual Pluralism". However, this change in the use of the concept did not effect the basic trends of Smoha which can be criticized in three important aspects :

a - That he focussed in his research on studying attitudes through surveys rather than through describing and analyzing situations. Nevertheless he was more forthcoming in his study of real situations.

b - That he excluded from his study the Israeli occupation of 1967 and ignored its impact on Israel and on the situation of Arabs in that country.

c - That his analysis was non-historic for he did not touch upon the historic processes that could explain the situation of the Arab minority in Israel.

In addition to that, in the recent years, Smoha had tended to emphasize that the State had become more open and its policy less stringent towards the Arabs and that this new attitude gave the Arabs a better opportunity to penetrate the political centre and influence it then. In fact, in this he propagated the ideas developed by Ian Lostick in the late eighties. At that time Lostick claimed that the State's openness and leniency towards the Arabs, coupled with the political changes that were affecting their life, would cause the State to change from a Jewish state to a binational State. In fact, the indicators both researchers used were superficial and not substantial. In addition, those claims went at odds with the findings of other researchers, especially Palestinian ones, to which we will come later. It seems that Smoha once again joined the mainstream trend which focussed on the process of urbanization, modernization and gradual absorption into the body of the State. A proof of this change in Smoha's approach was his use of a new term, "Ethnic Democracy" to describe the situation in Israel, which term ignored the reality of the ethnic and national polarization and the balance of forces.

The return of Lostick and Smoha to the ranks of the mainstream trend in the Israeli sociology, for all the important difference, they have with it, once again brought our attention to the fundamental arguments of this trend, which concern the status of Arabs in Israel, and the majority-minority relationship, which continue to prevail in the field of studies.

This trend persisted in its initial versions which were reflected in its depiction of the Arab village and its social structure and its backwardness compared to its Jewish counterpart. These versions had their root in an ideological attitude that ignored the role of politics in shaping the village structure and the level of its development. This politics had sought to reshape the Arab village by confiscating its resources and restricting its chances to develop amid claims that the Arabs reject planning and modernization. Furthermore a policy was drawn to bring families against each other and propagate the claim that the family structure was hostile to development. This policy was harmonized with the efforts to isolate the Arabs (the village) from their surroundings and prohibit them from organizing politically, and as such the village was recreated to become an isolated institution and geographical entity. Hence the insistence of the mainstream researchers to distinguish the Arab village from its developed surrounding and to draw a pattern of all-alike Arab agglomerations. For these researchers, although the village was an organic unit that developed in the process of interaction with its surroundings, it still suffered from the traditional social organization, as represented by the family, which hindered the process of modernization. Hence the claim that the relationship (interaction) with a modern society presents an acute problem of values, although it brings about positive change. That is why it became clear that the problem of modernizing the Arab village can be solved by injecting additional amounts of modernization into them,

otherwise modernization shall have to be adapted to the prevailing local social structure.

What is most striking about this trend and its theories about the Arabs and the Arab village is that certain oriental researchers like Smoha take up a Western guise when they write about the Arab minority. In the latter's view, all Israeli Jews are "Western democrats" compared to the Arab. No less surprising is the insistence of researchers of this trend on using static terms to describe an ever changing reality. The village, for instance, is no longer the traditional village and the Arab minority has gone through fundamental changes in all fields especially political organization, mobilization and creation of representative bodies. For them this had contributed considerably to the openness of the village and to the changing of its structure.

However, the insistence on distinguishing the village and its population using a pack of terms can only be understood in the context of the policy of keeping tight control on the Arab population. Certain radical researchers had, indeed, concluded that this distinction between Arabs and Jews was institutionalized to serve certain political, military and economic aims, and to maintain hegemony and exploitation. With this interpretation, the radical trend in Israeli sociology had taken a step forward beyond the former attitude which considered the distinction as an inevitable outcome of the colonial project.

Fourth

The radical trend in Israeli sociology now represents a leap forward compared to the trend of the eighties. This new trend is represented by a good number of young researchers who have focussed their research efforts on the Arab sector and its integration into the Israeli labour market and economy. It should be admitted that the work of this group represented a qualitative as well as quantitative change in the studies on Arabs. This group tended to describe the situation in a far more objective and honest manner than the mainstream trend. Still, their works have some clear shortcoming especially in assessing the State and Jewish majority's attitude toward the Arabs which in our view originate, in the national struggle. However, a more profound treatment of this issue can be found in research works done by the "radicals" who considered the Israeli case as one of colonization, hence the determining factor in the formation of the Israeli society was the settlement and confrontation with the indigenous population.

This review of the Israeli sociological studies about the situation of the Palestinians in Israel, higlightens the thinking background and the environment in which the Palestinian social research evolved. Some of the Palestinians researchers adopted the general theoretical trend while others rejected it as being part of the Zionist political challenge that had to be confronted. However, this confrontation has been taking place in inequitable conditions as the scientific production conditions in which the Palestinian researchers work resemble those

in which the Palestinian minority in Israel do where the norm is the lack of vital resources in all fields and especially in the field of academic and scientific research.

Part II: The Development Stages of Research Among Palestinians: Conditions and Restraints.

Palestinians in Israel do not have academic institutions or research centres of their own. That is why all Palestinian students, especially of social sciences, have to go to Israeli universities to get their higher degrees, except a few who pursue their higher studies abroad, especially in the United States.

Palestinian students in these universities lack fundamental material resources and face difficult challenges and consequently have to make unusual efforts to satisfy their academic aspirations. In addition, they live severe psychological pressures because of the theoretical and empirical literature which they study which serve as the only source of knowledge they have access to.

These conditions are the main reason for subordination to the prevailing way of thinking in Israeli universities which is based on the Western way of thinking. This thinking is characterized by unique selectionism in the field of studying the situation of the Palestinians in Israel in particular, and Palestinians and Arab people in general. The subordination is furthered by the students' resorting to pragmatic ways to obtain their academic titles and avoidance to enter into heated discussions or confrontations. In addition, Israeli universities enjoy considerable material capabilities and can offer work opportunities for graduates and researchers alike. This factor serves as a source of attraction to many students and academics. For those who want to de research, the alternatives are scarce; so they have either to accept the conditions set forth by research centres or to look for opportunity abroad. The other alternative, i.e. to work in a Palestinian university, is very limited. However, Palestinian universities are generally sought as a final resort, because they are no match to their Israeli counterparts as their academic level is too low to satisfy the aspirations of academics and the work system in them is unsatisfactory, not to mention the material compensation which is too low to meet living needs. Furthermore, these universities do not offer scholarship opportunities or finance research or offer the necessary conditions for research doing, because they lack adequate infrastructure, means of research, scientific platforms, means of publication, dialogue channels and academic traditions. Therefore, you find university employees involved in daily struggle for positions and access to financial sources. Those who do research lose most of their efforts in writing reports to foreign, Arab or local institutions, while genuine academic research is scarce. Friction among academics is not rare in their efforts to gain administrative positions because the two fields are not separated. Serious academics face fierce competition and stumbling blocks from their inferior colleagues. Very often research activities are strongly opposed by

"elite" which monopolize foreign communication channels. These elite include non-active academics who, contending themselves with the titles and the positions they obtained, exercise monopoly over conference and symposia attendance of whatever nature, while they continue to lament the political conditions and the obstacles the occupation creates for scientific research.

In view of this, most of the Palestinian researchers prefer to work for Israeli universities and research centres. These researchers are generally considered to be part of the prevailing sociological trends in the Israeli academic institutions, and they rarely deviate from this trend. The work of these researchers is very often used by the mainstream trend to oppose the radical trend. However, some of these researchers, supported by both moderate and radical researchers, have taken an independent path in theorizing and criticism.

Against this background, social research, especially: sociological one, involved through four main stages: The beginning was in the late sixties with a few Palestinian academics who obtained their Ph.Ds from the United States. These academics deserted research to administrative posts and only occasionally took part in field studies or prepared reports to official institutions. The approach they used was harmonious with the sociological trend in Israel so it was not by accident that their subject matters were confined to family and the traditional social structure of the Arab village.

This trend started to take another direction in the middle of the seventies when a new phase was ushered in with the publication of the works of some researchers who had finished their studies and lived for long times abroad.

An example is Khalil Nakhla who specialized in studying the social structure of the Arab village, although his analyses completely differed, if not contradicted, from the prevailing tendencies. Nakhla was the first researcher to establish a relationship between this structure and the Israeli policy towards the Arab village and population. He continued his research about national identity analyzing the relationship between it, the family and sectarian structure of the village. Afterwards he directed his attention to field work focussing his efforts on developing and enhancing the Arab civil institutions in Israel. This approach was followed by Sami Mari in his research about Arab education in Israel. Since 1978 Mari's work served as the basis for academic research on the Arab minority from a critical point of view.

The publication of Ilya Zrik's book in 1979 could be considered as another step forward in the development of academic research laying the foundation for the subsequent stage, especially at the theoretical level. In Zrik's view in which he challenged the dominant theoretical trends especially in Israel, the state of Arabs in Israel was a state of "internal colonization". Meanwhile the number and quality of research were ever improving. This development coincided with the sociological research in Israel ushering in the third phase, which was characterized by an increasing number of researchers entering the field of research about the Arabs. This phase, starting in the eighties, can be considered

the beginning of the real challenge to the theories promoted by the Israeli researchers through Arab researchers. This phase witnessed political and social renaissance within the Arab minority, thus providing opportunity for committed researchers to be active especially in politics and in producing the knowledge needed to face up to the political authority. At this stage, a great number of researches were published containing fundamental information attesting the discrimination practised against the Arabs and to the fact that the Arabs do not stand against modernization, but rather they were victims to the official policy against them. Most of these publications came out in Hebrew because the daily discussions and political struggle were carried out in this language.

This situation posed difficult challenges to committed researchers for the following reasons :

1- The researchers who obtained their degrees from Israeli universities faced the difficulty of reconciling the desire to obtain the academic title with the theoretical approach to be adopted for analysis and theorizing in the doctorate dissertation, especially when certain approaches are rejected by those supervising the dissertation. Some researchers chose the easy path and joined the prevailing trend in Israeli sociology while others chose medium ways or maneuvered their ways out to their ends.

2- The number of such researchers is very small compared to their Israeli counterparts. Adding difficulty to the challenge is that a number of Arab researchers work in the Israeli institutions thereby enhancing the Israeli attitude, although they sometimes reveal the discrimination against the Arabs.

3- Very often the Arab researcher is not sure what publication language he should choose. English publication would serve to hit two objectives; first, to respond to Israeli arguments at the international level, and second, to guarantee academic promotion. But most researchers lack mastery of this or that foreign language because their university study was conducted in Hebrew. On the other hand, the need to integrate oneself in the academic life of the country and to make oneself heard by the public required that publication be made in Hebrew. In spite of all this, some observers noticed that the number of publications in Arabic were rare although publishing in this language was important for political mobilization.

4- Researchers feel they shoulder a national responsibility and therefore they should directly involve themselves in the political and social activity, at the risk of exposing themselves to the likely accusation of being biassed. On the other hand, their focussing on pure academic research might cause them to be accused of retreating from the political struggle and of isolating themselves from the public.

5- Researchers working outside Israeli institutions, particularly in Palestinian universities, lack the vital means and resources for research, expression and publication opportunities, that is in addition to the obstacles created by the very

backward nature of the system and relationships which cause negative atmosphere to prevail and efforts to be wasted.

In these circumstances the committed researcher is obliged to find the appropriate solutions and to overcome difficulties by his own means. For instance, the lack of references and vital resources has been solved by using the Israeli institutions' libraries. Some researchers even managed to establish links with the foreign and Arab institutions, research centres and publishing houses.

With their own efforts, these researchers managed to bring about a tangible quantitative and qualitative change in the field of research, particularly sociological research. They have made scores of studies in various languages and fought their way towards foreign publications known for their prestige, thus succeeded in gaining recognition in the academic circles including Israeli ones, to the degree that their works became references. Some of them have been publishing in well-known Arab publications with the aim to fill the gap and acquaint the Arab readers with the local realities.

As we said above, this trend started in the middle of the eighties. It gained a strong momentum when a comprehensive project of research about the situation of the Arabs was initiated and financed by an American institution.

The project started in 1986 and continued for 4 years during which twelve researches were made in both English and Hebrew languages. More important is that in the context of this project, eight books were published in English by prestigious houses in America. These researches and books contained considerable information about the situation of Arabs in Israel in fields untrodden before and using analyses that deviated from the conservative trends prevailing in the field. What added special importance to the project was the fact that about half of the studies were made by Arab researchers while in the remaining half Arab researchers served as assistants. This project represented for the Arab researchers a breakthrough in terms of new experience gained, publicity and in terms of overcoming the obstacles in the path towards establishing links with the outside world. This participation on the part of these researches also contributed to refuting the claims that the work done by the Arab researchers and their level of objectivity were below the normal.

Ever since, an increasing number of young researchers became active in the research work. These made use of the experience gained by their predecessors, and the recent knowledge to embark on new fields. A number of young Jewish researchers also joined their ranks, while some of their colleagues specialized in studying the Israeli society started to take into account the Arab population, their situation and even their impact on, and role in, the Israeli society. This resulted in an amalgam of theoretical approaches and a great amount of knowledge and an increase in the number of outlets through which the studies were published.

The increasing quantity and new quality of the researches in the last decade, along with the emergence of credible Arab researchers, were realized in long

and as complicated process as the political and social situation in the country and the region. That situation was so complicated that people in general and researchers in particular had to be very careful in forging their attitudes given the personal, social and political stake involved. It is in the field of sociological research in particular that many factors of contradictory nature, varying strength, and opposed tendencies mingle to leave their tint on the quality of the research, the topics treated and methods pursued.

Right from the beginning, researchers faced the problem of contradiction between the quest for truth and the need to reveal its importance in interpreting and understanding reality on the one hand, and the possibility of the ruling power using this revelation to its own ends on the other. Therefore, any decision to be taken as to the quantity and nature of the facts to be disclosed by the research should be carefully pondered with a view to avoid inflicting damage to society as a result of this revelation. That is why researchers live a constant state of tension resulting from the conflict between their quest for scientific objectivity on the one hand, and commitment to heed the concerns of society and contribute to solving the problems of development without causing damage to individuals or communities, on the other.

The need for researchers to publish the greatest number of researches possible and reveal their "own" truths as opposed to the "truths" established by the Israeli studies. In this respect publishing these truths becomes part of a positive political attitude in spite of its shortcomings and inadequacy of theoretical analysis and interpretation. On the other hand, some of the researchers who persisted in using the prevailing researching patterns and partisan theoretical analyses had fallen into fatal mistakes because they ignored the internal social dynamics, the conflicts and the real active forces in society and focussed instead on the one-dimension analysis which provides that society is static and acts only in reaction to outside forces. This kind of research was not much better than the other Israeli research work although it maintained a different approach.

The above considerations along with the considerations related to the capabilities, infrastructure and policy pursued by Israeli and Palestinian academic institutions alike explain the kind of impact factors and contradictions that define the development course of sociological research in Palestine. To further explain the various dimensions of the experience of sociological research, I have to add the following facts:

First, students and researchers have, in most cases, studied in Israeli institutes and therefore are influenced by the ideas prevalent in these institutes especially insofar as studying the Arab society is concerned. Secondly, these ideas are as diverse as the thinking and theoretical trends adopted by students and researchers. Thirdly, the institutes provided the means, particularly libraries, to acquaint the students with the various and the latest of the thinking trends, approaches and theories.

This situation resulted in a great diversity of topics dealt with in university dissertations and researches with emphasis on certain issues in the education apparatus, the social institutions, the public services, the active social forces, the traditional social structure, the modern institution, and local government institutions. This diversity and concentration of researching on local issues, and on defined domains, and deepness in treating phenomena, add a great deal of knowledge, interpretations and analyses that enrich intellectual and cultural dialogue. However, this phenomenon is not devoid of negative effects for two reasons : first, that some researches are done in unsuitable manner such as when researchers, especially in university dissertations fail to see the theoretical and intellectual repercussions of their works on certain social problems, the interpretations and attitudes they cause to develop within the members of the society subject of research and from the part of the circles responsible for causing and solving these problems; and secondly, that many of these researches study certain phenomena on the presumption that these phenomena are uniquely local with no attempt to link them to the overall situation or interpret them in the general context of society and its position in the political and economic system.

The experience of Palestinian sociologists in Israel was unique and distinguished from the experience of the other concerned parties. It differed from that of their Israeli counterparts in a number of aspects in spite of the daily contact between the two groups:

-The conditions of study and specialization

-Work opportunities and conditions

-The Israeli experience is an extension of an old tradition of orientalism compared to the primitive experience of the Palestinians.

In spite of the difference in experience, there existed very similar conditions effecting the nature, subject matters, and approaches of studies.

This specialization is twin to the ideological political attitudes and, in addition to being part of the encounter and interchange, is an integral part of the political confrontation and struggle. As for similarity, it differs in the following aspect : while the Israeli researcher feels secure and totally free to choose the research topics and approaches and analyses, his Palestinian counterpart lives a constant state of tension resulting from the contradiction between the work conditions and the interests involved on the one hand, and choosing a path of research dictated on him by political attitudes and public interest on the other.

This ever-present factor in the Palestinian experience distinguishes it also from the experience of Arab sociologists, who very often feel secure in choosing the path of serving their societies and public interests without feeling intimidated. On the other hand, the Palestinian researchers did not have the opportunity to compile teaching books or translate the works of the leading sociologists or the history of the theory. This task is monopolized by Israelis since there is no chance of teaching in Arabic.

The experience of Palestinian researchers in Israel was also distinguished from that of their native researchers living in territories occupied in 1967. The latter possess their own institutes and do no live the state of uncertainty since they are totally unconcerned with what takes place on the Israeli side. In addition, their contacts with the Arab world and universities continued uninterrupted. It is important to note that the nature of Palestinian academic institutions and their work conditions were not encouraging to research. Some of the researchers focussed their efforts on compiling school books, while others made sheer political studies and reports on the Israeli practices in the various fields. These studies and reports are far from being considered sociological researches because they did not study the internal social interactions or the ethnic or class structure of the Palestinian society. These studies are overwhelmingly political and mobilizational carried out in favour of certain foreign institutions or certain Palestinian factions. These works, like the artistic and literary works in general, escaped objective criticism, and as such contributed to the general atmosphere of degradation. In these cases teachers and researchers freed themselves from the duty of keeping up with the scientific developments in both theory and approach, and left the school curricula unchanged for many years.

What is worth noting is that team work in the same academic institutions, with a few exceptions, did not lead to creating an atmosphere of cooperation between the Palestinian academics of Israel and their natives in the occupied territories. In fact the atmosphere in these institutions was characterized by conflicts between groups and exclusion of the other. Naturally such an atmosphere could not help research to flourish. Part of this exclusion was the monopoly some Palestinian researchers from the occupied territories and the Diaspora practised on the study of Palestinian society and communities. As a result team work was confined to studying Palestinian heritage and history, which, nevertheless, is a healthy phenomenon proving that Palestinians continue to insist on having a distinctive national identity.

It is generally noticed that the experience of Palestinian researchers in Israel attests to their marginalisation in their relationship to the three parties which influence their scientific work. It is basically a socio-political marginalisation that resulted from the special political conditions.

This marginalisation and the nature of the relationship between the various parties resulted in a clear division of labour, in which Palestinian researchers in Israel concentrated their research work on their own society, and ignored the Israeli society. This tendency was met with disapproval and even condemnation on the part of the Israelis. This reaction could be explained in the context of the domination of the spirit of orientalism and the concomitant feeling of superiority among them. However, it can be explained simply by the lack of interest on the part of Palestinians and Arabs.

In view of this division of labour which was caused by the socio-political conditions, it has become clear that any attempt to study the other society was a kind of "passing" the limits imposed on the Palestinian researchers in Israel.

Part III: Characteristics and Specifics of Social Researching of Palestinian Society

The work of the Palestinian researchers in Israel in the field of studying their society have contributed considerably to the big arsenal of material available on this society which far exceeds what is available about the other communities in the Middle East. This research work has some specific characteristics that can be summed as follows.

Studies about Palestinians in Israel exaggerated the particularity of the Palestinian to such a degree that these studies are bereft of any comparison between the Palestinian and other communities or minorities in the world. It is worth noting that this exaggeration serve the aims of the Israeli researchers who used this particularity as a pretext to absolve themselves and their state from treating the Palestinian minority in the way minorities are treated in the Western countries, although ironically, they consider Israel as a modern Westernized state. This exaggeration resulted in the justification of the degraded economic and social status of the Palestinians and consequently considering the forsaking of their particularity as a condition for improvement.

Some Palestinian researchers rejected this claim of particularity and included in their researches comparisons between the status of the Jewish majority and that of the Palestinian minority. They also rejected the Israeli researched approach of comparing the status of Palestinian to that prevailing in the Arab countries, insisting instead that the comparison be made between communities living with one socio-economic system and are influenced by the same laws and policies.

No doubt this attitude, along with the publication of the said researches, had contributed considerably to the political mobilization, which resulted in significant long term effects.

The comparison with the Jewish majority had statistical character in most of the researches and it acquired special importance in the light of the comparison approach followed by the Israeli researchers, who compared between the present conditions in which the Palestinian live and those which prevailed at the starting point in 1948, using the quantitative development as a proof that the Israeli policy was positive towards the Palestinian minority. Some Palestinian researchers went too far in using the statistical approach at the expense of qualitative analysis.

Some of them even used statistical data in studying subject matters that were unyielding to statistical approach. This improper use of statistics led some researchers to the conclusion that, before 1967, the identity of the Palestinians

in Israel was evolving into Israeli Arab identity. After that year, transformation started to change direction towards the Palestinian national identity.

It is noticeable that the sociological studies conducted by the Palestinian researchers in Israel, contrary to the Israeli studies, emphasized the historical context. For most of Israeli studies, history began in 1948 although in their research about the Israeli society they started from the Jewish immigration to Palestine.

In their studies, Palestinian researchers included historical elements, which, for them, began from the Ottoman reign or at least form the British mandate. Some Israeli researches tended to be so no-historical that they even ignored the 1948-1967 period during which the Israeli state was imposing its military rule on the Arabs. This rule had permanent impact on the development of the Arabs in all fields.

In many of the Israeli researches about the Palestinians, the role of the state and its socio-economic policy in defining the status of the Palestinians was ignored. It is to be noted that this approach stood at adds with their approach in studying the Israeli society, where the role of the State policy in the development of society was emphasized.

On the other hand, Palestinian researchers exaggerated the role of the State, with some of them considering its role as the sole inconstant element that explained all the developments and phenomena, thus ignoring the role of internal dynamics and interactions and the active social forces.

Many of the studies focussed on specific aspects and certain phenomena while others were mere limited ethnographic studies, devoid of any effort to analyse phenomena through the general structural context; In most cases, such studies included generalizations about the status of the Palestinians without consideration to the differentiation and diversification and the various levels and directions of development.

Some Palestinian researchers shouldered the responsibility of confronting the outstanding theoretical trend in Israeli research which sought to explain the reasons of Palestinian backwardness mainly through culture, values, and social structure. The task of Palestinian researchers was complex in that they had to sift through the Israeli researches to reveal the ideological attitudes that stood behind these researches and to prove their theoretical inferiority and then to proceed to conduct original researches on the same subjects using different levels of analysis and as many objective and subjective factors as possible in their interpretations.

Researchers about national identity and political organization used approaches and theoretical analyses that were different from those used in the Israeli studies, except with a few Palestinian researches who used Israeli approaches. Some field researchers used qualitative analysis and went deep into the historical context. These researchers also established relationship between living conditions and political attitudes and analyzed the development

of the Palestinian identity, avoiding the use of terms like "extremism" used by some.

When we carefully study the research work done by the Palestinians in Israel we will find that good part of it is greatly influenced by the Israeli research. This influence can be attributed to the relationship of subordination. Contrarily, some other Palestinian researchers sought to refute the ideas propagated in Israeli researches, by using different theories and approaches. However, in both cases we can notice a high level of academic research effort prompted by the need to challenge the Israeli researchers. Obviously, we can find some other researches of lower level done by researchers who were not concerned with challenging Israeli researchers and were seeking different criteria by which to assess their work.

Part IV: Challengers and Future Prospects

Palestinian researchers in social sciences have in the recent year been confronted with new and more difficult challenges resulting from the rapid changes taking place in the region in general and in Palestine in particular. These changes have been accompanied by new theoretical theses which, given the prevailing political and social conditions, represent a great challenge that cannot be easily overcome.

The past challenges were somewhat easier because of the relative clarity of the situation and the straight forwardness of the presented theses, because Israeli studies, in general, used clear theoretical analyses that could be challenged and whose failure to interpret reality exposed. In their efforts, the Palestinian researchers were able to fulfill two objectives :

- First, they were able to provide alternative information to those found in the Israeli researches and official sources.

- Second, they were able to come out with alternative versions to challenge those presented by orientalists.

The success in achieving the above objectives was due to the adoption of realistic approaches and ideas. Palestinian researchers avoided exaggerated conclusions, vague interpretations, negligence of social particularities, extra-psychological approaches and separating phenomena from their social and historical context. Therefore, at least some of them, were able to come out with interpretations that were honest in reflecting reality as opposed to those interpretations which sought to justify the official policy.

Although at slightly different levels, Palestinian researchers came out with studies to challenge two approaches: first that of the orientalists who overemphasized the similarity between the oriental societies (generalism) and second the partialist approach which depicted society as a heap of elements with no links between each other.

The alternative research developed by some Palestinians included elements such as : common traits, social processes, historical analysis, affirmation of the national identity, communal conflict resulting from the struggle for the same land, the relationship of power and hegemony and its impact on diversity and differentiation and individualism which become prominent in the context of generalism and communal identity. Researching in the field of communal, cultural and political identity and its social effects away form dogmatic attitudes that exaggerate particularity and ultimately lead to hostile attitudes towards development and modernization, was on outstanding trait of some works. A special effort had also been made by some researchers to highlighten change, diversity and development of the individual as being social processes that could not be separated from the development of a clear-cut national and social identity.

As said before, the political changes have produced new situations and phenomena that are very often totally different from the past ones. The tendency for normalization has reflected itself in all domains of life and is effecting social research and researchers. And although the real situation has actually remained the same, the tendency towards studies that seek to prove the "reality" and "naturality" of the situation has taken precedence over the studies which continue to emphasize contradictions and conflicts. The latter studies are now considered biassed and unrealistic not to say extremist. These changes are obliging researchers to look for new terms and concepts to study history and the prevailing situation. It is to be noted that this change actually means ignoring history or at least ignoring its role in interpreting reality.

The new political developments have brought with them new situations and radical changes for the Palestinians in Israel, affecting their behaviour. These new situations are being used by some Israeli and Palestinian researchers concerned with change to prove that their past and present approaches are correct and that the researchers who committed their work to the communal concerns were wrong. Not surprisingly, the said changes left their impression on social research in Israel. However, they were not the sole contribution to the new tendencies in research; other changes in the Israeli society have to be taken into account, which manifested themselves, starting from the eighties, in the emergence of new tendencies and theoretical approaches in research. Also the tendency of some Israeli researchers to embrace emerging elements of renewal and modernization in the social theory and apply them in their studies, has to be taken into account.

These changes and this renewal pose a new and difficult challenge to the Palestinian researchers for two reasons : First, they imply a considerable potential of camouflaging and falsification of the reality by their invitation to "normalize" backwardness and thus preserve the development gap though propagation of "advanced" theoretical interpretations "based on lofty human values that consider the right of the other (the subject matter) as "different" while in reality, they mean "backward". Second, these new tendencies are advocated

by powerful social and political forces and supported by actions aimed at proving their soundness in terms of the analyses and theories they apply. The political elate, especially from the Arab and Palestinian side, find support in these theories in terms of depicting reality with the aim to lead society towards embracing their own choices.

Changes in the Israeli research work can be noticed in three kinds of studies, which although ostensibly different, reflect a unified tendency and end up in the same conclusions :

-The first kind is represented in the historical studies which were conducted and published by a group of historians calling themselves "the new historians". In their studies, these historians focussed on the history of the Zionist-Palestinian conflict where they admitted, through official Israeli documents, the crimes committed against the Palestinians, especially the organized displacement of Palestinians. Also many of these studies contained details about the policies developed and executed by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinian nationals of Israel during the first two decades after the establishment of the Jewish State, such as land confiscation, encroachment on the daily life of the Palestinians, provoking family and sectarian disputes, the education policy for Palestinians etc... Those studies, important as they are in terms of asserting already recognized facts, and being documented by the authorities, are part of the political and cultural normalization effort under way. They present the past as history which can serve solely as a subject for academic research in spite of the fact that this past is still present in the life of people and continue to shape their future. According to this tendency, normalization basically means putting an end to the conflict and the establishment of "normal" relations free from past grudges, with no need to remedy the damages done to the life of individuals and society.

- The second kind of studies theorizes for a new epoch in the history of Zionism and Israel, i.e. the post-Zionist epoch. These studies seek to prove that Israel had evolved from a State inspired by the Zionist ideology and characterized by strong collectivism to a normal State like other Western states. According to these studies, the normality of the State and society is manifested in the dominance of the individual identity and interest over ideology and centre-inspired behaviours.

These studies and their guiding theories stand also aloof from the real situation they study. Israeli has only taken initial steps towards privatization and transformation to a liberal capitalist system and Jewish collectivism continue to dominate society and individual life. These studies imply a new challenge to the Palestinian public in general and researchers in particular because they call for changing the realistic attitudes and human behaviour to match "their" new epoch. Therefore (Palestinian) researchers have to develop new vision with corresponding approaches and analyses that condemn extra-individualism as being an invitation to adopt detached approaches to affect social and economic

action that mock communal work, solidarity, and adherence to communal identity, and replace them with individualism, personal joy and happiness.

The studies of both kinds find some support in the real circumstances the Palestinians have witnessed following the recent political developments which are affecting their cause and the whole region. The recent few years have witnessed rapid changes in the social relations, political organization and activity resulting in the development of new attitudes vis-à-vis integration into the Israeli system, under the same previous terms, in favour of leaving the past behind, although the system continues to insist on using the past's heritage to achieve its aims.

These changes in attitudes and behaviour, though their outreach is yet to be gauged, confronted the Palestinian researchers with the problem of understanding their dimensions. The problem of understanding for some of them lies in continuing to adopt the analyses and theories dominant in the studies of the kinds we mentioned above, which detach past from present and accuse historical analysis of failure to interpret the on-going phenomena. In other words, they separate between the official policies and the Zionist practices during the past five decades on the one hand, and the ongoing developments on the other.

- A third kind of studies is manifested in the new wave of analyses that adopt post-modernity ideas to interpret reality. There has been, in the recent years, a heated discussion about these ideas, their applications and impact, involving both Israeli and Western researchers. And although these ideas are still vague and have not yet evolved into a clear-cut approach, they have been adopted by some researchers in their study and interpretation of the local reality.

This development in the field of studies has special significance for our case in that it poses difficult challenge for the Palestinian researchers, because the post-modernity ideas are a source of strong support to the tendency which emphasizes local particularities and fatalities, the normalcy of environmental differentiation (backwardness), cultural proportionality and the multiple "power-discourse formations. Adding further difficulty to the interpretation of reality is that the post-modernity epoch is characterized by cultural inflow and consumption. This culture is imported and enthusiastically embraced in the form of technological products. This culture is free from political dimensions and serve as a messenger of modernity. It penetrates the non-Western countries in the form of institutions, organization system and life and language patterns. In this way culture may lose its significance as reference point because roots and origins are rendered useless and therefore lose their importance as a symbol of local identity. This contradiction between emphasis on the local particularity and fatality on the one hand, and the globalization of culture on the other can serve to attest to the diversity and even fragmentation, rendering existence inharmonious, incoherent and liable to rapid vanquishing. On the other hand, emphasizing the "local and particular" may lead to seclusion and extra-

fundamentalism to the detriment of progress, rationalism, harmony and predictionalism management.

As we said before, the dissemination of post-modernity ideas and their application in analyzing the local reality of Palestinians in Israel bear special significance particularly when they get adopted by some Palestinian researchers who do not concern themselves with the ensuing results. This adoption may be inevitable in view of the circumstances these researchers live and in view of the failure of many researchers to keep up with the developments in theory or, worse, their failure to grasp the motives behind these theories and the repercussions of applying them.

We are not going to discuss the post-modernity ideas in this place. However, it is clear that these ideas are the product of a very advanced stage of modernity or of a new historical epoch. They are applied in the case of a society which has only taken initial steps towards modernity. Although the post-modernity theories provide the non-Western societies, with the opportunity to change, and provide researchers with the opportunity to study their societies by using societies' local concepts and values, these theories impose themselves on local societies and researchers. Economic, political and intellectual subordination oblige these societies and researchers to emulate and borrow terms, concepts and approaches, under strong influence from the West, ultimately causing the gap to widen between reality and theory. In the case of Palestinians in Israel, they constitute a society under control deprived of the means of self-defence in the face of a cultural offensive that seek to market their culture, and uproot it as a communal heritage. Researchers in this society are not independent and are very often obliged to apply the theories and approaches dictated by the Israeli academic institutions, otherwise they have to adopt the Western approaches as the only alternative available.

In the case under consideration, the full adoption of the post-modernity approach imply theoretical as well as practical risks that can be summed up as follows:

- the application of approaches and analyses that are the products of a very advanced stage of societal development on under-developed societies, threatens to widen the gap between theory and practice and to falsify reality in favour of the stronger party.

- exaggeration of cultural proportionality, as advocated by post-modernity ideas, is likely to lead to accepting the "backward" reality as being "different".

- exaggerated cultural proportionality could legalize the imposition of local norms and rules on the social relations, i.e. abstinence from resorting to international (Western) norms in the application of paramount norms such as human and citizen' rights, democracy, child and women rights.

- the post-modernity ideas find support from the ante-modernity social and political forces which seek to impose local norms and values and cast doubt on the value of development and change which would mean opposing modernity

and leaping over it to the post-modernity epoch in certain fields, while the present social formations and balance of forces are perpetuated.

The outcome of the above will clearly be keeping society in its backward status of weakness, fragmentation, subordination and impotence in the face of forces that dominate it. The other alternative is to forsake the challenge to the detriment of society's coherence, solidarity and communality.

With these challenges, the task of researchers in social science becomes further complicated. The challenge becomes even more difficult to overcome, the more researchers are fragmented and individualists. In view of the difficulty of the challenges, there is an ever increasing need for a formula to guarantee continuing exchange between researchers. There is a need for a thoroughly pondered collective project to provide platforms for exchange and collective efforts are needed to train the new generation of researchers and equip them with the means to start new era of innovation and dialogue away form subordination.