A SERVANT OF SERVANTS: TEACHERS, STUDENTS, AND ETHNIC HIERARCHY IN THE ISRAELI STATE

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ABSTRACT

Title: A Servant of Servants: Teachers, Students, and Ethnic Hierarchy in the Israeli State

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This dissertation investigates how the Israeli state educational system reproduces and transforms the social structure of that country by reinforcing, modifying, and blurring ethnic, class, and gender hierarchies. Specifically, this project examines how the social inequalities of non-Western Jews (Mizraḥim) and Palestinian citizens of Israel are manifested in the educational system and how their educational opportunities can be understood in relation to one another and to Israelis of European descent. These questions are addressed through a comparative historical and ethnographic analysis of the role of teachers and schools in two discrete communities in the South of Israel; a planned community of formerly nomadic Palestinian-Arabs, and a development town settled largely by non-Western Jews. This project uses ethnographic data derived from classroom and community ethnographies to examine the differential delivery and effects of statewide educational curricula, teaching materials and methods, and teacher-student relations.

The role of the school and position of teachers in these communities is very different. In Arab towns teaching is a high status job, and teachers are likely to be active participants in their communities. In the Mizraḥi communities, teachers are marginal actors outside the school, and teaching is often seen as a sign of personal failure. On a national level, educational success is rewarded and gendered differently, and Arab and Jewish teachers have been differentially incorporated into the state bureaucracy. On the local level, community-based hierarchies are reproduced through subject and vocational tracking, which affects the attitudes of students, parents, and teachers towards schools, education and one another.

Using Gramsci's theory of hegemony, I argue that history, economy, and ideology determine the position of teachers and role of education within these communities, and thus determine how schools reproduce social hierarchies. However, the way that schools do so is also determined by local politics and the relationship of community to state. Consequently, although the school, as an institution, is bound to the state, it is also a site of local and national struggle, and thus venue for change.

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INTRODUCTION

> And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.
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> —*King James Bible*, Genesis 9:25

Canaan, the son of Ham, was cursed to eternal bondage for having seen his grandfather Noah's nakedness. Idiosyncratically, I understand the fate of Canaan as the curse of vision. He looked beyond the obvious—past the cover of clothing and obfuscation—and recognized Noah's nakedness. Canaan came to a revelation of the patriarch's weakness and vulnerability. For this he was cursed. Upon the Israelites return from their own bondage in Egypt, the Canaanites, this time the indigenous residents of what would become Israel, are again enslaved to the Hebrews—the Semites, children of Noah's son Shem—as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (Joshua 9:23). Considering the ideological importance of the Hebrew Bible to contemporary Israel it may well appear to be a poor portend, or perhaps overly cynical to begin with such story. Yet, its contradictory nature—in which Canaan, the enemy of Israel, is enslaved for seeing the patriarch's power exposed—is too apt a metaphor to be ignored.

What of the modern Canaanites who do not avert their eyes at the nakedness of the modern patriarch, the weakness and vulnerability of the state? Are they cursed for this? This study examines the relations between communities and state, and, in particular, the community members who are able to step outside bounds and bonds to recognize

their role within the state. Specifically, I look to teachers in the modern State of Israel, wondering if they have the ability to speak truth to power, as Edward Said argues we must (Said 1994). However, unlike the image of Émile Zola shouting "j'accuse", the actions and roles of teachers are curtailed by their positions within the state and community. These limitations are explored in depth in the pages that follow.

Setting the Scene

While recent events in both the United States and Israel have kept the media focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is often forgotten that almost a fifth of Israeli citizens are of Palestinian-Arab origin, existing in the lowest strata of Israeli class structure, facing significant social and economic discrimination. Also forgotten is that nearly half of Israeli Jews are Mizraḥim, of Middle Eastern or North African origin. These two groups, despite their radically different political identities, share similar social and economic circumstances in Israel.

These social divisions are clearly visible within the educational system. They are marked by the religious, linguistic, and geographical segregation of schools as well as by class and ethnicity. In school, Palestinian and Mizraḥi youth are faced with unequal distribution of resources, limited access to quality schooling, inappropriate tracking, and other forms of discrimination. Not surprisingly, this is paralleled by an extremely high rate of school dropout and failure among Palestinian and Mizraḥi youth in Israel, approximately twice that of the dominant European Jews, the Ashkenazim. These

structural limitations are further compounded by ideological barriers and limited rewards for educational success.

Teachers and students are not passive victims, they are usually aware of their situation and the consequences of the choices they make, frequently struggling against what they see as the sources of inequality. Yet, these same teachers and students are the active agents in the application and deployment of the state's educational policies. If this is the case, how then can we say that the schools, teachers, or the educational system are largely tools in the reproduction of social hierarchy? Or alternatively, that the schools, teachers, and educational system are on the front lines of social mobility: helping, modernizing, and liberating resistive students. Is the school nothing more than a stage where actors play-out their scripted roles? Clearly, these arguments are exaggerated, yet the function of school in society is so often seen as monolithic that it is forgotten that it is made up of real people, with conflicting interests.

The notion of hegemony, as outlined by Antonio Gramsci, offers a framework which enables a complex and nuanced reading of the contradictions inherent within education's dual role of gate-keeper and facilitator of social mobility, and as a site where social inequalities are simultaneously reproduced and resisted. Theoretically, this model offers a means to counter a top-down approach that emphasizes policies, ideologies, and structures, and minimizes the roles and activities of participants. It is here that Gramsci's insistence upon the mechanisms and inevitability of resistance and change becomes most meaningful, and differentiates hegemony from other theories of reproduction. Most importantly, it provides a cogent explanation for why some students—or educational

systems, depending upon one's point of view—continue to fail, and how this both reflects and determines the functioning of hierarchy within the state.

Method

This dissertation is the result of a 21-month ethnographic research project that took place from September 1998 to June 2000 in the Northern Negev region of Israel. This research took place in two communities: Gourmetim, a primarily Mizraḥi Development Town, and Al-Aqsām, a planned settlement for Palestinians. In addition, Rimon, a wealthy gated suburb, is used for contrast. All communities are roughly a half-hour drive from Beersheba, a large Jewish city, and regional capital of Southern Israel. Gourmetim and Al-Aqsām have roughly the same population of 30,000, and share remarkably similar levels of poverty, unemployment, and high school dropout, among the highest in Israel. Rimon is pretty much the opposite, with high income, low unemployment, and the lowest level of dropout in Israel.

This research took place in Southern Israel. Throughout this dissertation, I argue that, like Gramsci's division between the North and South of Italy (1995), the South of Israel is in a particular power relationship to the North. Power and capital are primarily located in the North, particularly in the region between Tel Aviv and Haifa. In comparison, the South is poor. Gramsci suggests that the particular modality of power in Italy is determined by the conflict between the industrial North and the agricultural South. The Italian road to revolution can only be traversed when Northern workers and Southern peasants join together to overthrow the alliance between Northern industrialists

and Southern landowners (Gran 1996). The distinctions between Northern and Southern Arabs or Jews in Israel, as well as the different locations and modalities of capital and power, suggest that there is a similar—although less marked—distinction in Israel.

School ethnography is an exploration of local educational practice. In the schools, I observed behavior in the classrooms, hallways, offices, and faculty lounges, as well as during leisure time, attempting to determine what teachers, administrators, and students do and how they interact. All observations were recorded in descriptive field notes. I looked to the classroom as a site where state educational standards, curricula, and goals are applied on a local level. I observed nine classes in each school for two academic years: a tenth, 11th, and 12th grade mathematics, English, and history class. Classes were selected in consultation with teachers and administrators, ensuring that the level, curriculum, and subject remained constant across all schools. In addition, there were a number of classes that I observed in isolation: a 12th grade biology class in Gourmetim, an 11th grade geography class in Al-Aqsām, 10th grade Hebrew literature classes in both Al-Aqsām and Gourmetim, and many others, some of which I taught.

I observed how the same curriculum is differently presented in each school, and how the relationships and expectations between teachers and students vary in different communities. In the classroom, I examined the relationships between teachers and students, noting which students the teacher called upon or volunteered, and how they do so. I noted how the teacher interacts with the students, reacts to various answers, and deals with or ignores misbehavior. I was also conscious of different teaching methods. Lastly, I looked for curricular variation, noting which textbooks are used, which parts of

the daily lesson the teacher emphasizes or ignores, how the teacher uses the textbook. Next to the classroom, the faculty lounge is the location where teachers spend most of their time during school hours. I conducted many informal interviews in the lounge, and observed the interactions and conversations between teachers, pupils, and administrators.

I conducted 48 in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended interviews with students, teachers, and administrators in all schools, in both home and school settings. I completed 20 interviews in each Al-Aqsām and Gourmetim. An additional eight interviews were conducted with teachers at Rimon. Interviews were conducted in Colloquial Palestinian Arabic, Hebrew, or English, depending upon the subject's preference. The following subjects were broached in the interviews: 1) Perceived reasons for failure or success in school, particularly who, or what is responsible; 2) Satisfaction with school, particularly with student-teacher or teacher-administrator interaction, texts, curriculum and programs of study; 3) Specific goals and problems of education for the subject's ethnic group, class, and gender; 4) Perceived similarities, differences, and shared problems in education between ethnic groups and genders; 5) Family's history of and opinions on education; 6) Relations between teachers, students, administrators, and community; and 7) Potential for employment or future study.

Informal events around the school, or involving schoolteachers, administrators, or students were ideal opportunities for casual or spontaneous interviews. This took place during visits to homes, local coffee shops, youth clubs, and parties. In these settings, the formality of the school was dispensed with, and more candid conversations took place. These conversations far from the school allowed for more realistic, and critical

perspectives on problems in the school, and other related difficulties. I held a weekly, Thursday night open house for teachers in my Beersheba apartment, with dinner and drinks provided in exchange for conversation, which would usually involve discussions of education as well as local and national politics.

In addition to these weekly events I lived in Al-Aqsām for five summers between 1991 and 1997, teaching English in the local schools or summer camps. During my research I lived with two Arab teachers from Al-Aqsām, and later a Jewish teacher from Gourmetim. Not unlike the traditional village ethnographer, I found that my social life had become research. I went everywhere with my little red and green notebooks, asking questions at opportune moments. My village, however, was not defined geographically, but rather, as Lave and Wenger suggest, as part of a community of practice (Wenger 1998), wherein education and the school were the defining boundaries.

Organization

This dissertation is organized in two sections. Section I (chapters 1 and 2) outlines the theoretical and historical background necessary for the ethnographic data of section II (chapters 3–5). Chapter 1, "Education, Reproduction and the State" introduces the central theoretical themes of this dissertation. I oppose two key approaches to the function of education within society, examining the work of Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, and S. N. Eisenstadt, who see education through the lenses of modernization and socialization. However, writers as diverse as Michel Foucault, Bowles and Gintis, and Shlomo Swirski argue that education must be seen in light of social reproduction. I propose an alternative

vision of the school and education in the writings of Antonio Gramsci. In particular, I suggest that Gramsci's state-based notion of hegemony provides a rich and nuanced theory of education.

Chapter 2, "Education and Ascendancy" outlines the history of Palestine and Israel through education. This historical analysis attempts to show how the structure of society in Palestine, and later Israel, formed the school in its image. I note that the "rupture of 1948", Israeli independence and the Palestinian catastrophe, brought about very few changes in either educational structure or performance. In its place, I suggest that the real rupture—the creation of the state and the imposition of capitalism—occurred in the early 20th century, during the last years of the Ottoman Empire and through the British Mandate. It was during this period that the structure of the educational system was formed.

My ethnographic data is fleshed-out in the second section. Chapter 3, "Communities of Learning: Tracking and Hierarchy in School", describes the communities where I conducted research, providing historic, economic, and social background. I do so by examining subject tracking in these different schools. In Gourmetim, I examine how a new "excellence" track was established as a direct result of conflict internal to the community, and how the origin of the students reflects this. In Al-Aqsām I argue that the preexisting tracking system reflects social and economic hierarchy. In both cases, the structure of the educational system demonstrates how social hierarchies are reflected, resisted, and reproduced.

Chapter 4, "Teachers as Intellectuals, Intellectuals as Teachers" explores the personas and roles of teachers, and attitudes of teachers towards students and communities. I argue that it is possible, and at times likely, for Palestinian teachers and former teachers in Israel to function, in Gramsci's terms, as organic intellectuals. That is, they are able to become central figures within their communities, speaking for and to that community, making sense out of its place in the state. On the other hand, it is much more difficult for Jews, both Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim, as teachers to remain tied to their community. The reasons for this are to be found within the historical development of Israeli education, and the current political-economic structure of the Israeli State.

Chapter 5, "After the Ethnic Gap: Class and Gender in School", looks at different aspects of teacher-student relations. I examine variations in school discipline and different attitudes towards the role of teachers within a community, and suggest that different economic rewards for educational success structures student reaction to the school. Lastly, I suggest that the success of women in schools and the so-called feminization of teaching have gendered educational success, which has a very strong affect upon the way that both men and women view education and the school.

Finally, in "Conclusion: Resistance, Hegemony, and Education" I re-examine the applicability and use of Gramsci's formulations and theories of the state, hegemony, and intellectuals in a place and time very different from what he knew and described.

CHAPTER 1

EDUCATION, REPRODUCTION AND THE STATE

> It is scarcely possible to calculate the benefits which we might derive from diffusion of European civilization among the vast population of the East. It would be... far better for us that the people of India were well governed and independent of us, then ill governed and subject to us; that they were ruled by their own kings, but wearing our broadcloth, and working with our cutlery, then that they were performing their salams to English Collectors and English magistrates, but were too ignorant to value, or to poor to buy, English manufactures. To trade with civilised men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages.
>
> —Thomas B. Macaulay, *Minute on Education*

In his much-maligned essays and lectures on Indian education, Macaulay suggests that for both the British Empire and subject Indians, an educated customer is a better customer. He reasons that an educated Indian would naturally prefer English broadcloth and cutlery to Indian homespun and hands. His logic is based upon the efficacy of a good education; disregarding the raw material, a proper English education can impress middle-class tastes on almost anyone.

Even in the metropole, correct education can turn the "local color" into respectable citizens. Any variation of the Pygmalion myth,[1] whether by Shaw (2001), or the musical adaptation *My Fair Lady* (Cukor 1964), demonstrates that anyone can be made into the image of the bourgeoisie, with the proper education. The transformation of Galatea in *Pygmalion* and *My Fair Lady* from cockney flower girl to Hungarian princess is at the hands of a new Pygmalion, a "phonetician".

> You see this creature with her kerbstone English: the English that will keep her in the gutter to the end of her days. Well, sir, in three months I could pass that girl off as a duchess at an ambassador's garden party. I could even get her a place as lady's maid or shop assistant, which requires better English. (Shaw 2001)

Similarly, Audrey Hepburn's unseen conversion in the film *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Edwards 1961), from the egg-stealing wild-child Lulamae to debonair Holly Golightly is, at root, French lessons. Education tames the savage heart? It would appear so. As the unlikely combination of Macaulay and Audrey Hepburn suggests, education of either a colonized or working-class savage has its benefits.

Yet, it seems to me, that such expectations of education are bound to fail, or perhaps are designed to do so. After all, it is one thing to have savages clamoring to buy broadcloth or silver, it is quite another having them all move to London or New York. Our hope in education is disappointed because we believe our educational system to be a "bootstrap", to pull us up, and have failed to acknowledge its limitations. We cannot, in good faith, expect schools to provide an effective counterbalance to the hierarchical effects of capitalism. Nor can we reasonably expect that our education system will enable us to remove the stains of colonialism or racism from our hands, nor the ancient stratifications of gender from our minds. Yet, we continue to believe in the power of education, producing films and books based loosely upon the myth of Pygmalion.

Theories of Reproduction

There are hundreds of explanations for how and why some children fail or dropout of school more frequently than others. These explanations run the gamut from the genetic

absolutism of the lower and upper ends of *The Bell Curve* (Herrnstein and Murray 1994) to the class determinism of *Schooling in Capitalist America* (Bowles and Gintis 1976). However, the vast majority of these can be distilled to two models, education-as-reproduction and education-as-socialization. Eliza Doolittle, our modern Galatea, demonstrates that education can be the road to socialization, towards upward mobility and modernization. At the same time, as many contemporary studies of education show, education is also a key to understanding social reproduction, towards understanding how the school functions to ensure that "working class kids get working class jobs" (Willis 1977). I suggest neither model offers a reasonable or applicable model for understanding the complex relationship between education and the state.

I will examine two examples of these contemporary theories—modernization theory and political economy. Both are what a post-modernist might call grand theories; their lineages and orthodoxies can be traced back to 19th century writers. I will show how each fits into my rough division of education-as-reproduction and education-as-socialization, and how very often the practitioners fail to reach their goals for the same reason; the school and consequently education are presented as a monolithic structure, with definable goals and purposes. This is hardly the case. The fault lies in the adoption of a simplistic view of the state.

I represent each of these approaches through the work of both theorists and practitioners. For modernization theory I begin with Emile Durkheim, and then explore the work of Talcott Parsons, and his Israeli advocate S. N. Eisenstadt. After a brief interlude with post-structuralism, I outline the state-based political economy of Antonio

Gramsci, who offers the most fitting theoretical structure for understanding the role of the school in social reproduction.

Pygmalion and Modernization: Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons

The roots of modernization theory can be located in the work of Emile Durkheim. His writings on education are condensed in two scant volumes, which are transcriptions from lectures (1956; 1961). Durkheim suggests that the role of education is not to perfect a child, but rather to fit that child into society, molding the child's mental, physical, and emotional attributes for the good of society, not the individual.

> Education is the influence exercised by adult generations on those that are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to arouse and to develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual and moral states which are demanded of him by both the political society as a whole and the special milieu for which he is specifically destined. (Durkheim 1956:71)

Education strengthens commonalities between citizens and reinforces dominant ideologies. It also serves to reproduce the division of labor, and thus the class system.

> Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child, from the beginning, the essential similarities that collective life demands. But on the other hand, without a certain diversity all co-operation would be impossible; education assures the persistence of this necessary diversity by being itself diversified and specialized. (1956:70-71)

Thus, for Durkheim, education is socialization. The school functions to insure that social norms are learned and internalized by young citizens. Students who fail to do so are unable to become full members of society.

Talcott Parsons's work in education expands Durkheim's project of socialization. Parsons had a long and highly productive career, and it would be an impossible

digression to detail even a modest portion of his work here. Consequently, I will only address only those of direct relevance to education and social reproduction.[2] In order to understand the role of education and socialization in society, it is necessary to explain Parsons's theory of social stratification. Parsons suggests six "differential valuations" by which humans are ranked: kinship, personal qualities, achievement, possessions, authority, and power (Parsons 1940:848-849).[3] "The status of any given individual in the system of stratification in a society may be regarded as a resultant of the common valuations underlying the attribution of status to him in each of these six respects" (1940:849). In "modern" societies certain forms of stratification pose a danger to the universal application of these valuations and thus to the well being of society.[4] Parsons saw the valuation of kinship as an anathema to the modernization of America. "Birth cannot be a primary criterion, [but rather,] the main criteria of class status are to be found in the occupation achievements of men" (1940:856).

> In order for a system of 'generalized universalistic norms'… to develop, the kinship system must become separated from the economy and the polity in order for social stratification and legitimation to be 'liberated' from ascriptive and particular values of blood-relationship. (Turner 1993:3)

In the classroom the ascriptive valuations of family are stripped from the child; "the old familial identification is broken up… and a new identification is gradually built up, providing the first-order structure of the child's identity apart from his originally ascribed identity as son or daughter of the 'Joneses'" (Parsons 1959:310). This new identification is primarily the function of achievement.

> [The child's] personal status is inevitably a direct function of the position he achieves, primarily in the formal school class and secondarily in the

> informal peer group structure… To an important degree this process of differentiation [between children] is independent of the socio-economic status of his family in the community, which to the child is a prior ascribed status. (1959:310)

The school serves as an instrument of modernization, removing the primal valuation of kinship, and replacing it with achievement. In addition, the classroom and school serve as

> (1) an emancipation of the child from primary emotional attachment to his family, (2) an internalization of a level of societal values and norms that is a step higher than those he can learn in his family alone, (3) a differentiation of the school class in terms both of actual achievement and of differential valuation of *achievement*, and (4) from society's point of view, a selection and allocation of its human resources relative to the adult role system. (1959:309)

The school class is then the primary agent of modernization and socialization, and "functions to allocate… human resources within the role-structure of the adult society" (1959:297), as "an agency which differentiates the school class broadly along a single continuum of achievement" (1959:304).

Is Parsons suggesting that classroom performance is based solely upon cognitive and social merit (Parsons 1959:304), and that the only real handicap faced by American students is that of cognitive capacity? Parsons clearly states that the child's achievements in the classroom are "independent of the socio-economic status of his family" (1959:310). However, he also, albeit in a footnote, suggests that class or status does make a slight difference, and may "protect the high status boy who has difficulty 'making the grade'" (1959:300, n. 3). So what are we to make of this? Clearly, the classroom, and by extension the school are the modernizing forces which socialize children. The children, who fail to be socialized due to their cognitive or moral failures, fail to be modernized, and thus fail to achieve universal citizenship.

Modernization in Israel

A complex and nuanced application of modernization theory in Israel can be seen in the work of S. N. Eisenstadt, the founder of Israeli sociology,[5] and student of Talcott Parsons. Eisenstadt seeks to explain why the Jews who had originated from the Middle East and North Africa are not as successful as their European or Ashkenazi brethren, updating and applying his Parsonian theory of acculturation and modernization in light of the developing events in Israel, and the continuing "failure" of the Mizraḥim in school and society. Eisenstadt argues that Israeli society is undergoing a "revolution" of modernization. However, this miracle of modernization is not all encompassing, and the Mizraḥi Jewish immigrants were found to be less than willing to participate.

Eisenstadt suggests that the initial circumstances of immigration determine the conditions and processes of absorption into the new society.[6] These factors come to determine not only "the immigrant's motives for migration" but also the immigrant's "image of the new country".

> [This is] of crucial importance for understanding his initial attitudes and behavior in his new setting. It is this initial motivation that constitutes the new first stage of the process of social change inherent in any migration and in the absorption of the immigrants, and this first stage largely influences the subsequent stages inasmuch as it decides the immigrant's orientation and degree of readiness to accept change. (Eisenstadt 1954:4)

The varying levels of integration, acceptance and success of the historical waves of immigration, *aliyot*[7], are determined by the immigrant's distance from the ideological mainstream, and consequently from Zionism. This ultimately determines the immigrant's ability to be integrated into the new society. Thus, the immigrants from the Middle East

and North Africa, who are on the periphery of Israel society (Ram 1995:32), are unable to adapt to the new conditions in Israel.

> The Oriental Jews did not become fully integrated or institutionally dispersed and the process of their absorption was not smooth. It seems therefore that the reason for this should be sought in their specific social characteristics, their motives for immigration, and the degree of their disposition to change their social and cultural behavior. (Eisenstadt 1954:92)

These immigrants failed to become Israelified, or modernized because of their social structure, their reasons for immigration, and their unwillingness to change.

Expanding on this failure to modernize, Eisenstadt argues that the "traditional patterns" or structure of culture had not been eliminated, and the Mizraḥi immigrants were unable to accept "different roles in the new society." (Eisenstadt 1967:52). Consequently, they fell into "basic participation" (1967:51), and were forced into the working classes. Their very low level of education, in comparison to the Ashkenazim, played a major role in their proletarianization. A "continuous relation between low-educational level and equally low-occupational level developed, initiated and accentuated by the 'culture conflict' in which the oriental Jews found themselves" (1967:235). Consequently, the immigrants' rejection of the values of the new society made it impossible for them to become fully integrated, and their low educational levels drove them into the working class.

The Other Side of Modernization

> [Eisenstadt] did not consider [the result of] the imposition of an alien economic and social leadership with the ability to dominate the community completely because of a well-developed and well-funded

> organization, without any consideration whatever for the community's special social, spiritual and economic needs. (Eliachar 1983:179)

The modernization theorists—represented here by Durkheim, Parsons, and Eisenstadt—see education as socialization. Education and the school are the means by which individuals are integrated to society. School failure is the result of the rejection of the ideological norms of society, and students who fail do so because they have rejected these values. There is, however, no discussion of how these norms or values came to be dominant. Consequently there is no conception of power beyond the abstraction of society, and the state is nothing more than the political representation of society. In short, the function of the school as a tool of socialization is both monolithic and singular, with no allowances or explanations for individual agency, or state power.

There are others who dispute this, arguing that education is a keystone to social reproduction, and that the school is a mechanism by which certain groups are excluded from society, and forced to the bottom rung of hierarchy. These reproduction theorists have, in a way, turned modernization on its head. This is perhaps seen most clearly in a comparison between modernization and post-structuralism.

There is a particular resonance between Durkheim and the French post-structural thinker Michel Foucault in regards to the school; "each thinker's strength is the other's weakness: where the one has the greater vision, the other is blind" (Cladis 1999:4). Both Foucault and Durkheim argue that the school is hardly for the good of the child but for the benefit of society. However, while Durkheim feels that the individual benefits from her incorporation into society, for Foucault the individual is stifled and repressed by socialization, with her persona ultimately destroyed by society. "What Durkheim

celebrates, namely social bonds, Foucault dreads. Durkheim investigates and champions normative social constraints, whereas Foucault investigates and finds them intrinsically problematic" (1999:6). The difference between Foucault and Durkheim may be seen in their very different uses of the concept of 'modern'. For Durkheim and structural-functionalists such as Parsons and Eisenstadt "modernization" was based upon teleological notions of progress, implying a move towards a favorable future. Foucault's discourse of "modernity", however, is a formulation that takes many local forms, and seeks to uncover the historical and structural processes by which the individual is conceived and controlled.

Thus Foucault turns Durkheim on his head, suggesting that the mechanisms that Durkheim sees as creating freedom and happiness are in fact gears in the machinery of domination and repression. Mark Olssen, in a reading of Foucault's later works, suggests that the goal of education is to program and naturalize the act of self-knowledge, and consequently the self-regulation that incorporates the individual into modern society (Olssen 1999). However, whether the final results of education and other forms of social reproduction benefit or harm the individual belies the point that both Durkheim and Foucault believe that the institutes of education—teachers, administration, and staff—are in the service of society, and for all intents and purposes enslaved to it.

A similar point can be made about Jones and Williamson's Foucauldian "genealogy" of English education. They argue that bourgeois concern over the morality of the working classes "made it possible for popular education to be formulated as a necessity" in the mid–19th century (Jones and Williamson 1979:62).

> The need for popular instruction in this period is a need for a multi-valent tactic: in relation to the problem of preventing crime, to that of securing the authority of government, religion and the law, and in relation to the problem of reducing the poor rate while improving the welfare of the Poor. (1979:71)

However, by the end of the century the school was no longer only a moralizing force but also prepared students for a life within institutions. Consequently, the bourgeoisie used the mechanism and institution of education to control the working classes through the imposition of a moral order, reinforcing and reproducing the social hierarchy. Again, the school's purpose is to serve society.

In their seminal Marxist analysis of *Schooling in Capitalist America*, Bowles and Gintis suggest that the "educational system helps integrate youth into the economic system… through a structural correspondence between its social relations and those of production" (Bowles and Gintis 1976:131). It does so "By attuning young people to a set of social relationships [which replicate the hierarchical division of labor], similar to those of the workplace" (1976:131). Thus, for Bowles and Gintis vocational tracking serves as a means by which the class-based division of labor is reproduced, insuring that the working classes remain working.

Like Jones and Williamson, Bowles and Gintis argue for a correspondence theory, in which the school is a training grounds for the factory, or other such institutions, establishing an equation in which school is to student as factory is to worker, and more importantly, teacher is to student as capitalist is to worker. The work of Paul Willis (1977) reflects this same image of the classroom and school, where the struggles of working-class students against the authority of the teacher parallels their parents'

struggles against capitalist exploitation. However, as I will show, the simplistic analogy between struggles for student autonomy in working-class schools and class-based struggles in the work place is unacceptable.

Teachers frequently come from the same class and ethnic background as the students in the community in which they teach. How then do we envision the teacher as the oppressor? Frequently, these teachers have children studying in the very school they teach, is it not in the interest of the teachers to educate, not reproduce? Or perhaps it is, as Louis Althusser suggests, a false consciousness; "little do [teachers] suspect it that their own devotion contributes to the maintenance and nourishment of this ideological representation" (Althusser 1971:157). Of course, the alternative to this, where selfless teachers struggle to modernize and lift their semi-barbaric students from the shadow of ignorance is equally absurd. It is necessary then to find another road, one in which the role of the school within society is neither reproduction or socialization, but rather reflects the fact that the school, as an institution, is located within both state and community, and thus subject to their political, historical, and economic dynamics. I believe that this can be found in the writings of Antonio Gramsci.[8]

An Alternative Road: Gramsci and Education

> Every relation of hegemony is necessarily a pedagogical relationship and is verified not only within a nation among diverse forces which compose it, but within the international and world field, and the complexities of national and continental civilization. (Gramsci, "Filosofia di B. Croce")[9]

Education, in the broadest sense of the word, is of utmost importance to Gramsci. The workers' revolution, undeniably Gramsci's most important goal, could not be achieved

without the leadership of intellectuals. Consequently, it was necessary to create a new stratum of intellectuals who were organically linked, or autochthonous to the working classes. Thus, by creating and forming these intellectuals, schooling would play a crucial role in the formation of a new revolutionary class, the "historic bloc" that would usher Italy into a new era.

However, there are serious inconsistencies in Gramsci's commentary on education. His writings on childhood schooling, particularly those found in the *Prison Notebooks*, are notoriously vague and contradictory. Like the shifting relationship between civil and political society found throughout Gramsci's writings, and different uses and meaning applied to hegemony, the contradictions are apparent (Anderson 1976),[10] Gramsci nevertheless offers the researcher far more than just a unique set of tools and methodology. A coherent and singular theory of education emerges throughout Gramsci's corpus. This is enabled by the centrality of the state and the notion of hegemony, providing the means by which ideology and economy, structure and agency, as well as persuasion and coercion are rendered not as irreconcilable oppositions, but rather synchronized gears, without which the machinery of the state comes to a grinding halt.

Gramsci suggests that the modern state can be viewed from two different vantage points, called "societies". From the vantage point of political society, one sees the functions of the coercive forces, such as the police and the army, which control the actions of citizens through force of law and economy. From the vantage point of civil society, we see that citizens are persuaded by dominant ideologies to behave correctly,

morally, or properly. In a quote describing the role of intellectuals within the state, Gramsci notes that there are,

> two major superstructural "levels": the one that can be called "civil society", that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called "private", and that of "political society" or "the State". These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of "hegemony" which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of "direct domination" or command exercised through the state and "juridical government". (Gramsci 1971:12)

Thus, the modern state is the amalgam of these "super-structural levels", political and civil society, which exist, inseparable and irreducible, within the function and structure of the state.[11]

Hegemony is not the complete domination of one group or class over another, but rather the partial and impermanent control of the state by a "historic bloc" or an alliance of social groups. Control over the state is never assured, and ruling classes constantly jockey back and forth, including and excluding different groups within their ruling alliance. Thus, the struggle for domination is not a war of individuals, but rather, the struggle for control over the state is a war of alliances.[12] Hegemony in civil society is composed of competing *Weltanschauungen* or worldviews (Salamini 1981:7), in which differences in morality, ideology, and even common-sense reflect social differences.

Competition for control over the state must take place within both the political and civil realms. Coercion and brute force is never enough; the rulers must also persuade the ruled not to rise up against them. It is here, in the centrality of ideology and culture, where Gramsci differs from almost all of his contemporary Marxists. He does not see ideology, as Althusser does, as an epiphenomenon of the economic base, or as a false

consciousness.[13] Rather, for Gramsci the role of ideology and culture in directing the course of history is a legitimate and important force of change, and is neither eclipsed nor enslaved by the economy. Consequently, the role of those intellectuals who shape culture is as essential as politicians, industrialists, and revolutionaries, and statecraft involves not only establishing borders and consulates, but also creating and reforming culture. Gramsci suggested that without radically new modes of thinking and complete cultural change no revolution could succeed or survive—this is the task of the intellectuals and education.

What role then does the school play in social reproduction? For Gramsci, schools provide students and children with the skills for becoming citizens, and serve as a training ground for intellectuals. The only way that the subaltern classes can challenge the dominant and seize the state is if they have intellectual leadership; this is, according to Gramsci, the role of the school. "If our aim is to produce a new stratum of intellectuals, including those capable of the highest degree of specialisation, from a social group which has not traditionally developed the appropriate attitudes, then we have unprecedented difficulties to overcome" (Gramsci 1971:43). These "unprecedented difficulties" are the struggle against folklore, attitudes, and learned behaviors. It is in this struggle that the importance of schooling becomes clear. However, my purpose is not to outline Gramsci's road to revolution, but rather to suggest ways in which education serves to prevent social change and revolution (Eley 1984:459). Consequently, it is necessary to examine not the means of struggle, which was Gramsci's central interest, but rather the mechanisms against which the struggle takes place.

Gramsci's writings on education in the *Prison Notebooks* are a reaction to the Casati Act, the Fascist educational reform of 1923, which established two parallel school systems: "the vocational school for the instrumental classes, [and] the classical school for the dominant classes and the [traditional] intellectuals" (Gramsci 2002:71). Rejecting these reforms, Gramsci calls for "a common school of general, humanistic, formative culture that properly balances the development of the capacity for working manually (technically, industrially) with the development of the capacities for intellectual work" (2002:72). Gramsci objected that in vocational schools, the "student's destiny and future activity are predetermined" (2002:72). He also argued that the new schools neither treated work as an "educational principle" (2002:76), nor involved the "interior development of personality" (2002:78). The new school system was, by its very nature, anti-democratic.

> The multiplication of types of vocational school, then, tends to perpetuate traditional distinctions; but since it also tends to give rise to new stratifications within these distinctions, it gives the impression of aiming for democracy. Take, for example, the unskilled laborer and the skilled worker, or the peasant and the surveyor, or the petty agronomist, etc. But the trend toward democracy, in essence, cannot mean merely that an unskilled laborer can become a skilled worker, but rather that every "citizen" can acquire the ability to "govern" and that society places him, even if only "abstractly," in general conditions to make this possible. (Gramsci 2002:80)

In reaction to the new vocational schools of the Casati Act, Gramsci recommends a return to the abstract classical education of pre-Fascist Italy. This apparently conservative response has been very hard for many sympathetic commentators to reconcile with his Marxism.

Attempting to explain this to their readership, Hoare and Smith, the editors and translators of *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* suggest, "The apparently 'conservative' eulogy of the old curriculum in fact often represents a device which allowed Gramsci to circumvent the prison censor, by disguising the future (ideal system) as the past in order to criticize the present" (1971:24). Harold Entwistle, however, examining Gramsci's letters to his family from his Turin prison, suggests that his "prescriptions for the upbringing of children", particularly his own children, "are, indeed, conservative and it would be odd of the entire thrust and substance of his discussion of educational principles had been completely misleading and unreliable hints of his own preferences" (Entwistle 1979:20). Thus, "it is not clear that Gramsci's defense of historical institutions was a disguise for advocacy of new, radical educational content and practices" (1979:20).

Entwistle argues that "it was in denying access to the traditional curriculum of secondary school to the poor, that Gramsci judged existing educational arrangement to be supportive of the hegemonic *status quo*" (Entwistle 1979:110). This is backed up, very clearly, by Gramsci's own words.

> The traditional school was oligarchic because it was intended for the children of the ruling groups who were themselves destined to rule; but it was not its mode of teaching that made it oligarchic. It is not its students' acquisition of leadership skills, nor its propensity to form superior individuals that gives a particular school its social character. The social character of the school is determined by the fact that every social group has its own type of school designed to perpetuate the specific traditional function—ruling or subordinate—of the given social stratum. In order to break this pattern, then, one must not multiply and classify vocational types of school but rather create a unified type of preparatory (elementary-secondary) school that would guide the youngster to the threshold of choosing a career and, in the process, form him as a person capable of

> thinking, studying, and ruling—or controlling those who rule. (Gramsci 2002:80; see also Entwistle 1979:92-93)

Gramsci therefore appears to be an educational conservative, embracing the traditional or classical school with its abstract humanistic education.

However, Entwistle's work on Gramsci and education is, as Geoff Eley writes, "gratuitously hitched to an ultimately misplace polemic against 'current neo-Marxist educational theory'" marred by Entwistle's attempt to turn Michael Young[14] into a straw man (Eley 1984:458-459). Entwistle suggests that Young's project, "rejecting the assumption of any superiority of educational or 'academic' knowledge over the everyday commonsense knowledge" is misguided, and wrongly turns Gramsci into a relativist (Entwistle 1979:30). This is evident when Gramsci notes that the teacher must remain

> aware of the differences between the type of culture and society that [the teacher] represents and the type of society and culture represented by the students, and that [the teacher] is aware of his duty to accelerate and control the child's formation in keeping with the struggle of the superior type of culture and society against the inferior one. (Gramsci 2002:77)[15]

Thus there are two Gramscis; one who suggests that the "society and culture represented by the students [is] inferior" (2002:77) and another who argues that "all men are intellectuals" (1971:9).

While Gramsci felt that a folkloric understanding of the world had little place in school, he did not suggest that common sense was necessarily a false consciousness. One indication of this is Louis Marks's description of Gramsci's mockery of a university lecturer who had come to the offices the socialist magazine *Ordine Nuovo* to offer his services as a teacher for the workers. Gramsci asked the lecturer:

> who do you think is more qualified to be classed as an intellectual: a lecturer, or even a professor, who has stored up a certain number of more

> or less disconnected notions and ideas, who knows nothing except his own job; or a worker, even one who is not very cultured, but who has a clear idea of what the progress and future of the world should be and who coherently organizes and co-ordinates those modest and elementary notions he has been able to acquire around this idea? (Bernstein 1984:97)

Gramsci "saw that folklore, for example, was a reflection 'of the life conditions of the people'" (Bernstein 1984:93).

> Every individual, ultimately, carries on some form of intellectual activity; that is, he is a "philosopher," an artist, a man of taste, he shares a conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it—that is, he helps generate new ways of thinking. (Gramsci 2002:82)

Thus, Entwistle's suggestion that the "culture" of a professional philosopher is superior to that of a worker or peasant is as divergent from Gramsci's writing as Young's assertion of relativism.

As Bernstein points out, if a professional philosopher "thinks with greater logical rigor, with greater coherence, with a greater sense of system… this could lead to the conclusion that all people were capable of becoming more rigorous thinkers" through education (Bernstein 1984:98). At the same time, "if dialect and folklore had an integrity of their own, they nevertheless were obstacles to the establishment of a national culture, a goal Gramsci considered desirable" (1984:93). Gramsci's definitive goal, more important than any step on the way, was the worker's revolution.

Gramsci's criticism of the Fascist educational reforms and his apparently conservative support for the old school must be understood in the context of the Fascist seizure and consolidation of power. "The fascist alliance between the northern industrialists and the southern landowners exploited the divisions within Italian society and languages. Ideologically, this fascist alliance required the non-existence of an

effective Italian normative grammar" (Ives 1997:98). Gramsci saw in the Fascist education reforms a "strategy by which a normative grammar could retain its hegemony [keeping the] rules and mechanisms [of the normative grammar] relatively unknown outside the dominant class" (1997:99). In other words,

> the absence of instruction in Italian grammar in the fascist school curricula in the Education Act of 1923 [would] condemn a great number of working-class and peasant children to illiteracy and deny them access to the structures of power. (1997:99)

Gramsci's attack on the reforms was hardly conservative, but rather was directly concerned with the ability of the schools to teach literacy. Entwistle fails to place Gramsci's writings on education within the context of Fascist educational and linguistic policies. Because working-class and peasant children do not speak the normative or dominant form of Italian at home, it is only through the acquisition of grammar that they will be able to achieve both proficiency and literacy in standard Italian. This is of great importance, without a lingua franca, a common language for all Italians, the Italian road to revolution, the alliance of Northern workers and Southern peasants, is impassible.

Gramsci's approach to education was based upon the equality of educational and career opportunity, and the education and clarification of young minds. This is hardly an apolitical task. The institutions of education, no matter for children or adults, are both hegemonic and political, and are consequently tools for both liberation and repression. The error of Entwistle's thesis of a conservative Gramsci is that his writings on education are taken largely in isolation from his other writings. While Entwistle has combed all of Gramsci's work for references to education, he appears to have left out the very structure of Gramsci's theory of the state, which makes up the bulk of Gramsci's writings.

In the U.S., Michael Apple has been the most vocal proponent of Gramsci in educational studies. Apple's work on curricula (1990), power (1995), and recently the state (Apple and Aasen 2003) provides a nuanced reading of Gramsci. Apple's concern, however, with Gramsci and education remains firmly situated on the level of structure and policy, and offers little assistance to the educational researcher who seeks to actually understand classroom dynamics. Paulo Freire (1987) and Henry Giroux (1983; 1988) also apply Gramsci to education. Their work, particularly that of Freire, goes beyond Apple's top-down structural approach, and seeks to relate classroom dynamics to state policy. However, Freire and Giroux are primarily concerned with the creation of a pedagogy of liberation, reversing Gramsci's concern with "the mechanisms and modalities of hegemony under capitalism" (Eley 1984:459). Freire and Giroux are more concerned with social justice then with social research. Consequently, it is difficult to find ways in which their readings of Gramsci can be applied to what is actually happening in the classroom.

In opposition to this abstract criticism is John Ogbu's a tripartite model of minority social reproduction (Ogbu 1982:299). While Ogbu does not cite or acknowledge Gramsci, his model for understanding why certain ethnic groups face persisting structural inequalities in education is easily assimilated into a Gramscian worldview. Ogbu suggests that three factors reproduce persisting educational under-achievement; limited opportunities and job ceilings, inappropriate teaching methods and unequal educational structure, and cultural strategies of resistance through the rejection of dominant models of behavior (Ogbu 1987:151). Ogbu's model has limitations, notably its lack of a processual

analysis of reproduction and its inability to explain the creation of the institutional structures of inequality. However, through historical and ethnographic research, these limitations can be overcome. The real advantage to Ogbu's model is that education is a site of contestation, where social inequalities are both resisted and reproduced. I have applied Ogbu's concern with educational structure in chapter 3, teaching in chapter 4, future opportunities in chapter 5, and resistance in the conclusion and throughout.

Political Economy in Israel

In Israel, Shlomo Swirski's research and writings on the intersections of political economy and education are clearly inspired by the ideas of Gramsci. Swirski argues that education, rather than integrate, equalize, or promote "Israelization", serves to reproduce ethnic hierarchy ensuring that Ashkenazi Jews remain central to economic and political power while the Mizraḥim are alienated from it (1990; 1999).

Like Entwistle, Swirski adopts a rigid and literalist interpretation of Gramsci, arguing that social reproduction in Israel occurs through the mechanism of vocational tracking. Tracking is "an in-school reflection, as well as a major operational instance, of society-wide patterns of inclusion and exclusion, based on historically constructed configurations" (Swirski 1999:252). Ashkenazi students are placed in academic tracks, enabling them to matriculate to university and become officers in the Army. Mizraḥi students are placed in vocational tracks and find that university matriculation is close to impossible, as are army promotions. Swirski's analysis concentrates on the means by

which inequalities are reproduced in Jewish schooling. He extends this mechanism to the Arab schools, even though vocational education and tracking are absent from them.

Swirski's research is a history of the structural mechanisms by which class based and racial hierarchies are reproduced in Israel. The very fact that Swirski's mechanism of vocational tracking is not part of the Arab school is indicative of Swirski's failure to address lived experience. In short, Swirski's exposition of Israeli education completely fails to examine the schools themselves. Swirski's analysis, like that of Eisenstadt, fails to take into account the complexity of the school. Rather, the school has a monolithic purpose and structure, and blindly reproduces the structure of the state.

In opposition to Swirski's top-down, structural approach to education is Arnold Lewis's *Power, Poverty and Education* (1979). Like Swirski and Eisenstadt, Lewis proposes "to learn why… the Israeli educational system apparently fosters a continuation rather than a narrowing of the socio-economic gap between Ashkenazi and Oriental Jews" (Lewis 1979:183). He does so through an ethnographic study and analysis of a poor primarily Mizraḥi town in the center of Israel. He examines the relations among national institutions, the community, and local schools, as well as among administrators, teachers, and students. His conclusion is that the loss of control and autonomy on the local level leads to powerlessness and apathy. However, these disempowered subjects continue to believe "that schooling offers their children a fair chance to compete as individuals with higher status youth for coveted social rewards" (1979:183). The failure of the community, and its students is predetermined by its powerlessness. Education cannot repair the damages done by inequality. The attempts on the part of politicians to

improve education are empty gestures. “Large sums of money are expended, public attention is focused on educational policy, there is a good deal of apparent motion, and the socioeconomic gap between Ashkenazi and Oriental Jews is sustained” (1979:188).

Although their methodologies are significantly different, the conclusions of both Lewis and Swirski are identical; education cannot be a *deus ex machina*, dropping down from above to repair the damage done. Rather, education is simply another aspect of processes by which the social gap (*pa’ar ḥevrati*) is reproduced. The differences between Swirski and Lewis, however, are their mechanisms of reproduction. Swirski sees tracking as the primary means by which the differences between Ashkenazi and Oriental Jews are reproduced. Lewis suggests that differences in the empowerment and autonomy of both communities and students play an important role. The alienation of both individuals and communities from the school, reinforced by prejudice, apathy, and infighting on local and national levels, makes the school more a battlefield than a haven.

Hegemony and Habitus

Gramsci identifies two mechanisms by which the school reproduces hierarchy. The first, vocational tracking, is outlined above. The second mechanism is the cultural, ideological, and behavioral differences between social groups and classes, which aids in the success of some and hinders others.

Hegemony goes far beyond ideology, extending deep into the physical. Consequently, social groups have predilections towards specific forms of work. These are not innate, but are learned at a very young age.

> In a number of families, particularly among the intellectual strata, children find in their family life a preparation, extension, and integration of school life; they absorb from the "atmosphere," as it were, a whole assortment of notions and aptitudes that facilitate their educational progress in the formal sense. They have already acquired and they develop knowledge of literary language, that is, the means of expression and of knowledge that is technically superior to that of the average school population between the ages of six and twelve. Thus, urban schoolchildren, by the very fact of living in a city, have already absorbed by the age of six a wide assortment of notions and aptitudes that make their progress through school easier, more profitable, and faster. (Gramsci 2002:73-74)

These behaviors are learned at home, during early childhood and come to heavily influence future development and school performance. Specifically, these appear to be a "psychophysical adaptation [which is] learned from family traditions how to fit in". Thus, in school, the child "finds it easier to concentrate since he is already used to physical self-discipline, etc." (2002:82)

In a similar vein, Pierre Bourdieu (1990; 1991; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) suggests that the major cause for failure in school among working-class students in France is their *habitus*,[16] which are forms or sets of behavior and values linked to origin and social class. Habitus are:

> systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to obtain them. (Bourdieu 1990:53)

A child growing up in a working-class environment would not have the same habitus as a child who was raised in a more privileged one. Even from the first day of school, the upper-class child already has the advantage, since the child would have already learned the correct accent and dialect, the correct posture, the correct way of behaving and

addressing others. Bourdieu and Passeron write that the "most privileged students do not only owe the habits, behavior and attitudes which help them directly in pedagogic tasks to their social origins; they also inherit from their knowledge and *savior-faire*, tastes and a 'good taste'" (Grenfell and James 1998:21).

Language, particularly accent and dialect, is a major component of habitus and cultural capital; an upper class Parisian accent appears more educated, intelligent, civilized, and pleasant than a working-class or rural accent (Bourdieu 1991). In order for the working-class child to succeed she would have to learn new habitus, and in doing so she would have to accept or recognize the language and habitus of the dominant group as legitimate and valuable, while debasing and misrecognizing her own as valueless.

> Such misrecognition operates in the education system… through an arbitrary curriculum that is 'naturalized' so that social classifications are transformed into academic ones. The result is that instead of being experienced for what they are… such social classifications [are] experienced as if they were grounded in nature. (Grenfell and James 1998:23-24)

Social reproduction in education works through the tacit acceptance of the dominant group's habitus by the entire educational system: administrators, teachers, students, and parents (Robbins 1998:30). It is within curricula that the habitus of the dominant groups is overvalued, while that of other groups is debased.[17]

However, unlike Gramsci, Bourdieu's formulation appears to leave out any possibility that teachers, students, parents, or even administrators might recognize or object to the transmission of dominant habitus. If, indeed, as Bourdieu suggests, social reproduction occurs by the wholesale transmission of the values, behavior, knowledge and habitus of one sector of the population from one generation to the next, there is little

possibility of change. Kathryn Woolard suggests that Bourdieu overestimates the power of linguistic and cultural hegemony and underestimates the ability of subordinate groups to resist, and the possibility that "alternative linguistic markets" exist (Woolard 1985; Akinnaso 1995). Bourdieu either ignores or dismisses these alternative markets, in which non-standard languages carry more power or importance then the standard languages (Collins 1993; Woolard 1985). We must, therefore, look to the school not only as a site of reproduction or socialization, but also as a locale where students and teachers may resist the impositions of society and the state.

Conclusion

Eliza Doolittle, uncouth and lumpen, was civilized by a proper English education. However, she, like Galatea, is mythological and thus a poor symbol for a system that fails to educate, civilize, or make bourgeois, more often than it succeeds. One cannot help but wonder if the school is not intended, from the onset, to fail. In writing about a similar "total" institution, the prison, Foucault suggests, "perhaps one should reverse the problem and ask oneself what is served by the failure of the prison".

> If so, one would be forced to suppose that the prison, and no doubt punishment in general, is not intended to eliminate offenses, but rather to distinguish them, to distribute them, to use them… In short, penalty does not simply 'check' illegalities; it 'differentiates' them, it provides them with a general 'economy'. And, if one can speak of justice, it is not only because the law itself or the way of applying it serves the interest of a class, it is also because the differential administration of illegalities through the mediation of penalty forms part of those mechanisms of domination. (Foucault 1979:272)

In a similar way, it is necessary to ask what purpose is served by the failure of the school. Does it, as Foucault might suggest, "differentiate" students, and serve as "part of those mechanisms of domination"? The answer is certainly yes; educational institutions do distinguish between students and determine their futures, and I will argue that they are certainly part of a "mechanism of domination". However we must also acknowledge that there is some truth to Durkheim's claims that social bonds are not necessarily evil.

For many writers, the school is a machine, a process, and a factory by which the raw material of youth is woven into the fabric of society. Whether the end result of this process is, for individuals, liberating or enslaving is secondary to the fact that it assumes a monolithic function for the school. Formal education serves to incorporate and bind the individual to society. But the school is not a unitary entity. Like all institutions, the school is multivalent and multipurpose. In order to get beyond assigning single or even dual meanings and functions, it is necessary to understand that the institution of formal education is historically, economically, and ideologically tied to the state, and, consequently, a site of struggle.

Education is, therefore, at root, a struggle between groups and alliances of differing power and social origins (Archer 1979:2). At the same time, however, "the nature of the state and the relation of classes in civil society to the state" determines the pace and direction of educational change (Green 1990:75). It is in this sense that I return to Galatea, suggesting that while she may contain a modicum of truth, she does not really offer us anything beyond the most superficial understanding of the function of education.

In the following chapters I attempt to lay out how this Gramscian view of the state can help us understand the different purposes and roles played by formal education in Israel, and explain how the school, as part of the structure of the state both reproduces and undermines the conditions of its existence. Bearing in mind that the school is a collection of individuals—teachers, students, administrators, staff, bureaucrats, and politicians—it is more than the sum of its parts. As a state institution, the school has a state charter. However, pressure from the community and the needs and desires of those working inside influence its character, functions, and purposes. Indeed, the central difference between the schools I examine is not so much what they teach, but rather how, why, to what end, and perhaps most importantly, the politics that determine these things. Learning skills takes place in every school. However, the untaught knowledge of how to use those skills in the future is a very different issue, and one that differentiates one school from another.

Notes

[1] In the Greek myth, Pygmalion, a sculptor, fed up with the difficulties involving real women, sculpted a beautiful statue, which he named Galatea. Aphrodite, the goddess of love, breathed life into the sculpture.

[2] Notably, I am ignoring Parsons's much commented upon AGIL framework (Hamilton 1983:106-113; Parsons, Bales, and Shils 1953; Parsons 1960).

[3] These six valuations are Parsons's attempt to go beyond Ralph Linton's well-known distinction between achieved and ascribed status. (Parsons 1940:849, n. 11)

[4] It is worthwhile noting that no matter how un-American or anti-modern kinship, and consequently the family, might be as the basis for ascriptive valuations, the family serves a very important role in socialization, for it is within the family, according to Parsons, that gender-roles are differentiated.

[5] Eisenstadt was also a public intellectual whose responsibilities went far beyond that of training a new generation of sociologists (Ram 1995:25). His writings and theorizings conferred "scientific legitimacy upon the ruling elite and the social order it constructed" (1995:44), and determined the path of Israeli social and educational reform.

[6] Eisenstadt bases his theoretical framework of immigration based upon Parsons's AGIL theory (Parsons 1960; Parsons, Bales, and Shils 1953). It is noteworthy that there is a very similar argument in the work of John Ogbu, in which the "initial conditions of migration," are also understood to determine the effectiveness of education (Ogbu and Simons 1998).

[7] No work on Israel seems to be complete without reference to aliya (plural; aliyot); the particular Hebrew word used for immigration, which is derived from the verb, *ole*, to ascend. Thus, immigrants to Israel are *olim*, ascenders, while emigrants are *yordim*, descenders.

[8] I have tried as much as possible to use Joseph Buttigieg's excellent, but partial translation of the *Prison Notebooks* (Gramsci 1992, 1996, 2002). However since Buttigieg's translation is, as of 2003, incomplete I have also relied upon the earlier edited volume by Hoare and Smith (Gramsci 1971). Some of Buttigieg's translations from

Gramsci's writings on education have been printed in a special issue of *Daedalus* (Gramsci 2002), however a significant portion remains without English translation.

[9] *Quaderni*, Vol. III p.1638, quoted and translated by Bernstein (1984:96).

[10] Perry Anderson suggests that the different relations between civil society and the state, which are deployed by Gramsci within his *Prison Notebooks*, ultimately make the application of Gramsci a "potential political danger" to the socialist or Marxist writer. "There is thus an oscillation between at least three different 'positions' of the State in the West in these initial texts alone. It is in a 'balanced relationship' with civil society, it is only an 'outer surface' of civil society, it is the 'massive structure' which cancels the autonomy of civil society" (Anderson 1976:12). He has also pointed out that Gramsci uses hegemony in a number of different, and possibly contradictory ways. First, he uses hegemony to mean intellectual and cultural domination, "The 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by [the dominant group]" (Gramsci 1971:12). Second, Gramsci uses hegemony to mean the struggle for domination of a state, and the consequent alliances between different groups and classes.

[11] Buttigieg argues that, within liberal democracies, civil society is far too frequently misconstrued "as simply another version of what, in U.S. political parlance, is routinely called the 'private sector' or 'private sphere'" (Buttigieg 1995:4).

[12] For those of us, particularly in the Anglophone West, who are unfamiliar with this style government, Gramsci's writing about historic blocs, cross-class alliances, and direct correlations between political parties and classes appears unmistakably alien. Israel, however, is an excellent example of an Italian style parliament in which ideologically different political parties struggle to make alliances and coalitions (*ko'alitzia*) in order to gain ministerial positions or portfolios (*tik*).

[13] The Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) outlined by Althusser in his essay "Ideology and the State" (1971:127-186) appears comparable to Gramsci's hegemony. Yet the ISAs are both false consciousness and inescapable.

[14] See Young's *Knowledge and Control* (1971). Young's work is similar to that of his American counterparts, Michael Apple (1989; 1990; 1995) and Henry Giroux (1981; 1983).

[15] Hoare and Smith's translation of this quote is remarkably different. The teacher is instructed to "be aware of the contrast between the type of culture and society which he represents and the type of culture and society represented by his pupils, and conscious of his obligation to accelerate and regulate the child's formation in conformity with the *former* and in conflict with the *latter*" (Gramsci 1971:35-36, emphasis added). While in Buttigieg the teacher is asked to be "aware of his duty to accelerate and control the child's formation in keeping with the struggle of the *superior type of culture* and society against *the inferior one*" (Gramsci 2002:77, emphasis added).

[16] There is some confusion whether habitus should be treated as singular or plural noun: On page 53 of *The Logic of Practice* (1990), habitus are "systems" while on page 54 they are a "system". It is unclear if the problem is found in Bourdieu's original, or in the translation. I have attempted to remain loyal to the original (translated) text, although if there is any doubt, I treat habitus as a plural noun.

[17] See James Collins's "Determination and Contradiction" for an excellent description and example of class-based differences of habitus in a university composition class in the U.S. (Collins 1993:133).

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION AND ASCENDANCY

> The Mandatory shall see that complete freedom of conscience and the free exercise of all forms of worship, subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals, are ensured to all. No discrimination of any kind shall be made between the inhabitants of Palestine on the grounds of race, religion or language. No person shall be excluded from Palestine on the sole ground of his religious belief.
>
> The right of each community to maintain its own schools for the education of its members in its own language, while conforming to such educational requirements of a general nature as the Administration may impose, shall not be denied or impaired.
>
> —Article 15 of the Palestine Mandate

It is a central point of this effort, if not the central point, that understanding the lives, histories, and economies of Arabs and Jews in Israel as parallel trajectories that never intersect, is an unhappy and pervasive myth.[1] The structure of mainstream history, and the myths of nationalism channel most writing on Israel into two streams; one Jewish, one Arab, further divorced by religion or ethnicity. Yet, the history of Israel clearly revolves around the relationships between these apparent enemies. Thus, for history to be relevant—providing a background and explanation of the current state of things—a relational approach must be adopted, demonstrating how the histories, identities, economies, and lives of Arabs and Jews in Palestine and Israel are inseparable, and at times indistinguishable. It should also detail the processes by which Jews and Arabs, Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim were identified, isolated, and segregated.

I examine these processes through a history of public education. I begin with its origins in mid–19th century Palestine, through the end of the Mandate, and conclude with a series of reforms in the 20th century under the Israeli Ministry of Education. I argue that the way that education has been structured has served to isolate and distinguish Jews from Arabs, and Mizraḥim from Ashkenazim. While the roots of this segregation are found in the imposition of capitalism on Ottoman Palestine in the 19th century, it was not until the first half of the 20th century, during the British Mandate, that they came to fruition. During the Mandate, Arab and Jewish schools were forcibly integrated into two large standardized and parallel systems. Schools that did not fit within the system, such as the autochthonous Jewish or locally controlled Arab schools, were abandoned or absorbed by the larger systems. The Zionists were able to safeguard the autonomy of their schools, ensuring that all Jewish education was placed under their control. Palestinian schools however were surrendered to British colonial administrators. This process of centralization with autonomy served to empower a discrete portion of the Jewish population, deepening the already wide social, political, and economic gap between Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim. However, educational centralization did not appear to benefit any portion of the Palestinian population. Rather, it created a school system that was dependent upon a foreign bureaucracy, and outside of community control. The effects of this have been exasperated by a series of reforms under Israel rule, and can be seen in the current structure of the Israeli educational system.

Debunking Myths of Education

Zionist histories of education typically begin with a justification for the historical legitimacy of Zionism. This is expressed through an allegedly universal diasporic longing of all Jews for a return to the promised land of milk and honey, articulated in the formulaic Passover pronouncement "next year in Jerusalem". There is, of course, no doubt that there has always been the fantasy in Judaism for a return to the golden age. However, the end of diaspora and longing for repatriation was, until the 19th century, never so much desire as memory, or a criticism of the present. Zion at that point became a geographical location.

The roots of the movement to claim Israel as a homeland for the Jews in the 19th century were secular, political, and not religious. Consequently, three leitmotifs of the 19th and 20th century—capitalism, nationalism, and colonialism—are a much more fitting background to Zionism than the Torah.

> Zionism did not emerge out of a vacuum. It arose in an age of intense nationalist passions set loose by the French Revolution. It arose, also, at a time of colonial expansion and Western imperial arrogance. The idea of establishing a Jewish state beyond the domain of Europe could easily be rationalized as part of that larger enterprise of spreading Western civilization to backwards areas. (Falk 1983:93)[2]

However, according to the Zionist mythology the reason can be found in the Jewish enlightenment (*haskala*), which called for abandoning traditional European Jewish education.

The traditional European Jewish schools, which exist today only among the ultra-Orthodox, are based upon a two-tiered system. The *ḥeder*, like the Islamic *kuttāb* discussed below, is a one-room school usually run by a single teacher, which teaches

basic literacy and religious rites. The language of instruction was, in Europe, usually Yiddish. Advanced studies, for the more adept or wealthy students, might be pursued in the *yeshiva.* Like the Islamic *madrasa*, the yeshiva is a larger version of the ḥeder. Subjects of study and texts were primarily, if not exclusively, religious. Other subjects, such as mathematics were taught as secondary skills necessary for understanding the Qabbala and the book of the Zohar, forms of Jewish mysticism.

Many changes were wrought upon this system during the Jewish enlightenment by *maskilim,* the so-called enlightened European Jews of the mid–19th century. In the process, education ceased to be solely religious instruction, and took on a more instrumental, pragmatic, and frequently vocational character. Education, in this new form, was exported first in the mid–19th century to the Jewish communities of North Africa and the Middle East, and later at the turn of the century, to the newly established *Yishuv*, the Zionist community in Palestine. Vocationalism is one of the most notable adaptations in the education of the new Palestinian Jew, and it runs parallel to an effort on the part of the socialist Zionists to create a Jewish proletariat. Thus, we leap from the ḥeder to vocationalism, from memorizing the books of Moses to learning how to plow, sew, and weld.

Another major myth is that of the struggle of the Zionist teachers against non-Hebrew Jewish education of European missionary schools in the Yishuv, and their later insistence upon the autonomy of the Jewish school system from British control during the Mandate. Thus, the history of Zionist education, at least according to Zionist sources, consists of the importation and adoption of modern European education to the Land of

Israel. However, as I show below, this history of Zionist education is disingenuous, and makes up one of the major myths of State building.

The mythologies of Palestinian Nationalism are, in contrast, less about success than failure. Notable is the *siyāsāt al-tajhīl,* the policy, or politics of ignorance, an unstated policy on the part of the British, and later Israeli government to guarantee that the Palestinian Arabs remain ignorant, and quiescent to the Zionist colonization. This is used to explain the constant failure of Muslim schools. Many Arab educators continue to believe that the siyāsāt al-tajhīl exists as a established but secret policy, just as most Jewish educators continue to believe that the whole Zionist enterprise, not just Zionist education, succeeded because of their predecessors' firm convictions and great efforts. I do not mean to completely dismiss either Zionist cabals or untenable idealism; rather, I suggest that both points of view express the same weakness and the same structure, which is the united struggle of Arabs or Jews against a formidable opposition. Yet, as I will show, this struggle was hardly united, and rarely defined in purely ethnic terms.

Educational History in Palestine under the Ottomans

Up until the beginning of the British Mandate, formal education in Palestine, irrespective of religious community, was primarily private, religious, and, for the most part, rudimentary. Leaving aside for the moment Jewish education,[3] A. L. Tibawi, using statistics from the Turkish Ministry of Education, estimates that in 1914, after nearly 400 years of Ottoman Turkish rule,[4] there were 477 schools in all of Palestine. Of these, 95 were Ottoman public elementary schools, and three were secondary schools (Tibawi 1956:20). Until the late 19th century, Muslim education in Palestine was dominated by

the traditional Islamic system of education, which, like the Jewish, was composed of two schools, the kuttāb, and the madrasa. The kuttāb, like the Jewish ḥeder, was essentially a one teacher, one room, and one text school. The teacher was usually a religious figure who had memorized much, if not all of the Qur'ān. Reading and writing were taught based upon the Qur'ān. Arithmetic was occasionally taught as a useful but extraneous subject. Once the Qur'ān had been recited in its entirety, schooling was complete. For a selected few, education could continue at the madrasa, which were almost always associated with a *masjid jāmi'*, a large mosque. The largest of these, for example, Al-Azhar in Cairo, have dozens of teachers and hundreds of pupils. Education was complete when the student received certification from his teachers that he had memorized and understood the required texts. Like the kuttāb, the madrasa was first and foremost a religious institution. This is not to say that history, mathematics, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and geography were not taught or were not of interest. Rather, by their nature they were of secondary importance, and were taught on the side.

Taha Hussein's brilliant autobiography *Al-Ayyām*, provides a personal and inside view of a kuttāb in Upper Egypt, and later, schooling in the madrasa of Al-Azhar. The education he received and his experiences in an Upper-Egyptian kuttāb were probably quite similar to those in Palestine.

> Our friend [Hussein]pictures himself… sitting on the ground playing with the shoes around him, while 'Our Master' hears him recite Surat-ar-Rahman, but he cannot remember whether he was reciting it for the first or second time. Indeed on another occasion he sees himself sitting not on the floor among the shoes, but on the right of 'Our Master' on another long dais, and the latter is hearing him recite… To the best of his belief he had finished reciting the Quran through once and was beginning to do it a second time. It is not to be wondered at that our friend forgets how he learnt the Quran, since at the time of its completion he was not nine years

> old. He remembers very clearly the day on which he concluded his study of the Quran, and 'Our Master' telling him some days before how pleased his father would be with him and how he would make stipulations for it and demand his past dues… These claims 'Our Master' always detailed in terms of food, drink, clothes and money. (Hussein 1997:23)

Rationalization of Ottoman Education

The first wave of educational reform in the Middle East occurred in Muḥammad 'Ali Pasha's Egypt during the first half of the 19th century.[5] It is often assumed that this educational reform began as means towards the modernization of the Egyptian and Ottoman Armies, who were facing a European aggressor. However, Tibawi suggests that the impetus originated in largely internal tensions, namely the conflict between the Ottoman Sultan Maḥmūd II and his resistive Janissary servant, Muḥammad 'Ali Pasha of Egypt.

> [The reforms] began at the top in Istanbul, but the aim was military, not educational. The method of approach was not through the modification of the traditional system, but by the gradual and almost unconscious creation of a new and parallel system… Not before the first quarter of the 19th century did educational modernization, still military in intention, restart on a considerable scale. This time it was started almost simultaneously in the capital Istanbul and the important Arab province of Egypt… Like his master in Istanbul, [Muḥammad 'Ali Pasha] was bent on creating an army on European lines. Both used education as an instrument. (Tibawi 1972:50-51)

All the same, it is clear that these educational reforms were also a reaction to growing European interest in the Ottoman lands. The beginnings of educational reform in Egypt came a few years after the Napoleonic adventure in Egypt and the Crimean War (Grunwald 1975:165). In any case, Sultan Maḥmūd II and Muḥammad 'Ali Pasha's insistence on military education makes clear the goal of military improvement (Tibawi

1972:50-51). But why did the Ottoman Porte and Muḥammad ‘Ali Pasha choose educational reform to improve the military?

At the end of the 18th century something had changed in the way which education was thought about. No longer the realm of sheikhs and religious functionaries, education was now considered something which could do things, and could now be seen and used “as an instrument” (Tibawi 1972:51). A new world was forming; for the Ottoman Empire to remain “competitive”, educational as well as bureaucratic rationalization was needed. Rationalization, or Weber’s *Rationalisierung* is the application of standardized methods to achieve a desired and predetermined result.[6] In Ottoman education, the following standardized methods were employed,

1. A national level curriculum, replacing ethnicity-based (*millet*) curricula.
2. New teaching methods, replacing rote memorization.
3. Vocational education, replacing religious education.

These methods achieved a number of results, ranging from the construction of a modern army to the formation of an educated national elite. For the European Jews, rationalized education would be deployed to “modernize” their poor cousins in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, and would balance the skewed class structure of European Jews, creating a new proletarian Jew. Education had became “an instrument” (Tibawi 1972:51) not just to “inculcate moral values and to form character” (1956:74), as had previously been the case, but also to provide the training for “lucrative employment” (Laskier 1983:63) and much more.

Ottoman Law and Missionary Education

The Ottoman Education Law of 1869 (A.H. 1286)[7] under the Ottoman Sultan Abdul-Aziz established, for the first time, a public system of primary schools in the empire (Grunwald 1975:165) and began the process of rationalization. The law made education compulsory for four years, beginning at age seven for boys and six for girls (Tibawi 1956:128-29). Despite its compulsory nature, it is doubtful if education under the Ottoman Empire ever reached levels approaching even 10% compliance in Palestine.

> The law of 1869… provided for a minimum compulsory schooling of four years… but under the social, economic and educational conditions then prevailing, the provision was not more than a pious hope. So was another provision of the law seeking to extend state control to private schools, native and foreign. While it was easy enough to place the traditional Muslim schools under the supervision of local educational committees in which officials and local notables served, it was not easy to do so with private Christian schools of different denominations, still less with foreign mission schools. (Tibawi 1972:65)

Since the middle of the 19th century, European missionaries had been providing religious schooling for both Christian and Jewish Ottoman citizens. They were able to do so because of the *millet* system, in which "every community enjoyed internal autonomy under its spiritual head and managed communal affairs including education with little or no interference from the state" (Tibawi 1972:63). The millet system was originally designed for the control, taxation, and ostensibly the protection of the *ahl al-dhimma*, protected religious minorities (Jews and Christians) within a Muslim state.

By the mid–19th century, the millet system was serving the interests of European colonial powers, who were busy competing over pieces of the so-called Sick Man of Europe. The reforms of 1839 and 1856 under Sultan Abdul-Mejid, bestowed formal legal equality on all Ottomans, ending many of the legal restrictions for non-Muslims, while

retaining the millet system's autonomy of minorities in personal status law and education. With the establishment of secular courts in the 1840s, and the adoption of the French Commercial Code in 1850 and Penal Code in 1858, the Ottoman Empire had opened its doors to European merchants, and, importantly, to European missionaries (Rodrigue 1990:31-32). These reforms established a separate court system for European merchants. Some Ottoman Christians and Jews were able to take advantage of the system by working as *protégés* under the tutelage of European embassies, councils or merchants (Laskier 1983:20).

More important for the status of Ottoman Jews and Christians was the competition between European nations for minority religious groups. Originally, under the Capitulations of the 16th century (Somel 2001) and the *Tanẓīmāt* reforms of the 19th century, France was able to claim the status of the protector for all Catholics under Ottoman Rule. Russia was able to claim the right to protect the Orthodox Christians, and England claimed the Protestants. While Jews were left out of this system by the absence of a Jewish state, a number of Jewish philanthropic groups were able to assert protection through a European embassy. In the case of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the most important of these Jewish philanthropic groups, France fulfilled this role.

In an attempt to control education in the Empire, wresting it out of the hands of the Europeans, the Ottoman Education Law of 1913 (A.H. 1329) provided "the legal provision for strict control of private schools by local and central authorities" (Tibawi 1956:133), reflecting the growing Ottoman suspicion of Europe, and increasing distrust of European missionaries and their schools. However, by 1913 it was far too late. Education in the Middle East and the Ottoman Empire had become a political tool. Like

Muḥammad ‘Ali Pasha’s reforms of the army, cotton industry and education in Egypt, the revamping of Ottoman education in the 19th century was, in part, a reaction to European encroachment. In any case, many Ottoman citizens, not just European nations, had much to gain from the benefits of the new education.

Alliance Israélite Universelle and Educational Rationalization

The Alliance Israélite Universelle established its first school in 1862 in Tetuan, Morocco, and in 1870 founded Mikve Yisrael, an agricultural boys school outside Jaffa, Palestine (Rodrigue 1993:14-21). The Alliance was the first of many national associations established by European Jews to assist their poor cousins in North Africa and the Middle East. Other national associations were the London based Anglo-Jewish Association established in 1870, the Wien Allianz in 1873, and Berlin’s Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden, also know as the Ezra, in 1901 (Laskier 1983:32). The Hilfsverein and the Alliance would play a significant role in the formation of education in Israel.

To dismiss these philanthropic societies as colonial institutions overlooks their complex structure and purpose. Clearly, they played into and took advantage of European power, ensuring that the Ottoman state would not interfere with the inner workings of their schools and missionary associations. Tibawi, writing about the educational efforts of Christian missionaries in 19th century Syria, remarks:

> It is important to bear in mind that the educational work of all foreign agencies among Christians in Syria was privileged. If the activity was welcome by the community concerned it was a mere extension of its right to provide for its children the kind of education it chose. But even when disapproved by the community, foreign religious and educational work was in a sense covered by the extraterritorial rights of foreign powers

> under the capitulation, unless it was contrary to public morality and likely to lead to a disturbance of the peace. (Tibawi 1972:63-64)

This privilege was extended to the Alliance, even though France was not the official protector of the Jews.

Established in Paris as a vehicle to modernize non-European Jewry and spread French culture throughout North Africa, the Middle East, and the Ottoman Empire, the Alliance must be first viewed as part of a self-serving French *mission civilisatrice* (civilizing mission) as well as an arrogant symptom of the Jewish Enlightenment. However, the Alliance did not seek to encourage a "total emulsion of French Secular culture" (Laskier 1983:33) and preferred local administrators and teachers to those from France or other colonies. The goals of the Alliance, as formulated in its Charter of 1860 are,

> de travailler partout à l'émancipation et aux progrès des israélites;
>
> de prêter un appui efficace à ceux qui souffrent pour leur qualité d'israélites;
>
> d'encourager toute publication propre à amener ce résultat. (Chouraqui, 1965:412)[8]

The Alliance, like the Hilfsverein, offered a rationalized alternative to the traditionally religious education of the ḥeder[9] and yeshiva. Alongside *Tanakh*[10] and Hebrew, the Alliance taught "French, arithmetic, geography, general history, the rudiments of the physical and natural sciences, French Calligraphy, … post-biblical Jewish history, … and a 'useful language,' such as the language of the country or English, German, or Spanish" (Rodrigue 1993:25). In addition, the Alliance offered vocational and agricultural training.

The Alliance, Hilfsverein, and other missionary associations transformed Jewish education in North Africa and the Middle East after 1860; no longer was literacy learned

from the memorization and recitation of the Torah. Religious texts never ceased to be taught, yet somewhere along the way the goals of education silently shifted towards rationality and instrumentality. Literacy and arithmetic were now vocational skills, enabling easier and more gainful employment, and the school replaced apprenticeship as the site for vocational training (Lave and Wenger 1991:61-87).

The notion of formal education replacing an apprenticeship is very much an aspect of educational rationalization. Education became, perhaps for the first time, linked to employment possibilities. The Spanish council in Tetuan praised the Alliance by making a clear correlation between education and employment: "Young men, who were at one time condemned to a lamentable and obscure life, graduated from the [Alliance] and found lucrative employment in Morocco and elsewhere" (Laskier 1983:63). The rationalization of education would have long lasting consequences upon these Jews, providing some with the means to escape the dire poverty of 19th century Morocco and the *Mellaḥ*, Jewish neighborhoods.[11] Further, the Alliance provided the French colonial administration in North Africa, and mercantile interests in the Ottoman Empire, with a well-trained and loyal work force. It also provided a model of vocational education that would later be imported to Israel.

The establishment of these new European philanthropic and missionary schools in Palestine inaugurated a brief period of educational integration, at least for the urban upper classes. Palestinian Christians, Muslims, and Jews who had lived peacefully as neighbors and friends for centuries (Eliachar 1983:50, 56) for the first time attended the same schools (Tibawi 1956:73). Eliyahu Eliachar, the scion of a notable Palestinian Sephardi family, writes in his memoirs:

> Contact between Arab and Jewish youngsters began with the founding of the [Lämel] and the Alliance schools, the first modern European-style schools, where prominent Arab families sent their children. I remember as a student at the [Lämel] school, I befriended two upper-class men of the [Khalidi] family; our families were friends as well. (Eliachar 1983:50)

However, this contact and familiarity was not to last. By the end of World War I and the establishment of the British Mandate, Jewish and Arab education was, once again, completely segregated.

Educational History under the British Mandate

The consequences of educational rationalization in the Ottoman Empire reached the backwaters that were Palestine,[12] then part of Greater Syria,[13] much later than Egypt. The first wave of educational rationalization in Egypt during the first half of the 19th century had passed Palestine by with little effect.

Although British administration of Palestine took control over the Ottoman public schools in 1917[14], education laws remained unchanged until 1933, following the enactment of the Education Ordinance. Yet this legislation changed very little, and the Mandate administration adopted the typical British colonial policy of maintaining the status quo. Thus, the Mandate administration continued the Ottoman millet system, in which the *ahl al-dhimma*, protected minority religious groups, were granted autonomy in religious worship, personal status law, and education—so long as they did not contradict Ottoman interest or Islamic law.

In fact, remarkable changes were carried out during the Mandate. The most significant of which was the unconditional imposition of capitalism on Palestine (Asad 1975:262). Educational rationalization, which like capitalism, had begun to make inroads

during the 19th century, was only fully imposed during the Mandate, and thus was a reflection of the complete expansion of capitalism in Palestine. The British, in their zeal to rationalize, imposed laws and policies that, while expanding capital, repressed the non-capitalist rural and village economies of the *fallāḥ*, Palestinian peasants. This was done primarily through a system of rural property taxes and indirect taxation laid on the heads of the peasants, while barely touching the large-scale Zionist agriculture and industry (1975:263).

> The intrinsic character of the European (British) colonial state ensured the long-term *economic* growth of the capitalist mode of production at the expense of the non-capitalist mode, although it prevented the latter's complete elimination. This fundamental process is disguised by the *political* subordination of the Jewish community, equally with the Arab community, to the British Administration. (1975:262)

The policies were not intended to destroy of the economic and social base of the native Arab population. Rather, they were aimed to perpetuate the economic status quo by encouraging capital while preventing the complete destruction of non-capitalist economic formations. One of the consequences of this was the rising debt and dislocation of the Palestinian peasants.

These policies had an equally detrimental affect on the native Jewish population, "an integral part of a non-capitalist social formation" (Asad 1975:262), which was actively excluded from the benefits and capital accrued by the recent Ashkenazi immigrants to Palestine (Swirski 1999:51).

> I can state unequivocally that in matters of education as in many other areas of public life—vocational training, immigration and absorption, settlement on the land, the building of a bureaucracy, political representation—priority was given increasingly to [the Ashkenazim]. Instead of establishing a universal educational system supported by pooled donations from abroad and income from the National Council, separate

> educational networks were set up—general, religious, religious-independent, labour, *kibbutz* and others. The limited funds at our disposal were then disbursed proportionally, based on political representation in the Elected Assembly and Zionist Congress… In this process, the children of both the veteran Sephardi population and the new Oriental immigrants were automatically victimized. (Eliachar 1983:178)

The imposition and articulation of capitalism on top of—but not replacing—the antecedent system, both rural and urban, were mediated by the Mandate administration (Asad 1975:262), and played a crucial role in the future of education.

The articulation of capitalism and the imposition of rationalized education impressed three basic tendencies upon education in Palestine: isolation, unification, and centralization.

Isolation. Arabic and Hebrew language schools and speakers became increasingly isolated from one another; fewer Jews attended Arabic language schools, and fewer Arabs attended Hebrew language schools.

Unification. As they became more and more isolated from one another, the Arab and Jewish school systems became increasingly consolidated and integrated into two large homogeneous and parallel systems. Schools that did not fit the established molds, such as those in Judaeo-Arabic, were also abandoned or absorbed by the larger system.

Centralization. As the schools systems became consolidated and isolated educational administration was taken away from local control and placed on a national level. The Jewish schools were centralized under the *Va'ad Leumi*, the Jewish National Council, while the Arab schools including the kuttābs were centralized under the Department of Education.

These three tendencies, direct and predictable consequences of British educational and social policy, affected all schools. However, this policy had remarkably different consequences upon the Arab and Jewish educational systems. Most notably, this meant that the Palestinians were isolated, disempowered, and alienated from their schools, while the Zionists were given control over theirs.

A History of Arab Education in Mandate Palestine

The most common misconception about Arab education during the Mandate is its remarkable growth. In 1914, there were 98 public schools in Palestine (Massialas and Jarrar 1983:18-19). In 1947, as the British forces were withdrawing, there were 555 public schools, a huge increase (Tibawi 1956:270). However, these numbers do not account for the phenomenal decline of the kuttāb, the endemic Islamic one-room schools. In 1914 the Ottoman government counted 379 private Muslim schools, almost all kuttābs, in Palestine; 30 years later, there were 131 (1956:20). Thus the real increase in all Muslim schools, both public and private, over 33 years was roughly 144%. Relative to the 680% real increase of all Jewish schools during this period (Tibawi 1956:272), the growth of the Arab schools appears inconsequential.

The Mandate Department of Education, for the most part, looked down upon the kuttābs, not really regarding them as schools of any merit. The numbers and activities of the kuttābs went largely undocumented and were ignored by the Department of Education, which admitted that "A considerable number of kuttabs exist in which the Quran, reading and writing are taught" (Government of Palestine 1930:13). Complaints about the quality of the education ranged from the vague—"the standard in these

[kuttābs] remains rather low" (1930:13)—to the dismissive—"Muslims who had received the traditional religious education, even if adequate in Arabic, were ignorant in all other branches of knowledge" (1930:6). The Department of Education simply assumed that the Ottoman public should be the model and basis of Arab public education (Tibawi 1956:23), and set about reinforcing it by establishing a system which could absorb all other schools, including the abundant kuttābs. There was a "general policy aimed at 'the unification of various groups of schools, technically private but in fact quasi-public, into a single flexible system with that of the government'" (Miller 1985:94).

> Little or no control was exercised by the Turks over this type of private schools, and yet by a remarkably silent revolution the British administration extended its control over many of them and indeed absorbed them… into the new state school system. (Tibawi 1956:57)

There was nothing covert about the way that the Mandate government set about unifying the schools. "Private groups often requested government aid for private national schools" (Miller 1985:94). In response, the Department of Education made it known that monies or minor grants-in-aid were available to private schools, up to the sum of 200 mils (80¢)[15] per elementary student (Nardi 1945:43). Considering that the average annual fees of a kuttāb were usually less than 500 mils or $2 (Government of Palestine 1934:15), these grants-in-aid were significant. The monies however, came with a price. As the teachers came on bankroll the Department of Education had a say in teacher hiring. This eventually led not only to the right of teacher approval, but also to their appointment. Thus, by acquiring control over instructional appointments, the Mandate government quietly seized control, adding the kuttābs to a unified and centralized Department of Education.

With the exception of the Turkish administrators of the few Ottoman public schools established after 1869, there had never been any form of centralized educational authority in Palestine. Education had been privately financed and under local control. During the Mandate, control over education, which was still seen by most Palestinians as religious training, was for the first time, controlled by a foreign and Christian power. Naturally this resulted in harsh criticisms and conflicts. Local religious leadership and wealthy Notables, *a'yān*, decried the loss of autonomy and claimed that the Mandate government was, in alliance with the Zionists, imposing siyāsāt al-tajhīl, a policy of ignorance on the Palestinians (Miller 1985:38). The Supreme Muslim Council, which was founded in 1921 by the British and led by the Mufti of Jerusalem, Al-Hajj Amīn Al-Husayni, objected to the absorption of Muslim schools, and in response the council "established its own education department and started to look after the Muslim schools. Many of the Kuttabs placed themselves under the Council's control, but many others remained purely private schools" (Tibawi 1956:57). In spite of the conflicts and objections to the absorption of the kuttābs, "British officials were quite contemptuous of the Jewish school system and fought strenuously to expand Arab opportunities" (Miller 1985:94-95). Having little regard for either of the existing schools systems, British officials did attempt to improve the Arab educational system. They applied similar policies and standards to the two systems, with one fundamental structural difference: Jewish education was provided significantly more autonomy.

Jewish education was largely an independent system. Arab education was dependent upon the Mandate bureaucracy. The dependency and the phenomenal decline of the kuttāb resulted from the contradictory status of Palestinian Muslims under the

Mandate. This contradiction allowed private Islamic schools to be redefined as public schools, and absorbed into the nascent public educational system. In accordance with Article 15 of the Mandate, all communities, including Muslims, were defined as religious groups (Swirski 1999:49). This meant that, for the first time Muslims, who saw themselves as *al-'umma,* the nation,[16] not a religious or ethnic group, became an identifiable community, set among equals (Miller 1985:35). The 1926 Religious Communities Ordinance defined Muslims as a community. This "was not only a break with tradition but a vital change of status" (Tibawi 1956:137).

> The Muslim population, however, never had been one of several millets… and thus resented its degradation to the same level as minority groups; at the same time, they were unprepared for the need to organize along similar lines. (Miller 1985:35)

For the most part, this ordinance was viewed with suspicion. It was seen as aiding the "Jewish minority, and [disrupting] the Arab national unity by luring Muslims and Christians to organize as separate entities" (Tibawi 1956:137). In short, it was seen as evidence that the Mandate administration was actively assisting the Zionists. The administration's policies had made Muslims a millet, necessitating the autonomy of their schools. However, contradictory educational practices treated the Muslims like al-umma, the nation, which enabled government control of their schools and the absorption of the kuttābs. Had, in fact, the Mandate administration actually followed its own logic,

> The Department of Education would have found itself in a position with no schools to control and no education to direct. Its powers which it assumed as a successor authority to the Ottoman Ministry of Education for Arab Schools, would have passed to the Supreme Muslim Council or some other body. (Tibawi 1956:139)

The absorption of the kuttābs by the Mandate Education Department was, in fact, contradictory to the policy that allowed "each community to maintain its own schools" (Anglo-American Committee 1991:7).

Over the course of 30 years, from the establishment of the Mandate in 1917 to its end in 1947, the kuttāb ceased to be a significant force in education. This process however was slow, and they existed up until the mid-1950s in the Southern district of Israel and other outlying areas where state education was weak. However, for the most part, the kuttābs were absorbed by the state schools, and mass education shifted from private to public. Paradoxically, with this shift the locus of control over education was removed from the public—the parents and local authorities—and placed firmly in the hands of the Mandate bureaucrats, who were largely British. From 1917 to 1947, every director of education was a Briton, as were over half of the Arab Educational Directory.[17] In contrast, all of the Hebrew educational administrators in the Mandate Education Directory were Jewish. Moreover, all the members of the Va'ad Leumi, the national council, which was the real locus of power for Hebrew education, were Jews. A small number of these bureaucrats were British Jews, but most were of Eastern European origins. The Directors of Education were British officers and colonial civil servants. (Tibawi 1956:23; Anglo-American Committee 1991:2-3).

The unification and centralization of the Arab schools in Palestine was not an evil attempt on the part of the Mandate bureaucrats to disempower and alienate the Palestinians. Rather, the bureaucrats did what they were trained to do, namely, setting up efficient bureaucracies. In doing so they thought that they were helping the locals (Miller

1985:94-95). Despite the massive administrative changes, the system was slow and resistant to change.

> The early state village school… differed only superficially from the *Kuttab*… On the material side desks gradually replaced mats, and new reading books, paper and pencils were also introduced. On the technical side a written "curriculum" with new subjects called unusual names was flung in the face of a bewildered teacher who was supposed, moreover, to submit to state inspection. But all these changes did not take full account of the teacher who was still very much the same in ability, attainment and outlook, nor of society which did not fully appreciate the significance of the change. (Tibawi 1956:74-75)

However, one remarkable change was "that Muslim and Christian pupils… were for the first time in modern history educated together under a national system" (Tibawi 1956:73).

The absorption of the kuttābs was not restricted to Palestine. In Syria, the process began a few years earlier (Tibawi 1972:83), part of the larger process of educational rationalization which was happening throughout the Middle East. The kuttābs filled the need of basic elementary education. Contrary to British attitudes, these schools taught the necessary skills and values. "Despite… all its limitations, the *Kuttab* succeeded on the whole in achieving literacy and, more important still, it rarely failed to inculcate moral values and to form character" (Tibawi 1956:74).

Secondary schools were a different matter. There were, at the onset of the Mandate, three public secondary schools in Palestine (Tibawi 1956:20). Although closed during the war, the secondary schools were reopened in 1920, with the establishment of the Mandate civil administration. These schools were for the most part "attached to elementary schools" (1956:47). Indeed, despite any improvement, Arab public education under the Mandate remained "nothing more than a limited elementary education of

four–five years, and a restricted and highly selective intermediate (two years) and secondary (four to six years) education" (1956:42).

Arab public secondary schools were almost universally teacher-training facilities. For university training, Arabs had to travel outside Palestine, mostly to Beirut or London. Since few scholarships were available higher education was really only possible for the wealthy. Vocational training, other than the Haifa Trade School, was unavailable. Up to the 1930s students who did particularly well, ranking first or second in their school, might continue their education in either the Arab College, a secondary school in Jerusalem, or attend a costly private school. These prepared students to take the Palestine matriculation examination, which was well regarded and accepted by all English Universities. Starting in the 1930s, a number of other public secondary schools were opened, thus increasing the possibilities of pursuing an education. The Rashidiya College of Jerusalem, an Ottoman secondary school, was re-opened in 1930. Following this, the Kadoorie Agricultural School of Tulkarem was opened in 1931, the Haifa Trade School in 1936, and the Rural Women Teachers' Training Centre at Ramallah in 1935 (Tibawi 1956:50-54). In addition there were in 1946 13 two-year secondary schools, and 5 one-year secondary schools. Of these, only three accepted girls (Matthews and Akrawi 1949:246).

The extreme poverty of the Arab public school system became even more desperate when it came to rural and female education. The town schools were fairly evenly divided between the genders; in the 1930-31 school year there were 51 town schools, 21 of which were girls' schools. The same year, however, there were 255 rural schools, only eight of which were girls schools (Government of Palestine 1932:22). Nine

years later, the ratio had almost doubled, 303 rural boys schools to 27 rural girls schools (1941:4), yet remained very low. Apparently, the Education Directorate had planned upon establishing "girls' schools wherever a teacher can be provided". However, the "Women's Rural Teachers Training Centre at Ramallah produces about twelve teachers a year" (Anglo-American Committee 1991:648).

Palestinian Social Structure and Education

An important effect of the Mandate administration policy was the strengthening of the Palestinian Notables (*a'yān*), and the maintenance of family or clan hierarchies. The policy of appointing important or influential individuals to bureaucratic positions was proposed by the first High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, in 1923 (Miller 1985:49). There was nothing unusual about the appointment of important members of elite families to colonial positions; it was a colonial practice of the British from India to Ireland.

> Normal patterns of authority in the countryside depended strongly on paternal authoritarianism and family patronage relationships to keep order… When Samuel inaugurated the policy of substituting local for British personnel, his sensitivity to their political role made him anxious to employ representatives of the traditional Muslim elite, who could wield personal influence. (1985:49-50)

There were a number of perceived advantages to appointing local notables. First this would make the Mandate administration and its appointee's task of keeping order easier by relying on the authority of previously established hierarchies. Second, it was an effort to "to recruit those whose hostility to the mandate might be mitigated by government employment or whose personal affiliations would bolster their official authority" (1985:47). Both policies remain as a means of controlling Palestinians in Israel (Lustick

1980:198-231). Thus, government policy reinforced the strength and importance of the *ḥamūla*, the clan or extended family (Asad 1975:273). The conflict between hiring based on academic qualification, family patronage, or other political reasons remains a central issue today among Arabs in Israel, not only among government bureaucrats, but also among teachers and educational administrators. Christian Arabs were, due to their primarily urban residence and the availability of missionary schools, generally better educated and more likely to speak English. Thus, a central tension of the British administration was to maintain a "reasonable balance between Christians and Muslims" (Miller 1985:50). There was a clear tendency, on the part of the British to hire Christians over Muslims. However, the Christians had, at least among the overwhelming majority of Muslim Palestinian Arabs, low social status, and were not part of the clan hierarchy (1985:50).

The changes wrought on Arab education during the Mandate were highly significant. Building upon a rudimentary system of public education established by the Ottomans, the Mandate bureaucracy constructed a solid foundation of Arab public education that continues to be the basis for Arab education in Israel. The Mandate administration and Department of Education policies of adopting what they perceived to be the antecedent Ottoman millet system, while at the same time treating the Muslim Palestinian education as state rather than community-based, allowed for the absorption of local Islamic kuttābs into the Mandatory Department of Education. Unlike the Jewish Va'ad Leumi, the Department of Education was not community controlled. The results of this are, in retrospect, understandable—Palestinian Arab independence and self-sufficiency decreased as Jewish infrastructure grew. The Mandatory policy of the

preferential hiring of both educated Christians and Muslims from notable families created a new elite of educated Christians and entrenched the dominance of the Muslim notable families. Clan or familial hierarchies, compounded by a lack of female rural education, which might have challenged it, continue into the present day. Thus, the unification, centralization, and isolation of Arab education removed any semblance of local control over education, while reinforcing, if not reinventing, a family based locus of power.

A History of Zionist Education in Mandate Palestine

During the Mandate, Arab and Jewish education became increasingly unified under a centralized bureaucracy and increasingly isolated from one another. Among the Zionists these tendencies created an environment that fostered a capable bureaucracy, increasing Zionist independence and self-sufficiency, and reinforced an already well-entrenched ethnic hierarchy among Jews.

In 1914 there were only 12 Hebrew language schools in all of Palestine and no identifiable body controlling or coordinating them. These schools would become the nucleus for the Hebrew education system under the Mandate (Matthews and Akrawi 1949:256; Nardi 1945:19). At the same time, there were many religious and philanthropic schools. Nardi, counting Yiddish and Ladino schools, but somehow forgetting the Yemenite Judaeo-Arabic schools, suggests that "in Jerusalem before the first World War, there were four thousand pupils and two hundred teachers in seventeen Yeshivoth, twenty-two Talmud Torahs and many Hadorim" (Nardi 1945:16). At the dawn of the Mandate, there were three types of Jewish schools: Orthodox, Zionist, and Philanthropic. By the end of the Mandate and the establishment of the Zionist State, the educational

scene had drastically changed. Of the Orthodox schools, only the Ashkenazic had survived; the Sephardic and Mizraḥi schools had been swallowed by the National Religious Party[18] school system, and the philanthropic societies had been largely absorbed by the other systems and transformed into vocational schools and teachers' colleges.

The majority of Jewish schools in Palestine up until the 1920s belonged to the Orthodox Jews. However, a large number of European philanthropic schools were established in Palestine in the late 19th century. The first of these, the Lämel school in Jerusalem, was founded in 1856 (Nardi 1945:16). It was followed by the Alliance Israélite Universelle in 1870 and the establishment of the Hilfsverein der Deutsche Juden in 1901. The philanthropic societies, like the Christian missionary schools, professed altruistic and apolitical goals.

> All these organizations were concerned in a purely philanthropic spirit with ameliorating the physical and spiritual conditions of the Jews in the East. Palestine to them was just another country in the East; they never envisaged Jewish education there as the basis of a new Jewish life. (Nardi 1945:18)

However, these societies existed in very privileged spheres, under the protection of foreign embassies. Kurt Grunwald, summarizing the legal status of the philanthropic and missionary society schools under the Ottomans, asks whether it was "merely a coincidence that we see at this juncture the opening of the first Jewish schools in Jerusalem by foreign philanthropists" (Grunwald 1975:165).

> Since the early nineteenth century foreign missionary schools began to be established in the various parts of the Ottoman empire, a development favored by institutions particular to the country, i.e., the system of millets, the far reaching autonomy granted to the minority groups, national or

> religious, and the capitulations, giving special rights to citizens of foreign states. (1975:164)

These schools provided the foundation for both the Zionist school system and private Palestinian Nationalist schools. However, following the First World War, the importance of the philanthropic schools slowly dwindled. By the end of the Second World War and the establishment of the Zionist state, the philanthropic schools had all but disappeared.

The General Zionist schools, which would become the foundation of secular Jewish state education in Israel, were built upon the ruins of the Hilfsverein der Deutsche Juden. In 1901 the Hilfsverein took over the floundering Lämel School. This led to an early conflict that defined, if not created, the character of Jewish schools in Palestine. The language of instruction in both the Hilfsverein and Lämel schools was a mixture of German and Hebrew, just as the language of instruction in Alliance schools was French and Hebrew. This allowed for the training of a Hebrew speaking teachers, "and so helped the Hebrew revival" (Bentwich 1965:14). However, in 1912 the Hilfsverein announced that the language of instruction in its newly created Technicum—today the Haifa Technium—would be only German; Hebrew would only be taught as a second language.

> Actuated directly or indirectly by the German Government, the Hilfsverein began in 1913 to displace Hebrew in favor of German, and to give more and more place to inculcation of German 'Kultur.' Under the leadership of the Merkaz [HaMorim, the Teachers Association,] a general revolt against the administration of those schools was successfully carried out. On December 10, 1913 teachers and pupils marched out of the Hilfsverein schools en masse. (Nardi 1945:18-19)

The Hilfsverein, after losing the majority of its teachers and students, soon collapsed.

Hyperbole and myth usually herald the Zionist victory in the "Language War" as the result of the tenacity and temerity of the idealistic Zionist teachers and students. However, the result of the "so-called Language War of 1913… was confirmed when,

shortly after British troops occupied the country in 1918, the use of German in schools was banned and the German teachers interned" (Spolsky and Shohamy 1999:98). The Hebrew Teachers' Association, Merkaz HaMorim, soon reopened 12[19] of the Hilfsverein schools as Hebrew language schools. These schools became the basis of secular Zionist education in Palestine. In 1914 all 12 Hebrew speaking schools—ten elementary schools and two secondary schools—were centralized under the Zionist Education Committee, the *Va'ad HaḤinouch* (Matthews and Akrawi 1949:256; Nardi 1945:19). This number was tripled by 1918 under the Mandate, since the Alliance schools, which had been closed by the Ottomans during the war, were re-opened under the authority of the Va'ad HaḤinouch.

The Trend System

One of the central defining characteristics of Zionist society in Palestine was the trend system, discrete and unique school systems among the Jews in Israel affiliated with, and supported by political parties. Ideological disputes, occasionally violent, have racked Zionism from the time of its gestation. Many of the first Zionists coming from Eastern Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century were socialist ideologues, followers of Ber Borochov's dogmatic evolutionary communism, or A. D. Gordon's romantic Tolstoyian socialism. Others, coming from Germany and Central Europe, were liberals and capitalists who rejected the socialists' conviction that the normalization or proletarianization of the Jewish people was a necessary step in the construction of a Jewish state. Still others were ostensibly driven not by economic need or ideology but by religious longing for the coming of the Messiah.

While the goal of establishing a Jewish state or homeland, was universal among the Zionists, the political, social, and economic means to its foundation varied greatly. The social and political machines that were built around the three[20] major ideological factions in Zionism would become political parties, with different political, economic, and social agendas.

> Borrowing the political terminology of the Ottoman Empire, it can be said that the Zionist religious community, and later on the socialist community became *millets*, and actually *millets* within a *milla*, given that the Zionist community itself was part of the overall Jewish *milla*. (Swirski 1999:49)

These millets were "total parties" or "socialist macro societies" that not only provided education and political ideology, but also employment, health insurance, social clubs, banking, and housing for European Jews, while excluding Arabs and Mizraḥim (1999:88).

> The almost universal coverage of the Zionist educational *millet* hides two facts that will gain further relevance in the period after 1948. A significant segment of the Jewish population of Palestine stood on the margins of the new school system—Sephardi and Yemenite Jews, who together constituted about 15 percent of the Jewish population. (1999:51)

By the 1930s these political parties had solidified, and had produced three educational trends: General, Labor, and the National Religious Party (NRP).[21] The General school system was by far the largest educational trend, with 54% of all European Jewish pupils, followed by both Labor and the NRP schools with 23% each (Anglo-American Committee 1991:670). The trends were distinct and easily identifiable. However the actual curricular differences were, at least according to Nardi, small and tended to differ in only in the "supplementary" subjects.

> The General schools emphasized the academic subjects of the curriculum, both Hebraic and secular, and followed it rather closely. The [NRP] schools added hours for the teaching of Talmud, and the Labor schools

> increase their weekly schedules to make time for shop work and communal school activities. (Nardi 1945:36)

It is however hard to believe that each trend did not mark its materials and curricula with its particular ideology. The teaching of modern history, for instance, for a Labor Socialist could have very little in common with that of an Orthodox Jew. Similarly, science, language and most if not all other subjects must have been ideologically marked.

The National Religious Party (NRP) was formed in reaction to Herzl's elusory stance on the role of religion in political Zionism (Swirski 1999:47-48; Kleinberger 1969:35-37),[22] and fear that the colony would be torn apart by a "*Kulturkampf* between secular and traditionally religious Zionists" (Kleinberger 1969:35).

> Secular Zionist leaders proposed a peculiar formation for the resolution of the "war of culture": institutional separation between religious and secular schools, under one political and financial roof of the Zionist movement. This formula proved to be long lasting: in fact, it has been preserved to this very day, making Israel one of the few polities in which religious schools are fully funded by the state, but at the same time fully autonomous. (Swirski 1999:48)

The recent conflict over control of the Ministry of Education between the orthodox Shas, the left-of-center Meretz, and the centrist Shenoui parties demonstrates that this Kulturkampf is far from resolved. Following the path pioneered by the NRP, the leaders of the Histadrut, the monolithic Zionist labor union, and the other Socialist parties demanded that their schools be accorded a similar status to those of the NRP. The Labor trend was established in 1923. The General trend was recognized as a separate system, although it was only loosely linked to the General Zionist party (Kleinberger 1969:35).

The entire Zionist education system was transferred from the Jewish Agency to the Va'ad Leumi, the National Committee, in 1932, heralding the first tentative steps towards the centralization of Hebrew education (Nardi 1945:46-47).

> The central educational administration of the *Va'ad Le'umi* consisted of three bodies: a board of directors which determined the budget and administrative policies; and educational committee which dealt with pedagogic matters, e.g. a common minimum curriculum for all three trends; and a department of education which executed the educational policies. (Kleinberger 1969:35)

The centralization of education, however, had little affect upon the autonomy of the trends, which grew stronger under the Va'ad Leumi.

The major victim of this move towards eliminating schools which were not associated with the trends were the ḥeders established by the Yemenites in Jerusalem at the end of the 19th century, and the older Mizraḥi kuttābs. These schools fell or were placed outside of the Zionist millet (Swirski 1999:51), and consequently received little from philanthropy,[23] and nothing of the £P. 20,000 ($80,600) grant-in-aid which was given to the Va'ad Leumi by the Mandate government beginning in 1926. Any attempt to raise money for the Sephardi schools was blocked by "the various Jewish national funds [who] persisted in preventing any separate appeals by Sephardi representatives" (Eliachar 1983:178). In fact, the National Religious Party consistently opposed any and all aid given to these schools. The NRP argued that the Mizraḥi schools were by their nature religious, and thus should be part of the National Religious school network. This not only prevented the establishment of independent Mizraḥi school systems, it also forced these students into the National Religious school network, increasing the stature and funding of the NRP.

> The success of the National Religious Party in "obtaining" the Yemenites served as an enduring precedent, according to which the National Religious Party would continue to be recognized by the Zionist parties as a "natural venue" for Jews from… Arab lands, and, more recently, Ethiopia. (Swirski 1999:52)

Up to the recent establishment of Shas, this act has guaranteed the NRP as the only large religious Zionist party.

The period of unification under the Va'ad Leumi, from 1932 to 1948, reflects a watershed in Israeli educational history. In the space of 16 years, Hebrew education in Palestine solidified from a scattered and disorganized collection of schools, some loosely affiliated and others outright hostile to one another and the Zionist enterprise, to a unified system. While the trends survived, traditional education—the kuttābs and ḥeders—with the exception of the Ashkenazi Ultra-Orthodox, had disappeared. The Jewish philanthropic schools were incorporated into the new Zionist system, either as teachers' colleges or as vocational schools. The trend system would be ostensibly dismantled in the 1950s, however by that time all Jewish schools were controlled by the Ashkenazim. Thus, by 1926, any possibility of the construction of a non-Eurocentric state educational system was gone.

The Mandate government's insistence upon two parallel but unified and centralized systems of education created an embryonic government and enabled the trend system to thrive. At the same time, it allowed the Ashkenazi trend system to swallow any potential competitors. It is only now, almost 75 years after the Mandate's formation, that Ashkenazi dominance over the school system is being challenged.[24] Although the trend system was abolished 50 years ago, its impact continues to be felt in Israeli education today. Vocational tracking is one of the more obvious vestiges of the trends, and is a major contributing factors to the low rates of University attendance among working-class Jews and Mizraḥim (Swirski 1990; Shavit 1990).

Private and Missionary Education under the Mandate

The history of the Christian missionary schools is similar to that of the Alliance and the other Jewish philanthropic schools.[25] Both philanthropic and missionary schools enjoyed significant autonomy under both Ottoman and British rule. Under the Ottoman millet system, and the Ottoman reforms of the 16th and 19th centuries, European schools were far more independent than either the private Islamic schools or the Ottoman public schools. Similarly, under the British, European schools were treated with the same immunity as embassies. However, the fates of these schools were linked to their sponsoring nations; during the Second World War German and Italian schools were closed, though more often than not this was due to lack of funding, rather than government action. The missionary schools played, and continue to play, an important role in Arab education. Of the Arabic schools in Israel today that continually produce the highest scores on the Israeli baccalaureate exam, and the highest levels of university matriculation, most, if not all are Christian schools (Central Bureau of Statistics 1999:22.24-25). Unlike the kuttābs and the Jewish philanthropic schools, the Christian missionary schools were never absorbed into the public school system. The pressure from European nations on Britain and the Mandate government, like that on the Ottomans, guaranteed that the European missionary schools remained untouched.

> The purpose of [Article 15] is unmistakably clear. It was intended to protect the foreign schools against state control. France, Italy and the Vatican on one hand, and the Zionist organization on the other, were the major interested parties… the result was gratifying to foreign interests at the expense of the authority… It is clear then that with regard to non-public schools, the Palestine administration, through no fault of its own, found itself in an awkward political position. But it apparently did little or nothing to extricate itself from this position. (Tibawi 1956:135)

The missionary schools were both help and hindrance to the Arab and Palestinian nationalist cause. European missionary schools served as a safe harbor for Arab nationalism under the Ottomans and the Mandate. Although European education was not an active catalyst for nationalism their exemption from Government scrutiny made them more conducive environments for speaking and teaching about nationalism. In fact these schools contributed significantly to the formation of a generation of Palestinian intellectuals and nationalists.

However, the missionary schools also deepened the educational gap between Arab Muslims and Christians, and "consciously or unconsciously [promoted] respect and allegiance, not to an Arab culture and Arab nationalism, but to a welter of cultures and national ideologies" (Tibawi 1956:64-65). Writing of Christian education throughout all of Greater Syria, the educationalist and nationalist George Antonius describes western and missionary education as a mixed blessing:

> Although it raised the cultural standard to a relatively high level… in other ways it did harm. It emphasised sectarian divisions and added to them, in a country where their existence was… one of the main obstacles to national progress. It became an instrument of political penetration as well as a vehicle of culture; and, more reprehensibly still, it facilitated and sometimes deliberately encouraged the acquisition of political power by the clergy… It was striking at the root of the Arab national movement. (Antonius 1946:93)

Another ill effect of missionary education was furthering the already huge economic and educational divide between country and city, peasant (*fallāḥ*) and city-dweller (*madanī*). Since Palestinian Christians were largely city-dwellers, the missionary schools were located close to their target population. The Palestinian Muslims, of whom two-thirds lived in rural areas, did not have access to this high quality schooling. This has

contributed to the persisting educational gap between Christian and Muslim Arabs (Tibawi 1956:64-65).[26]

Towards the end of the Mandate the appeal and popularity of the Christian missionary schools waned. Up to the 1930s the missionary schools, along with two private Nationalist schools, Rauḍat Al-Ma'ārif in Jerusalem and Najāḥ College in Nablus, offered the only comprehensive education available to Arabic speakers in Palestine. With the expansion, however limited, of public education, private schooling ceased to hold a monopoly on education. Undoubtedly the high tuition was one of the major contributing factors in the decrease of private education, as well as a deep suspicion of the foreign schools followed the rise of nationalist feelings among Palestinians.

The Institutionalization of Hierarchy

If educational policies under the Mandate were, for the most part, applied in a similar manner to all sectors of the population, the policies of the newly established Israeli State can only be described as the opposite; creating a body of laws that treated Arabs and Jews, and Mizrahim and Ashkenazim, in remarkably different manners. And yet, the end result of both Mandate and Israeli policies were remarkably similar, creating and reinforcing the differential incorporation of ethnic groups into the state, and thus intensifying, legitimating, and obscuring the policy of segregation between Jews and Arabs, Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim. Of the two systems that emerged from the Mandate, Arabic education appears to remain unchanged under Israeli rule; retarded by the state's divisive policies towards its Arab citizens. Jewish education however underwent a transformation; the hodgepodge of bickering Zionist trends, were forged into a

centralized school system that was clearly divided, not along previous faults of political party, but rather across the older lines of ethnicity.

The First Decade and Establishment of Bureaucracy

In May of 1948 the Va'ad Leumi, Zionist National Council, the de facto governing body of the Zionist community under the Mandate, was replaced by the Israeli Government. However this change was only nominal, and the personalities remained the same. The administration of the Zionist educational system, along with all other responsibilities of the Va'ad Leumi, were now the jurisdiction of the national government, and the policies of the Va'ad Leumi were soon codified (Stanner 1963:27).

The codification of laws was touted as part of the process of conversion from council to government. The Compulsory Education Law of 1949 codified and legislated the established practices of the Va'ad Leumi, making de facto practices under the Mandate de jure under the state; and as such appears unremarkable. However, this law dealt a deathblow to the few remaining independent Mizraḥi schools, and ensured the monopoly of Ashkenazi education in Israel. The Compulsory Education Law of 1949 (herein, Law of 1949), as its name suggests, made elementary education compulsory for children between five and 17 years of age. However, all children were required to attended a school recognized[27] by the Ministry of Education (Stanner 1963:32). Mizraḥi schools fell outside the pale of the Zionist system, and were not recognized by the Ministry of Education. Consequently, their students were considered truant; parents could be fined or arrested, and children forced to attend a recognized school. For Ashkenazi youth, this law had little effect, since they were almost universally attending recognized

schools. Mizraḥi students found themselves in schools that they had little control over, their community schools were forcefully integrated into an Ashkenazi dominated school system, leaving them alienated and disempowered.

Local Communities and the Law of 1949

Just as the Law of 1949 removed the last traces of self-governance and determination from Mizraḥi education, the law also promised the same for the Palestinian citizens of Israel. In addition to initiating compulsory education, the Law of 1949 granted significant power to local authority. Of particular interest here is a clause within the Law of 1949 (Section 1, Definition C) which requires any area without "municipal status" to have its "local education authority" appointed by the national Ministry of Education (Stanner 1963:35-36). Since most, if not all, Zionist communities had established their municipal status during the Mandate, they were allowed to form a local educational authority, and thus had significant control over the education of their children.

Communities without municipal status, practically all Arab communities[28] and immigrant transit camps, were placed in receivership, and their local education authority was appointed by the Minister of Education. Consequently, most Jewish localities were given significant control over their schools; determining the hiring and firing of teachers and administrators and, to some extent, the classes and curricula that were offered. For those localities that had not established their municipal status, education and school management were completely controlled from above. Thus, for almost all Green-Line Palestinians, and those Jews, primarily Mizraḥim, living in transit camps, the local educational authority was anything but local.

Article 8a of the Compulsory Education Law of 1949, provides for the appointment, by the minister, of a committee or person as the local education authority. This authority has "the power to impose on and collect from the inhabitants of the area… a rate to cover the expenditure involved in carrying out the obligations imposed upon that local education authority" (Stanner 1963:160).[29] The "application of this law in practice discriminated against the disadvantaged Arab population" (Al-Haj 1995:63), since "in Jewish areas the Government paid to the local authority its share of the teachers' salaries… in the Arab villages the Government paid the teachers directly" (Benor 1961:85). In order to do so, the government collected a tax that was paid only by Arabs (Al-Haj 1995:63).[30] However, Jews in immigrant camps were paying neither taxes nor educational rate (Benor 1961:83-84, 89).

Curiously, something had switched after the end of the Mandate; Arabs went from receiving a free, if second-rate, education, to paying for it. Jews on the other hand, other than their local taxes, ceased paying the relatively high education rates. The definition of public or state education had been switched. During the Mandate, Arab education was under the direct jurisdiction of the state, and was free, although hardly universal. Zionist education under the Mandate was neither compulsory nor free. However, for the Ashkenazim it was close to universal. This switch in the definition, control, and location of state education may well seem revolutionary. However, for the Palestinian or Mizraḥi citizens of the new state, real change was minimal. Arab education was still controlled by a foreign power, and independent Mizraḥi education, following the patterns established during the Mandate, had been all but wiped out. Thus, the inner structures of segregation

and power remained very much intact. Arabs and Mizraḥim were isolated, and placed in schools over which they had no control.

The Trend System

The trends were another aspect of the Va'ad Leumi's educational system codified into the Israeli educational system by the Law of 1949. The trends—General Zionist, Labor, National Religious (NRP), as well as the non-Zionist Ultra-Orthodox Agudat Yisrael—were recognized by the Law of 1949, and became equal partners in the Jewish school system. This legislation, the existence of the trends, and their abolition four years later would have little if any affect upon the segregated Arab school system. However, like the effect of the local education authority clause on Arab education, the imposition of the trend system on the Mizraḥim would remove any trace of self-determination and local control over education.

Once legally incorporated into the state, the trends, like the political parties they represented, began to compete with a new urgency. The establishment of a self-ruling state meant that the power of the parties was significantly increased. Following the declaration of independence, Jews from all parts of the world began to stream to Israel. Some came as refugees from the Second World War and Nazi genocide, and others from North Africa, and the Middle East.[31] It was clear from the start that the new immigrants, by their sheer numbers, would represent a significant political force in the new state. The parties jockeyed back and forth over the bodies, souls, and votes of these new immigrants.

> The fiercest competition for pupils took place in immigrant camps inhabited by Jews who had come from Arab lands. In 1948 and 1949, the largest single group of these immigrants were the Jews of Yemen… The main competitors for Yemenite pupils were [Labor], on the one hand, and the two religious streams. (Swirski 1999:103)

There was little correlation between the ideological, religious, or political beliefs, and school choice. If, as Bentwich points out, a parent chooses a Labor school for their children, it may not be out of "Socialist convictions",

> but for fear that they might otherwise not be given employment by the local Labour Bureau. Parents who chose the [NRP schools] were usually religious themselves; but were often influenced by slanderous tales about the immorality of teachers in the General schools. (Bentwich 1965:40)

In almost every camp, or Jewish locality, no matter how small, a number of schools were opened—if even one parent demanded that his or her child attend a Labor, NRP, Agudat or General school, the government was obliged to provide one.

> As a result, in almost every camp or immigrant settlement, two three, even four schools were opened, often in violent competition. The infection spread to the old-established settlements as well… Scarcely a month passed without some newspaper article about stormy clashes, even leading up to violence. (Bentwich 1965:40)

The competition between trends culminated in the shooting of a Yemenite parent during a demonstration in a transit camp (Swirski 1999:103).

In 1953, four years after its official and legal adoption by the Israeli Government, the trend system was abolished. The State Education Law of 1953 was part of Prime Minister David Ben Gurion's new policy of centralization, wrestling power away from the parties. The policy of *mamlachtiut* centralized power, and superimposed the interests of the state over those of the parties.

> The *mamlachtiut* battle was fought on three fronts: the "destreaming" of the military forces, school system, and health care delivery system… Ben Gurion was fully successful only on the military front… [his] attempt to

> destream education… was in fact a defeat… some of the streams were never disbanded, and some even gained additional power. (Swirski 1999:109)

However, the Law of 1953 did not remove the well-entrenched trend system. In fact, Swirski argues that the new law was not intended to destroy the trends, but rather to regulate them. The Kibbutz school system remains as a vestige of the Labor system, and the NRP system remains very much intact, renamed as the Religious state education system.

The law of 1953 established two parallel school systems, "State" and "State Religious" (Stanner 1963:49). The two secular trends, Labor and General Zionism, were merged in the State schools (1963:168). To this day the secular trend is referred to as *klalli*, general, reflecting its origins in General Zionism. Ben Gurion assumed that Labor's dominance would guarantee that surrendering control of the schools would mean little real loss.

> [Labor] had become the largest Trend, with nearly one-half of the pupil population, and, as the leading party in Government, could expect to control the Ministry. There was no longer anything to fear. Some concessions had to be made to the General Zionists. (Bentwich 1965:42)

In fact, Labor did control the Ministry from 1953 until the appointment of the NRP's Zevulun Hammer in 1977 under Menachem Begin's Likkud–NRP coalition government.

The trend schools of the two major religious parties, the ultra-orthodox Agudat Yisrael and the NRP, were to be combined into a single national religious school system.

> Nevertheless, of the two main religious parties in the Knesset, only the [NRP] joined to coalition and supported the law; the Agudat Israel seceded (not only on the education issue). Most schools of the Agudat Israel ceased therefore to be official and fully-maintained, but were 'recognized' under the law, and grant-assisted, and have thus remained to this day. (Bentwich 1965:42)

The result of this law was a division of labor in which each trend was given its own turf. The General schools were placed under the direction of a Labor dominated government and ministry. The two religious trends, the NRP and the Agudat, remained untouched and were given a monopoly of the transit camps. “Thus, the two religious micro societies emerged as the main victors of the tripartite bargain of 1953; the bargain enabled them to stake a claim on all future ‘traditional Jewish immigrants’” (Swirski 1999:104). The real losers were these “traditional Jewish immigrants”, the Mizraḥim. The schools of the Yemenites and autochthonous Palestinian Jews had been destroyed by the Law of 1949. The early imposition of the trend system, which flooded the transit camps with money and schools, ensured that no independent system would or could be established. Like the Arab communities, the camps did not have municipal status; so all education was controlled from above.

After the Establishment

From its beginning the Israeli government was very concerned, at least in rhetoric, with the failure of the Mizraḥim within the school system. Histories of Israeli education usually explain post-independence educational history within three historical periods, representing general political strategies towards education, and specific strategies towards the problem of Mizraḥi failure and school drop out (Gaziel 1996:62-71; Iram and Schmida 1998:34-37).

Haim Gaziel suggests that the first decade of Israeli education, from the establishment of the state until 1958, shows a strategy of “formal equality” in which all students received a “uniform educational load, irrespective of their sociocultural

background, personal inclinations, and talents as individuals" (Gaziel 1996:62-63). This reflects the dominant project of state formation and nationalization. Few if any considerations were given to cultural or economic differences. Rather, a melting pot approach "in which immigrant children's initial identity would be shaped in the light of Jewish-Israeli [read; Ashkenazi] culture" (1996:62) was adopted. The sociologist S. N. Eisenstadt explains in his writings and advice to the government that the failure of the Mizraḥim to succeed in the educational system is result of their "strong adherence to old patterns of life [which] accounts for their special position in the Yishuv's social structure, where they formed a separate social group" (Eisenstadt 1967:51). In brief, according to Eisenstadt and many others, the immigrants from North Africa, Asia, and the Middle East failed to adapt and modernize.

By the early 1960s the Ministry's outlook had changed. The Wadi Salib riots of 1959 were a pivotal and perhaps causal point in social and educational policy towards the Mizraḥim. The residents of Wadi Salib, a poor Mizraḥi community[32] in lower Haifa, rose up in reaction against police brutality, terrible housing conditions, massive unemployment, and the Government's systemic discrimination against Mizraḥi Jews.

> The Wadi Salib demonstrations were the first organized Mizrahi protest in Israel, and they touched a sensitive nerve in the ranks of the Israeli elite, well evidenced by the appointment of a prime minister's investigatory committee, headed by a Supreme Court justice and including Israel's senior sociologist, S. N. Eisenstadt. (Swirski 1999:155)

Realizing the obvious correlation between the riots, general dissatisfaction of the Mizraḥi immigrants, and their lack of achievement in the state school system, the Israeli government, terrified at the possibility of violent ethnic uprising,[33] made a first attempt at educational reform.

The Ministry, then led by Zalman Aranne, formulated a new educational strategy, which Gaziel has characterized as based upon "differential resources" (Gaziel 1996:64). This included fewer students per classroom, head-start programs, and the "fostering of vocational education [and] introduction of a two-tiered new norm system" (1996:64-65).

> Israeli educators opted for the introduction of lower-level educational programs, constructed specifically for Jews from Arab lands, designed to limit the extent of scholastic failure, at the cost of giving up the vision of full educational achievements for all the new pupils. (Swirski 1999:176)

These efforts were paralleled by the construction of a welfare system "designed to provide a low-level, low-cost alternative and/or additive to the labor market" (1999:176). However, both educational and welfare systems were intended solely for Jews, and beyond the reach of the Green-Line Palestinians. Only in the past decade have ORT and 'Amal, the two independent organizations which provide vocational education in Israel, established schools in Arab towns and villages.

1960s: Tracking and Nurturance

If the original model for the Israeli education system did nothing to improve the social gap (*pa'ar ḥevrati*) between Ashkenazim and Mizraḥim, the second educational model of differential resources made things significantly worse. This was in part due to widespread prejudice on the part of both teachers and politicians. Kleinberger, an Ashkenazi sociologist of education and student of Eisenstadt, provides an excellent example;

> All these characteristics of the traditional society of Oriental Jews reflect the "primitive" mentality of its members which has been conditioned by the prevailing social system. Typical traits of this mentality are lack of rationality and planning, weakness of social and intellectual abstraction, adherence to the familiar and the concrete, magic thinking and superstition, inability to distinguish subjective intentions from objective

> conditions and formal relations… These are momentous impediments to scholastic success in a modern, Western-type educational system. (Kleinberger 1969:51)

However, when it became obvious that the second generation of Mizraḥim were actually doing worse in school than their parents, it was evident to many that some other factors were at play (Smilansky 1957; Swirski 1999:174).

In response to this continuing failure a new educational policy was enacted that introduced "ability groupings" and expanded vocational education in the Israeli school system (Swirski 1999:180-181). However, like the previous attempts at reformation, this one was also unable to repair the social gap. Rather, it further separated ethnic groups. The training offered and skills taught were of little value in the labor market, and the prevalent attitudes towards these schools were more damaging to the future of the students than good (Collins 1979:16-19).[34]

Vocational Education and Tracking

The history of vocational education in Israel is filled with contradictions, reflecting Labor Zionism's ambiguous attitudes towards a Jewish Proletariat. Vocational Jewish education can be seen as an outgrowth of the *mission civilisatrice*, the civilizing mission of 19th century European Jews towards their less fortunate sisters and brothers to the East. The Alliance Israélite Universelle, and the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden were both vocational in training and outlook, providing a rationalized education and job training for Middle Eastern and North African Jews. While the Alliance and the Hilfsverein both perished during the First World War, their influence and attitudes towards Mizraḥi education have remained.

The Hilfsverein and the Alliance were replaced by ORT, a philanthropic organization for the assistance and training of impoverished Jews with roots in Russia, and the Histadrut's 'Amal. Both are non-governmental organizations that, like the Alliance and the Hilfsverein, are staffed and funded by European Jews working with the intention of helping poor Jews learn useful trades. The Alliance and the Hilfsverein were established to help the Jews of North Africa and the Middle East, while ORT and 'Amal was to assist the poor Jews of Eastern Europe. As Ann Stoler (1995) has shown, social experiments in the colonies and upon the working classes often ran parallel to one another.

By the late 1960s the Jewish educational system in Israel had been completely converted to a two-tier system.

> In 1965, the Ministry of Education signed agreements with non-governmental organizations running vocational schools, with the purpose of doubling their student population; the government was to cover half the cost of expansion. (Swirski 1990:98)

> As result… the population of vocational schools in Israel doubled within 5 years, to 50,000 in 1970… [growing] to over 50 percent, to what was one of the highest proportions in the world. (1999:181)

Only about 20% of vocational students enter university (Central Bureau of Statistics 1999:22.22). The majority of vocational students are Mizraḥim, and most vocational schools are in Mizraḥi neighborhoods (Shavit 1984, 1990; Swirski 1999:181).

Differentiated education did decrease high school dropout among Mizraḥi teens, however, it did not increase university matriculation or success in the baccalaureate exams (Arum and Shavit 1995; Shavit 1990, 1984). Viewed cynically, these changes were nothing more than a new mechanism ensuring that Mizraḥi Jews remained underprivileged.

> Ability groupings became a major differentiating mechanism of the Israeli school system. In pushing them [the Ministry was], in fact, preserving the interests of the veterans, for the new differentiation served to consolidate the privileged position of the 'best' track. (Swirski 1999:188)

Not surprisingly, differentiated education did little to resolve the social gap. Rather it amplified the already distorted ratios in higher education.

Reform and Integration

Reforma and *Integratsia*, the reform and integration of the school system were the next step in the attempt to close the social gap between Mizraḥi and Ashkenazi Jews. Integration refers to the mixing of Ashkenazim and Mizraḥim within schools, not Arabs and Jew, and the incorporation of both academic and vocation students within one school. In the 1970s, encouraged by the civil rights movement in the United States, Mizraḥi parents protested the segregation of Israeli schools, arguing that the causes of their children's failure were due to poor schools and teachers. Much like the integration in the Southern United States during the early 1960s parents and children rallied around their schools and communities, for or against integration. Also, like the American version, little if any change in academic performance resulted from desegregation.

The structural reform of the school system, the Reforma, attempted to increase the quality of academic education through the creation of a junior high school system. Originally it had no connections to integration.

> The proposed restructuring of the school system suited the rising aspirations of the "state-made middle class". The change meant cutting short elementary school by 2 years, and creating junior high schools so that the elite among the middle class… would enjoy 6 years of continuous preparation for the matriculation exam, the prerequisite for college entrance. (Swirski 1999:191)

The state school system—as legislated in 1949—consisted of eight years of free compulsory elementary education, and four years of elective fee-based high school. The Reforma extended the compulsory free education from eight to nine years, and redesigned the Israeli educational system as six-years of elementary education, three years of junior, and three years of senior high school.

The Teacher's Federation (*Histadrut HaMorim*) opposed the Reforma since it would mean the loss of many of their members to the High School Teachers Union (*Agudat HaMorim*), which had broken from the Federation in the 1960s. The struggle between the Ministry of Education and the Teacher's Federation over the Reforma broke the power of the union, leaving the ministry dominant. In an effort to enlist support, the Ministry harnessed the protests of Mizraḥi parents, suggesting that the junior high schools would necessarily be integrated. Consequently the Reforma and Integratsia, unlikely bedfellows, were linked. Gaziel, apparently failing to see the irony of this marriage of convenience, comments:

> The reform sought to achieve its first goal [of social integration] by automatic promotion of all children from primary to post-primary education, by demarcating enrollment districts that would create junior high schools with an ethnically-mixed student population, by organizing heterogeneous home-room classes, and by encouraging social education in the school. To achieve the second goal [of raising the scholastic and educational level], comprehensive (academic/vocational) schools were set up, in which children with different talents and fields of interest might be catered to properly. Remedial care for low-achieving pupils, and encouragement of high achievement… were considered major objectives. (Gaziel 1996:67-68)

For the majority of the Mizraḥim, neither social integration nor raising the scholastic level was achieved. In fact, the Reforma and Integratsia, despite codification, were stillborn. Objections from angry parents and local authorities unable to finance the

construction of new schools made clear that the Reforma was too expensive, and Integratsia too objectionable.

Arab Educational History since 1948

This three-decade history of educational policy and legislation is understood to be the result of struggle on the part of parents, intellectuals, and politicians for a more equitable and appropriate educational system for the Jewish citizens of Israel. However, these reforms and laws have ignored the Arab citizens of the state. The law of 1949 required that the government provide schools for all children, regardless of origin. However, it would take several decades until the government even came close to fulfilling its own law for the Palestinian citizens. The development and codification of the educational system in Israel is ordinarily understood and explained as part of a great effort to close the social gap between Ashkenazim and Mizraḥim. However, this understanding ignores the presence of Arabs in Israel.

Although they were not intended to do so, these laws had a major influence upon the educational system of the Green-Line Palestinians. While the earlier law of 1949, particularly the municipality clause, had negative consequences upon the local control of education, the Reforma had a positive, if unintended, affect upon Arab education in Israel. In extending the mandatory minimum age of education from 14 to 15, Arab communities were able to insist that the government pay for the construction and staffing of new schools. Thus, the Reforma, which had little effect upon the Mizraḥim, increased number of Arab high school students fivefold, from three to 15 thousand between 1965 and 1975 (Swirski 1999:196).

Considering that they were not the intended target of either educational codification or reform, it makes little sense to map the history of Arab education after 1948 through legislation. More importantly, between 1948 and 1966 the Arab educational system was controlled by the Israeli Military Authority.[35] Thus, it is often asserted that since Arab education received little if any attention by the Government, its current state is the result of negligence, and not the consequence of a plan. However, Majid Al-Haj, citing the Office of the Prime Minister's *Report on Arab Education in Israel* (Jerusalem, 1955), suggests otherwise.

> As early as November 1947, upon the U.N. decision on the partition of Palestine, the Jewish authorities formed a special committee to work out a practical plan for the accommodation of the educational system of those Arabs who were expected to be included in the areas designated as the Jewish state. (Al-Haj 1995:61)

Arab education in Israel was well debated in the upper echelons of Israeli Government, and was hardly an accident.

The Palestinians, still reeling from the *Nakba*, the catastrophe of 1948, had lost the vast majority of their population,[36] especially teachers and educated Palestinians, who had fled in fear or were driven from their homes.[37] Those who remained in what would become the Israeli state were, for the most part, poor peasants who were unable or unwilling to abandon their land. Following 1948 more students than ever flocked to the schools, since they were now required by law to attend eight years of school, and also because they had nothing else to do. Employment was severely limited following the *Nakba*. Following the land seizures of the late 1940s and early 1950s children who had previously worked on family farms or as shepherds were unemployed. In a desperate bid to staff the schools the Military authority hired just about anyone who applied for the job;

creating a situation where the majority of teachers and staff in the Arab schools were under-qualified, many had not even completed elementary school. The problem of under-qualified teachers remained until the late 1970s in most Arab schools (Al-Haj 1995:154-155, Table 7.1) and remains a specter haunting the Arab schools in the South (see discussion "Corruption, Nepotism and Regional Difference", on page 174).

One proposed solution to the problem of under-staffing was for Arabic speaking Mizraḥim to teach in the Arab schools. This plan was never enacted. J. L. Benor, the Assistant Director General for Arab Education and Culture in the 1950s, points out that this plan goes against the tenants of Zionism.

> I am arguing also that there is no need for Jewish teachers in Arab schools, especially new immigrants from the Oriental groups. These Jews immigrate to the country in order to get acculturated in the Hebrew community and not in order to become Arab Israelis. Besides we may be able to move them to the Jewish schools. We have already started action in this direction. Some Jewish teachers will stay in the mixed centers, as you understand, but we try to keep their numbers down. (Copty 1990:285)

However, a large number of Jews teach in Arab schools, particularly in the South. In recent years it is notable that a significant number are Russian immigrants, who presumably could not find work within the Hebrew educational system.

Arabic Curricular Reforms

Rather then seeing the development of the Arab school system in terms of the codification and structural reform of the Jewish system, Al-Haj suggests that Arab education is best understood in two distinct periods, differentiated by curricula. The first period is the old curriculum, from independence to 1974. The second period is the reformed curriculum from 1975 to the present (Al-Haj 1998).

The process of centralization of the Arab system, which had begun under the Mandate, was completed during the first few years of Israeli independence. Other than the Christian schools, all independent schools and kuttābs were closed or incorporated into the centralized Military bureaucracy. The textbooks and curricula from the Mandate were seized and destroyed,[38] leaving the Arab system a blank slate for redevelopment by the Department of Arab Education under direction of the Military Authority. In its first decade, the Israeli government wiped out all curricula of the Arabic school system, leaving it isolated, and with "no alternatives but to accept any book or curriculum the [Department of Arab Education] produces" (Copty 1990:251). Mandate textbooks were judged too nationalistic, as were those from other Arab countries. It was not until 1967, almost 20 years after the foundation of the State, that there were textbooks for every subject. However, many of these were simply translations of Hebrew textbooks, and were not appropriate for a minority population (Al-Haj 1998:98-99; Copty 1990:249-252, 276).

Until the mid-1970s the Arabic school system functioned without a clear goal statement. Instead, as the Assistant Director of Arab education Benor noted, "security comes before everything else" (Amara and Mar'i 2002:27-28), and the success or appropriateness of education was of secondary importance. It was not until 1972 that a set of goals and curricula were established for Arab education.

> 1. Education in the values of peace.
>
> 2. Education for loyalty to the state by emphasizing the common interest of all its citizens and the encouragement of the uniqueness of Israeli Arabs.
>
> 3. Forming of a plan to make the economic and social absorption of Arabs in Israel easier.

> 4. Educating females for autonomy and for the improvement of their status. (Mar'i 1978:52)

An additional goal was

> to educate for the identification with the values accepted by the Israeli society—i.e., democracy and social ethnics; and also with the culture of interpersonal relationships accepted by it—relationships between the individual and his friend, relationships between the family, and the relation of the individual to society. (1978:52)

These new goal statements and policy made way for a new and revised curriculum (Peres, Ehrlich, and Yuval-Davis 1970; Mar'i 1978:70-83).

The old curriculum was lop-sided and poorly conceived at best, if not a malicious and willful siyāsāt al-tajhīl, policy of ignorance. In an astounding comparison, Peres, Ehrlich, and Yuval-Davis show how the Arabic curriculum in Israel devoted 256 hours of the school year to studying Jewish religious texts, more than twice the 120 hours of studying Qur'ān and other Muslim religious texts (Peres, Ehrlich, and Yuval-Davis 1970:159, Table 3). Similarly, Arab students in Israel studied slightly more Jewish history than Arab history.[39] The revised Arabic curriculum introduced by the Yadlin and Peled committees raised the curricular level of mathematics and science to the level of the Hebrew schools, and changed the social studies and humanities curricula, making them more appropriate for Arabs in Israel (Al-Haj 1995:142). The new curricula still retain cautious and ambiguous relations towards the "Arab nation" (1995:144-152).

The Military Authority

Shortly after the establishment of Israel the Knesset passed the Israeli Defense Laws of 1949. These were a translation and codification of the Mandate's Defense Laws. These laws were originally enacted in 1945 during the last years of the Mandate to crack down

upon Zionist terror organizations[40] that had been fighting a clandestine war against the Palestinians and the Mandate government (Jiryis 1968:3). The origins of these laws however are in the Emergency Laws of 1936 and the Defense Laws of 1939, enacted by the Mandate government to suppress the Arab Rebellion (1968:2). Ya'acov Shapiro, later the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice of Israel, argued during the Mandate that the foundations of the Defense Laws of 1945 would "destroy the very foundations of justice" in Palestine.

> The system established in Palestine since the issue of the Defence Laws is unparalleled in any civilized country; there were no such laws even in Nazi Germany… They try to pacify us by saying that these laws are only directed against malefactors, not against honest citizens. But the Nazi Governor of Occupied Oslo also announced that no harm would come to citizens who minded their own business. (1968:4-5)

There was a call in 1952 to repeal the Defense Laws during the first Knesset meetings. However, no bill was drafted.

By 1962 all of the major political parties[41] except the dominant Mapai (Labor) had come forward against the Military Government, calling for its abolition (Jiryis 1968:29-31). Other than the Communists, these parties were not concerned for the well-being of Israel's Palestinian citizens, but rather, in the words of Menachem Begin, then the leader of the right-wing Herut party, because "it is certain that the Mapai Party exploits the Military Government for its own ends" (1968:31). Mapai stood accused of using the Military Government in its own narrow interests; employing of many of its members, controlling the labor of the Palestinian citizens, and most importantly guaranteeing Mapai's continuing ascendancy in the Knesset by harnessing Arab votes (Jiryis 1968:31; Lustick 1980:221-222). In addition, the Military Government "facilitated the

expropriation of Arab land" through the offices of the Jewish National Fund (Jiryis 1968:44-47; see also Lehn 1988).[42]

The Military Government prevented "the formation of any Arab political movement which is either independent, or linked with any political movement other than the Maipai Party" (Jiryis 1968:44). It did so by blacklisting any Arab, particularly teachers, who spoke out against the Israeli government or even voiced support for another party or point of view. After the initial rush to staff the schools, teachers were submitted to extensive security screenings. J. L. Benor outlines the priorities of the Ministry, and consequently of the Military Government:

> When we began to organize the Arab education we set for ourselves three rules: A. We must give to the Arabs all that is due to them as citizens with equal rights; B. We must cancel or reduce as much as possible the differences, and first and foremost the artificial differences, between the Arab education and the Hebrew education and to move the Arab school on to the course of the Hebrew school; C. *State security comes before everything else*. (Amara and Mar'i 2002:27-28, emphasis added)

Teachers and administrators were hired and fired with security being the overriding concern.

> A security classification was held as an effective controlling tool over Arab teachers and the Arab educational system. Thus, teachers who did not comply with the political consensus of the authorities were not employed. An Arab teacher applying for a teaching position was required to fill out, in addition to the regular questionnaire, a personal questionnaire, which had nothing to do with professional skills. According to this additional questionnaire and other examinations, the office decided if the applicant is "of suitable qualifications" for teaching. (Al-Haj 1998:96)

Many teachers were fired, compounding the situation in the already greatly understaffed schools. According to Benor, teachers were fired if they had a "nationalistic past, or if they were active or inactive communists" (Copty 1990:281). The exact number of

teachers fired due to security concerns is unknown. However, Copty suggests that "the authority fired most of the old teachers" (1990:281). Currently, security concerns are less apparent than before, and security questionnaires for teachers have been discontinued since 1994 (Al-Haj 1998:96). However, to this day, all Arab teachers, and administrators must go through a security check before appointment.

Conclusion and Criticism

This chapter has shown how two centralized parallel educational systems were created during the Mandate. The Zionist and Palestinian systems became centralized, unified and grew to monopolies, swallowing the ḥeders, kuttābs, and other private schools. This created a fully functional and autonomous Zionist bureaucracy that would easily seize power in 1948. At the same time, the Mandate created among the Palestinians a mass of dependent petty bureaucrats who could not function without the structure of the Mandate. This had stark ramifications for the Arab school system. In addition, the Mandate's bureaucracy renewed and continued the hegemony of the Palestinian notables, and reassured the dominance of the European Ashkenazi Jews.

The years of the Mandate were the foundation of a parallel system of education that guaranteed that Jews and Palestinians would not—even until the present day—share the same school. The antecedent system during Mandate, as I have suggested, has left numerous other "vestiges" such as vocational tracking and a dual system of religious and secular schools that, like the parallel system of Palestinians and Jews, continue the ethnic division between European and Mizraḥi Jews. Following the establishment of Israel, the policy of differential incorporation into the state was maintained. However, it was

enabled not by a unified policy as under the Mandate, but by a broad series of laws and policies that facilitated segregated schools under the newly established Ministry of Education. Arabs and Jews, Ashkenazim and Mizraḥim, were kept in separate schools and tracks, ensuring that these social categories would become fundamental, natural, and self-evident explanations for why these groups are different.

I have outlined two separate histories: A history of Jewish education that is based upon the struggle between Ashkenazim and Mizraḥim, and a history of Arab education that revolves around the struggle between Jews and Arabs. In both cases education is a pivotal point, a fulcrum of the state's attempts to control the lives and futures of minority or subaltern social groups. However, these parallel histories contradict my original goal of constructing an encompassing history of Arab and Jewish education in Israel.

To go beyond parallelism, beyond the unyielding divisions of Arab and Jew, Mizraḥi and Ashkenazi, it is necessary to show that these categories are temporal, socially and politically constructed identities that obscure real similarities between these groups. I have suggested some of the ways in which these identities are historically constructed. The remaining, and more difficult task is to show ways to get beyond surface appearances.

Notes

[1] A version of this chapter entitled, "Education and Ascendancy Under The Mandate: The Establishment And Engineering Of Public Education In Palestine", was presented to the 2001 Association of Israel Studies Annual Meetings, Washington D.C.

[2] Yet it is odd, considering these roots in the European enlightenment, that Zionism found its most fervent adherents not in capitalist, imperialist, and nationalist Western Europe, but rather in feudal Eastern Europe.

[3] I will use the following to define the education of different ethnic and religious communities.

Arab Education: Referring to the education of all native Arabic speakers.
Christian Education: Referring to private Christian education, usually Missionary.
Muslim Education: Referring to private Muslim education.
Arab Public Education: Referring to State education of all Arabs.
Jewish Education: Referring to education of all Jews.
Zionist Education: Referring to any of the three trends of Zionist education.
Orthodox Education: Referring to the ultra-Orthodox Jewish schools.
Mizraḥi Education: Referring to the schools of the Sephardi or Mizraḥi Jews.

Note that after the foundation of the Israeli state and the passing of the State Education Law of 1953 all education is referred to by language of instruction, hence Arabic and Hebrew education.

[4] The Ottoman Turks invaded occupied Palestine in 1517. They ruled, with the exception of ten years of Egyptian occupation and the few months of Napoleonic rule, until 1917 when British forces under General Allenby and Arab forces under King Faisal and T. E. Lawrence defeated the Ottoman forces and "liberated" Palestine.

[5] Between 1816 and his death in 1849 Muḥammad 'Ali Pasha established over 50 elementary schools, and two secondary schools, as well as sending many students to Europe to continue their education (Tibawi 1972:50-56).

[6] Rather than use the rather dubious words modernization or westernization to describe the changes that occurred within education in the late 19th to early 20th century, I have chosen to use the term rationalization. While rationalization is as European in origins as the other terms, it does not, I believe, imply teleology, a progress towards "modernity".

[7] The law is also referred to as Ottoman Education Law of A.H. 1286. The Muslim calendar, *Anno Hegirae*, begins in A.D. 622, commemorating the *Hijra*, the migration of Muḥammad and his companions from Mecca to Medina.

[8] As translated by Laskier (1983:33-34):1. Working towards the emancipation and moral progress of Jews; 2. Lending effective support to all those who suffer because of their membership in the Jewish faith; 3. Encouraging all proper publications to bring an end to Jewish sufferings.

[9] Laskier (1983) offers the term *Ṣlā* in Moroccan Judaeo-Arabic, which was an alternative to the *Talmud Torah* for wealthier students in Morocco. Rodrigue (1990) uses the term *Meldar* in Judaeo-Spanish, and Eliachar *Kottaf* in Palestinian Judaeo-Arabic (1980; 1983).

[10] A modern acronym, *Tanakh* is composed of the Torah (The Pentateuch or the Five Books of Moses), and the Book of Prophets, and the Writings.

[11] Although comparison is inevitable, the mellaḥ was quite different from the Ghetto, although they were both areas that Jews were expected or forced to live. Mellaḥ has an unclear etymology, most likely derived from the Arabic *melaḥ*, meaning salt. This may refer to the agricultural poverty of the land.

[12] Beshara Doumani (1995) makes an excellent argument that, at least in area of Nablus, there was significant economic development in this period brought about by mercantilism. This may well be the case, however, there can be no doubt that the entire area was underdeveloped in comparison to Egypt, and Lebanon. Education was particularly under-developed in Palestine.

[13] Palestine was composed of the *Sanjak*s or governorships of Acre, Jerusalem, and Gaza.

[14] The British did not receive an international mandate from the League of Nations until 1920.

[15] For the purposes of this study, all monetary sums will be listed in both Palestine Pound (£P) and US Dollar ($). The £P is broken into 1,000 mils, and is equal to one £UK. I use the 1947 conversion rate of $4.03 to £P1, or 248 mils to $1.

[16] *Al-Umma* does not exactly translate as nation in the modern sense of a political entity, rather it connotes a people or community, often referring to the entire Islamic world (Wehr 1961:25).

[17] According to Tibawi, in 1947, the last year of the Mandate and its most "integrated", the Director and Deputy Director of Education were both British. Of the four Assistant Directors for Arab Education two were British (Director of Technical Education and Director of Female Education) and two were Arabs (School Director and Administration Director) (Tibawi 1956:39).

[18] The National Religious Party is also known as the Mizraḥi, for details see note 21 below.

[19] Note that Bentwich (1965:15) counts eleven schools, while Nardi (1945:19) counts twelve.

[20] I am, for the moment, ignoring the ultra-Orthodox Agudat Yisrael, which was as much a trend as any of the others. The Agudat provided its members with education and other social services as much as the other three trends. The only difference is that the Agudat was and remains strongly anti-Zionist.

[21] The NRP was, until 1956, known as the Mizraḥi, a shortened form of *markez ruaḥi*, spiritual center. Mizraḥi also means east, the direction towards which Jews in Europe would pray—towards Jerusalem. In order that it not be confused with the Mizraḥim, the Eastern Jews from North Africa, the Middle East and Asia, I will, following Swirski (1999:48), refer to the political party by its current name.

[22] There is some confusion as to when the NRP was founded: Swirski dates it at 1902 (1999:48), Bentwich in 1904 (1965:24-25) and Kleinberger in 1920 (1969:35).

[23] Zionist philanthropic societies had, by the early 20th century, pretty much usurped all of the donations that had previously gone to the Jewish religious community schools.

[24] That is, they are being challenged by the Shas schools.

[25] The purpose of the Christian schools was ostensibly to convert Muslim or Orthodox Arabs to more European versions of Christianity. The Jewish schools of the

Alliance or the Hilfsverein, on the other hand were not intended to convert non-Jews to Judaism, but rather to inspire internal renewal.

[26] Thus, the statistical breakdown between the Christian education and Muslim illiteracy in Israel is better explained by the huge gap in educational service and success between country and city, rather than between religious groups.

[27] Note that, under section five of the 1949 law, children attending unrecognized schools could be exempted, if the school is registered with the Ministry of Education. It is unclear if this exception was public knowledge. Whatever the case, "only a very small group of the ultra-orthodox section have availed themselves of this possibility and there has been no new publications of lists of [exempted] schools… since June 1950" (Stanner 1963:41-42). Thus the Ashkenazi yeshivas, while not members of a trend, were recognized by the state.

[28] Only the local councils of Tarshisha, Rama, and Peki'in, all fairly small villages, had been established during the Mandate (Benor 1961:85; Al-Haj 1995:62).

[29] See also Al-Haj (1995:62) and Benor (1961).

[30] While it is clear that this education tax is unique to the Arab population in Israel, Al-Haj is a bit disingenuous in that he fails to mention the locality tax, the *Arnona*, which all municipal residents must pay. It is funds collected from the Arnona that pay for the municipality's share of teacher salary. Since these Arabs do not live in a municipality, they do not pay Arnona.

[31] The reasons why Mizraḥi Jews came to Israel during the early 1950s are complicated. Abbas Shiblak's *The Lure of Zion* (1986) provides a sensitive and nuanced account of the immigration of Iraqi Jews in the 1950s.

[32] Wadi Salib was an Arab neighborhood prior to 1948. Its Arab residents fled or were forcibly uprooted after the *Nakba* and their homes were given to new Mizraḥi immigrants. The name *Wādī Ṣalīb* means hard valley, although an acquaintance, raised in Haifa, referred to it as *Wādī Salīb*, stolen valley.

[33] Swirski documents an astounding effort on the part of the Israeli Government to neutralize any threat of ethnic rebellion. "The leaders of the Wadi Salib were arrested and brought to trial. Furthermore, Labor politicians in Haifa arranged jobs for some… and

announced the imminent relocation of the Wadi Salib residents into new housing projects" (Swirski 1999:155).

[34] Arum and Shavit however suggest that the skills learned in a vocational track are useful in the job market, and serve to prevent working-class youth from unemployment (Arum and Shavit 1995).

[35] I have seen a number of conflicting dates for the end of the Military government, ranging from 1963 to 1967, however 1966 appears to be by far the most commonly cited, and thus I will adopt it throughout.

[36] The actual numbers who fled or left are very difficult to ascertain, since all previous censuses included the entire width of Palestine, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, and from 1948 to 1967 Israeli censuses included only within the Green-Line. Consequently, it is fairly meaningless to compare, as Al-Haj does, the Mandate census of 1947, with an Arab population of 1,294,000 (Al-Haj 1991:15), with the Israeli census of 1948, with an Arab population of 156,000 (1991:18).

[37] See Morris (1987) for more detail on whether the Palestinian refugees jumped or were pushed. Morris concludes that a combination of Israeli terrorism, and the assurance of the Palestinians that they would soon be returning combined to create *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem.*

[38] Apparently, rather than have these books make their way to market, the Department of Arab Education sold 32,213 Arabic textbooks to a paper recycler (Copty 1990:250-251). According to a Ministry memo, "the Inspector of the Arab Department of Education [was directed to] accompany the books and be present at the time of shredding so that he may be certain that the books will not reach the market" (1990:250). Among the books destroyed were 1,000 copies of *The Smart Rooster* (1990:251).

[39] Of the total history hours in Arab schools, 20.2% were spent studying Jewish history versus 19.1% on Arab history. It is notable that within the Jewish schools 38.8% of history hours were concerned with Jewish history but only 1.4% with Arab History (Peres, Ehrlich, and Yuval-Davis 1970:152, Table 1).

[40] There were two main Zionist Terrorist organizations, the Irgun, lead by Menachem Begin, and Lehi, also known as the Stern Gang.

[41] These included, the Liberal Party, the Communist Party, Herut, Mapam, and Achdut Haavoda; an odd coalition of extremities (Jiryis 1968:36).

[42] The Jewish National Fund (JNF or KKL, *Keren Kayemet LeYisra'el*) and the Military Government used Article 125 of the Defense Laws of 1945 to seize Arab land (Jiryis 1968:7). For more details see Lehn (1988)

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITIES OF LEARNING: TRACKING AND HIERARCHY IN SCHOOL

> You can not understand our education problems without an understanding of struggle with the government over our land, and between families.
>
> —Abu Lamis, Teacher

What defines a community? Class, ethnicity, religion? Common interests or engagement? Identity perhaps? To answer these questions I examine the history and current status of two schools and communities in Israel, and discuss the vicissitudes of community, and the relationships between community and state. As I have argued in the previous chapter, ethnic groups in Israel have been differentially incorporated into the Israeli state, providing access to power for some and denying it to others by means of governmental action. However, the politics that determine these policies are not only located on highest levels of government. Community politics, local struggles for power, and resistance affects the integration of a community into the state as much as government policy.

Communities of Practice

I begin this chapter by defining the classroom and the educational system as a community of learning, stressing the presence of a common search for shared meanings and practices across all schools in Israel, despite ideological, ethnic, or geographic distance. Jean Lave

and Etienne Wenger suggest that communities can be defined processually through the negotiation of shared meanings (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998).

> Collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations. These practices are thus the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise. It makes sense, therefore, to call these communities *communities of practice*. (Wenger 1998:45)

Members of a community of practice negotiate meaning through "participation", emphasizing the socially defined nature of meaning, and "reification", which externalizes and legitimates meanings within institutions (Wenger 1998:57-58). Teachers and students participate in their community of practice by negotiating the meaning of curricular materials, and reifying their interpretations when they reproduce them on state exams or submit official reports.

While I have found it very useful for structuring a comparative classroom ethnography, the concept of "communities of practice" fails to suggest ways that individual communities of practice can be understood in relation to the state and "to larger-scale practices" (Bergvall 1999:280). In order to overcome this limitation I must once more return to Gramsci's notion of hegemony, which I have embedded within a historical explanation of the processes by which community difference and inequality is institutionalized within the Israeli state.

Although I treat the two communities among whom this research took place, the Bedouin-Palestinian residents of Al-Aqsām, and the Jewish residents of Gourmetim as obvious and self-contained communities,[1] I do not wish to imply that these are concise categorizations, emic, or even positive. A significant number of Bedouin find the

name—and all that it represents—highly pejorative, and identify themselves as Palestinian. Residents of Gourmetim may deny that an Orthodox Moroccan and a secular Russian have anything in common, other than living in the same building. In fact, by many definitions of community, Al-Aqsām and Gourmetim barely qualify. Interaction, conflicting or consensual, appears to define what it means to live in Al-Aqsām and Gourmetim, not shared meanings, identities, ideologies, or interests.

However, such a definition of identity and community precludes comparison and neglects to note that our identities are political. The identities discussed in this section and dissertation—Mizraḥi, Israeli, Bedouin, Palestinian, Jewish, Muslim, et cetera—are not natural categories, but are the result of politics, economy, and history. There is very little about identity that is primordial. Identities, like communities, are forged in the heat of history. Therefore, in order to understand who makes up and composes communities, we must not only note shared histories and economies, but also, as Lave and Wenger suggest, shared commitment, focus, and communicative practices (Wenger 1998).

Al-Aqsām

Al-Aqsām is located 30 minutes before Beersheba, far off the principal highway. Like Beersheba, the first sign of Al-Aqsām are towers. Since Al-Aqsām has no industry to speak of, the towers, on closer examination, are actually minarets. As one travels closer, Al-Aqsām's poverty becomes more evident. Underneath the mosques, clustered around half-built stone houses, are shantytowns. On the dusty plain, between the minarets and the highway, are hundreds of encampments; a few low long tents that are, depending

upon the season, either black wool or burlap, and many one or two room huts, *sarif*,[2] built of construction block with galvanized or asbestos roofs.

Exiting the highway on one of the many steep dusty paths reveals a different world. While appearing empty from the highway, the shantytowns come alive the closer one moves. Dusty Subaru Sedans, Toyota Pickups, and an occasional—and usually spotless—SUV are parked next to ancient Ford tractors with rusty water tanks in hitch. A few chickens, goats, and sheep poke around at the earth or stand idly chewing in the shadow of hay bales. A few girls, playing close to home, stare as you drive by, while a small group of boys disengage from an impromptu soccer game, and shout greetings or—depending upon your appearance—mild taunts as you slowly drive a rutted trail. No adults are in sight.

Crossing these suburbs takes only ten minutes. Leaving the shantytown's dusty plain, the dirt path first parallels a deep *wādī*, a narrow gorge cut by winter rains, filled with old Peugeots, refrigerators, plastic bags, and an occasional dead animal. Then crossing over an unexpected curb turns onto an asphalt road, lined on either side by car mechanics, junkyards, and an occasional warehouse. Industrial Area B, as it is officially called—nobody seems to know of an Area A—is populated by men in cars or quickly moving from one building to the next. No women are in sight. In a few blocks, the streets finally feel alive, filled, depending upon the time of day, with groups of school children wearing backpacks with cute Japanese Anime characters, jeans, plastic sneakers, and depending upon their gender, t-shirts or long shirts covering their knees. At other times of

the day, women, wearing jeans, the long black Bedouin *thōb*, or the drab colored Islamist *jilbāb*, walk between homes and market in small groups.

In the afternoon, after school, and work, the streets are filled with *shabāb* (youth), and some older men, walking, driving, or sitting outside the ubiquitous *dukkān*, small stores that sell limited selections of fruit and vegetables, can goods, frozen meat, cigarettes, soda, and household items, ranging from cheap aluminum pans to porcelain statuettes. Streets are just wide enough for two cars to squeeze by one another and the cars parked half on the sidewalk. From the street, all that can be seen of most houses are the plastic fences surrounding them and the unfinished top story, littered with unused concrete construction blocks and long iron reinforcement bars bent in odd directions, crowned with a satellite dish and the ever present solar panels and hot water tank. Building materials vary greatly, from burlap and concrete block to beautifully crafted homes made of Hebron limestone. Courtyards range from fence-bound lush gardens of grass, flowers, and citrus trees, to random piles of dirt and trash.

Continuing towards downtown, through different neighborhoods, and what appears to be an incomprehensible maze of streets,[3] one passes innumerable small stores and goes over the steep speed bumps that protect a small neighborhood school or family mosque. Once out of an enclosed neighborhood, the central layout is clearer. In a deep valley between four neighborhoods is Al-Aqsām's *masjid jāmi'*, central mosque, a huge two-story stone building in the shape of a hexagon. At night, the green neon lights around the minaret reflect down and give the building a strange, unearthly glow. Finally,

surrounding the center of town, two schools can be seen. The school buildings are, like elsewhere in Israel, personality-less concrete buildings.

A drive through the central neighborhoods in Al-Aqsām will reveal an elementary school, kindergartens, and numerous private preschools. Elementary schools tend to be located on one of the main roads enclosing the neighborhood, and are usually named after one particular family. High schools, on the other hand, are supposedly on neutral ground, between family identified neighborhoods. In both cases, buildings are drab concrete, surrounded by a tall and often red fence. The yards or playgrounds that surround the schools are mottled grass. Dirt, attesting to heavy traffic and perhaps meager concern, makes the greater part.

There are two high schools in Al-Aqsām. The newer school, Al-Aqsām Comprehensive High School, was completed almost five years ago and is located on the western side of town. The older school, Al-Aqsām General High School, which was established almost 35 years ago, is located on the town's northern border, a kilometer from the kibbutz, which appears to guard the official and paved entrance, and two hundred meters from city hall. A third high school, Al-Aqsām Technical High School was being built during my tenure, slated to be complete and functional by 2003. The Al-Aqsām General High School (herein referred to as Al-Aqsām General) was the epicenter of my research. The other schools—while obviously playing a major role in the lives of many—are peripheral to my experience as writings and descriptions will reflect.

A Geography of Institutions

Geography is destiny and power. In Israel, as elsewhere, the location of institutions reflects the distribution of power within communities. The forces that determine where and when a school, or any other institution, is built often do so with narrow self-interest in mind. It is obvious that geography is regional and, consequently, must be understood within both local and national contexts. The geography of schools in Al-Aqsām should, like power differences, never be taken for granted. The simple fact of location reflects pre-existing social relations. Schools are not simply placed in the most convenient, accessible, or central vacant lot. There are, at any given moment, dozens, perhaps hundreds, of empty spaces in Al-Aqsām that could house a new school, hospital, clinic, library, police station, or falafel stand. The choice of one of these locations is based upon much more than objective fact.

What are these geographic and social facts that influence the location and consequent functioning of public institutions? In the case of Al-Aqsām and the Bedouin-Palestinian citizens of Israel, it is necessary to outline the historical process of their sedentarization, the particular social structure of the Arab family, and the affects of Israeli Government policy.

Family, Sedentarization, and the State

Although called Bedouin, it is unclear if the Negev Arabs ever were purely nomadic herders. However, it is known that at the turn of the 19th century, in the waning years of the Ottoman Empire, the Negev Bedouin were largely semi-nomadic pastoralists,

migrating between two permanently possessed or rented pastures, one for the dry summers and another for the wet winter. Thus, ownership of land, while largely undocumented,[4] was established and recognized.[5] In the early part of the 1950s, shortly after the Israeli War of Independence, or the *Nakba* (Arabic, catastrophe), the Israeli Government forcibly settled the 11 thousand remaining[6] Negev Bedouin onto a "reservation" (Hamaisi 1990: preface) similar to those that the U.S. Government constructed to resolve its native problem. Most Bedouin were uprooted from their family land, forced to live within a much smaller and barren territory. As a result the Negev Arabs were forced to rely upon wage labor (Marx 1984:1-15) as their sole source of earnings within a structure of income gradients based on Arab versus Hebrew labor (Lustick 1980:7).

Direct military rule over the Arabs in Israel ended in the mid-1960s, after the formulation of a "Master Plan" that included an official policy of containment, forcing the Bedouin to settle in planned villages (Hamaisi 1990). These villages or settlements were, according to Falah, a form of control that was to prove "more effective" than the reservation.

> By making the Bedouin landless and leasing them state land, it provided Israel with more effective control over the Arab minority than the earlier direct military rule (1948-1963). A new sort of control expressed through the mechanism of dependence on the state, which supplied the means of livelihood and land on which to live, came into existence. (Falah 1983:322)

The first of these new Bedouin communities was Tel Ṣeba'[7] (herein: Tel) founded in 1965 (Hamaisi 1990:5) or 1966 (Falah 1983:314). Small pre-built houses on 400m^2 lots of land were offered for sale by the government at highly subsidized prices (1983:314).

In its first years Tel failed to attract many settlers. Two explanations for its initial failure were suggested by the experts, the Israeli Arabists (Abed 1986). The first explanation, suggested by Amiran, was that the Bedouin were simply too primitive to understand the advantages offered by Tel (Falah 1983:314). However, in retrospect this little sense, as they were willing to live in other locations. The second explanation, argued by the anthropologist Shmueli, was that the failure of Tel was due to the fact that the original settlers of Tel were of "'lower tribal routes' of the Negev Bedouin, while the place did not attract other 'noble Bedouin' who were 'socially superior'" (Falah 1983:314). While poorly conceived and explained, Shmueli reveals something very important that was happening within the Bedouin communities, and affecting settlement patterns.

The Bedouin were, for the most part, unwilling to forgo all claims to their familial land, which was required in order to purchase land in Tel. Consequently, those who initially settled in Tel, "were mostly landless individuals and tribes who had become landless after the authorities acquired or expropriated their lands during the early years of the state" (Falah 1983:322). Not all Negev Bedouin were uprooted from their land following the Nakba, the catastrophe of 1948. A number of families, particularly those whose land fell within the boundaries of the reservation, remained on their land, thus creating two different classes of Bedouin (1985a:39-40).

> The first group comprised Bedouin whose land was appropriated after they were moved to the new location. This group held state lands on an annual lease, but could not build stone houses on rented land and hence converted their tents into tin shacks and wooden huts. The second group comprised those Bedouin who remained on their lands. (Falah 1985b:363)

In order to understand the current status of the Negev Arabs, it is of great importance to realize that the families that were allowed to remain on their land were not, in any way, randomly chosen. Rather, all are members of one grouping within the Bedouin population, the "original" or *'aṣlī*—often erroneously called noble.[8]

The initial failure of Tel to attract residents resulted in a new approach to community planning for the Bedouin. Rather than build a community anew, the Israeli authorities established Al-Aqsām on the lands of the Nuqabā', a very large extended 'aṣlī family. Thus, rather than establishing a new community and importing residents, the planners decided to establish a town where there already was a population. Al-Aqsām's model proved to be much more successful than the tabula rasa of Tel, and was used as blue print for all subsequent planned Bedouin communities.

This policy encourages the development of each town as the home of a particular *ḥamūla* (clan or extended family)[9]. As a consequence the distinctions of ḥamūla and origin have become divisive factors within the Negev Arab community. While these social distinctions existed long before the Mandate, they have increased since the foundation of the Israeli state. Ḥamūla and origin are two central facts that determine the allocation of power. In the case of the Green-Line Palestinians, there can be little doubt that social structure is largely determined by a familial structure in which bloodlines determine the flow of both capital and power (Gran 1996).

Talal Asad (1975), Ian Lustick (1980), Soheir Morsy (1983), and Nahla Abdo-Zubi (1987) argue there is nothing traditional about "traditional" Arab social structure in Israel. Thus, the ḥamūla is the result of specific Israeli policies towards Arabs.

> The institutionalisation of the hamula in local government is an attempt to provide an ideological solution to this political contradiction: for through this device it becomes possible to control rural Arabs administratively and also to separate them authoritatively on the basis of an imputed ethnicity. (Asad 1975:273)

Arab social structure in Israel then has been manipulated by the Israeli government primarily through the mechanisms of local government and also, as Asad suggests, through the influx of capitalism.

Throughout my research, when I asked about the causes of the internecine fighting between Arab families, I was inevitably told that the Israeli Arabs were victims of governmental manipulation that resulted in this interfamilial conflict. While I wanted to believe this, no one provided an example. There is, however, nothing mysterious about the process by which governments manipulate and change the social structure of groups. Social structure is incredibly flexible. Far from being a group of vestiges, social structure reflects the human ability to quickly adapt to new settings. All that is really needed is a stick and carrot to change or manipulate social structure. In the case of the Green-Line Palestinians, this was the legal distribution of land and the allotment of local government positions. An excellent example of this is the appointment of school principals.

Choosing the Principal

On a policy level, school principals are chosen through the action of a combined committee of members of the local council, city hall, school inspectors, and the Ministry of Education.[10] Positions are advertised in national newspapers, applicants apply through the Ministry, and are ranked by the committee according to education, experience,

leadership skills, and relation to the community. Once the committee selects a candidate their recommendation is forwarded to the Ministry of Education for final approval. According to the State Education Law of 1953,

> the Director-General [of the Ministry of Education] shall appoint the principals of institutions in consultation with the Pedagogic Secretariat… The Director-General shall, through the district inspector, consult a local authority… before he appoints, or decides upon the transfer of the principal of an institution. (Stanner 1963:238)

However, selection process rarely goes according to policy.

In actuality, a large number of factors that are not mentioned in the law are included in the selection of principals. Among the Arab populations of the South, the first and foremost of these factors is family and land. While unsettled and uncultivated land in the Negev is plentiful it is at a premium in the seven recognized Arab settlements. Since land was divided between the settlers and those who originally lived on the land in the six settlements following Tel, certain families, particularly the aṣlī, appear to have rights to a much larger amount of land then those of other families. For more recent settlers, the premium on land creates a situation where one generation of a family is able to purchase land, while others are not. The influence of this upon schooling and education cannot be underestimated. The land ownership system in connection to Bedouin family structure creates a series of monopolies in which schools are literally owned by families. Thus, in Al-Aqsām, the two high schools are controlled by one of two families who furnished the land and, in reward, provide the principal as well as many teachers. This does not necessarily mean that the principals are less qualified. However in the words of one

teacher, it feels as if the schools are family "cartels" and other families are disenfranchised.

Local councils or city hall, the Ministry of Education and other powers in the school system either manipulate or acquiesce to these family divisions. There is no talk of busing or integration. Schools continue to be built on family property. One result of this is that inter-family conflicts tend to be played out, frequently violently, in the school. Thus, in Al-Aqsām General High School violent group fighting broke out twice in the first month of the 1999-2000 school year. In both cases, significant damage occurred to the school itself and psyche of the students, not to mention the hospitalization of several students who had been stabbed with knives. The battles are understood by most teachers, students, and residents as an attempt on the part of the Nuqabā', the dominant family in Al-Aqsām, to demonstrate its strength and control over the school. The two main administrators, the principal and vice-principal, both from Al-Nuqabā', were accused by a local newspaper of hiding in their offices during the first fight, afraid to interfere in their family's assertion of superiority.[11] On the second occasion, two teachers, both from Al-Nuqabā', reported that they had been thrown out of the clan's *shiq* (a tent or building for guests and gathering, *dīwān* in standard Arabic) for not actively supporting the return to school of two family members who had instigated the fight. These fights are a direct result of the policy of identifying schools with particular families, and of land policies. In both cases, while the fights were between school children, they reflect larger conflicts between families.

Bypassing the Rules

Although there is a specific process by which principals are chosen there are also means of bypass. Notable is that of *menoui* (Hebrew: subscription, appointment). In an emergency, the Ministry of Education can appoint a temporary principal. An example of this occurred in the nearby town of Rahīn. The Rahīn Middle School is named after a prominent member of the Al-'Anmar family that had donated land for the construction of a school. Since its construction in the late 1980s, the school had been administered by Ibrāhīm Al-'Anmar, a prominent and well-educated figure in Rahīn who was successful and well regarded.

In 1996, after the resignation of Ibrāhīm Al-'Anmar as principal, the city council, which was then run by members of the Shas party, all Orthodox Mizraḥi Jews,[12] appointed Ibrāhīm's cousin to the position of acting principal through menoui. It is doubtful if he could have been appointed through the regular process, due to his lack of popularity and credentials. However, in this case, because the school stands on Al-'Anmar land, principal would be from this family. After a few years, Ibrāhīm, seeing that his cousin's position as the principal was threatened, which consequently endangered his family's position as the managers of the Rahīn Middle School, announced that he would return as the principal. Later that summer, he declared that he would not be returning, and his cousin was reappointed acting principal—menoui for the next three years.

Parenthetically it is, however, unclear how the familial monopoly of schools affects student achievement. For the most part, the children of 'aṣlī families, particularly those in position to manage schools, have relatively low rates of educational success,

while the children of many disenfranchised families appear, paradoxically, to have significantly higher rates of success in the baccalaureate exams and university attendance.

Family, Violence, and the State

> It should be borne in mind that three out of seven comprehensive secondary schools were established in the wake of tribal murders, rather than out of pedagogical considerations. (Abu-Rabi'a 2001:101)

The familial politics, conflict, and violence that appear so much a part of Arab life in Israel and is so often used as evidence of the overwhelming weight of tradition and rejection of modernity, are not the result of the unchanged, unbridled, primordial passions of the Arab, as many Israeli Arabists would have you believe (see Abed 1986). Rather, the Israeli state has and is continuing to manipulate the structure of Arab society. In the previous pages I suggested one mechanism by which this is achieved; using land ownership and settlement patterns to encourage division within the Arab community in the Negev. This is not to say that the Arabs have been blind, faultless victims. Certain people have greatly benefited from this power structure. Principals and members of local councils gain power and income from their positions. Construction contractors use their powerful position within the family to hire poorer relatives at below-market wages. At the same time, poor and exploited family members know that the extended family functions as a welfare state in miniature. Many defend this system, arguing that, as opposed to cold, callous democracy, no one starves or is homeless.

The strategy of keeping the Arabs divided on family lines was learned from the British, who were masters of dividing and controlling their colonies. The particular policy adopted by the Israeli state in the settlement of the Negev Arabs, the Bedouin, served to

bring new meanings and importance to previously existing social structures. Hierarchies of family and origin certainly existed among the Palestinian Arabs long before the birth of modern Zionism and the Israeli state. Talal Asad (1975) and Nahla Abdo-Zubi (1987), tracing changes in Arab social structure, suggest that the importance of the ḥamūla decreased during the British Mandate, only to increase after the establishment of Israel.

> Economically, the proletarianization of the villagers led to a strengthening of family ties because of the specific circumstances under which it was experienced. The Arab villagers were not substantially integrated into the Israeli labour force. For Arabs, proletarianization was not consequently followed by continuous employment at a living wage... Palestinians in Israel, excluded from full and equal participation in the educational and occupational life of the nation, and with a limited scope for expressing their political interests, have been forced to have the family provide the organizational basis for important aspects of social, economic and political life. (Abdo-Zubi 1987:34-35)

The ḥamūla and other so-called traditional family structures must be understood for what they are—the result of the influx of European capital and the manipulation of the Arab family structure by the Israeli government.

Family Structure and Politics in Al-Aqsām

In 1972, when it was established, Al-Aqsām was located on the land of the Nuqabā' family, on the lands owned by Sheikh Qāssim Nuqabā'. Shortly after its founding, as predicted by the Arabist Shmueli (Falah 1983:314), a number of smaller, landless families quickly moved into Al-Aqsām and built some of the first permanent houses. Shortly afterwards, a few larger landless families moved in. Up to the late 1980s local government, or at least the parts of it that were controlled locally, was completely dominated by the Nuqabā' family. This domination began on the lowest levels and

extended all the way to principal and mayor. By the early 1990s the domination of the Nuqabā' family was threatened. This was brought about by an alliance between the Amlā', a huge but landless family, and the Labor party. A large number of smaller families, feeling that this alliance would better serve their interests than the Nuqabā', brought about a coalition that served to temporarily topple the Nuqabā' family, and force them into a power-sharing arrangement. A few years afterwards, these smaller families, disappointed with the actions of the coalition government, were again unified under the umbrella of the Ḥaraka Islāmīya, the Islamic Movement in Israel.

Much like the coalitions of the Israeli government and the distribution of ministerial portfolios (*tik*), the power-sharing politics of Al-Aqsām leads to the political appointment of principals, as well as the construction of a number of different schools. However, in accord with the distribution of power in Al-Aqsām, appointments are distributed by family. As example, the second high school in Al-Aqsām was built in the mid-1990s, during a power-sharing arrangement between the Nuqabā' and the Amlā' families. There were a number of possible locations for the school, and yet the new school was built on Amlā' land with an Amlā' principal. Most tellingly, the new school was built quite close to the older school even though there had been complaints that students had to walk up to five kilometers since there are no school busses or local transportation in Al-Aqsām. The location of the new school was completely due to the position of the Amlā' family within local government.

Al-Aqsām General High School

Upon entering Al-Aqsām from the official entrance, rather than the countless dirt roads, one is first struck by how well organized it is: A large sign welcomes the visitor in Arabic, English, and Hebrew and many smaller green signs, placed in the middle of a well-tended divider, proclaim in Arabic, "God is Great!" and "Praise the Prophet!" Soon afterwards, however, one notices a small elementary school slightly off the main road, the physical condition of which is terrible. The building is constructed out of weather beaten clapboard with once bright greens and blues faded into pastels. The playground is a dusty dirt field with a few patches of grass, littered with a broken jungle gym and the inevitable rusty metal frame forming the two goals of a soccer field. Scattered on either side of the school and paralleling the road is a mixture of houses, some constructed out of stone or concrete and others out of cinder block with corrugated roofs. Further down the main road is the new fire and police station, with a new fire truck, a few green police jeeps, and a broken ambulance. Beyond the station is Al-Aqsām General High School.[13] The school is wedged in a small valley between three hills. There is a desolated, dry hill to the north, and a lush green hill housing a middle school to the west. To the east, overlooking the school, is the large hill housing the downtown complex including: city hall, a chain grocery store, the civic auditorium, and a small strip mall with the post office, a few restaurants, clothing stores, and a stationery store.

The school, surrounded by a tall green metal fence, is made up of three irreconcilable buildings. To the east of the tiny parking lot is the first incarnation of the school: five long dilapidated wooden buildings resembling barracks, each housing three

class rooms. The two wooden buildings to the east are empty, abandoned due to unsafe roofs. The other three barracks are used occasionally. A few remedial level classes meet there. Few of the classrooms have doors, and none have and may never have had glass in the windows. Across a small fence and ditch cut by water run off from the nearby hills, lies the new wing of the school. Due to labor and contracting difficulties, it took three years to build the wing. Made out of tan stuccoed concrete like almost every other public building in Israel,[14] the building stands in incredible contrast to the barracks. Four wide steps lead up to two double doors that, since the inauguration of this building in early 2001, serve as the main entrance to the school.

The new wing juts out, built into a hill, and rests upon the top floor of the old wing. Like the new wing, the older one is built of concrete and is of the same basic design, a square building of two floors. The ground floor contains a few classrooms, the administrative offices, library, social worker's office, janitors' room, and two bomb shelters. The bomb shelters, until the construction of the new wing, doubled as a teachers' lounge and computer lab. The classrooms on the second floor and in the new wing are arranged with the teacher's desk close to the door, facing the students' tables. The tables are arranged in rows, usually five rows of four tables, each for two students. Boys and girls do not share tables; in general, girls sit towards the front left of the teacher, closer to the door, while boys sit towards the rear right. Entering the school from the main door gives a pretty good impression; the halls are quiet with a few students waiting quietly outside of teacher's lounge and administrative offices. Going deeper into

the school quickly dispels this illusion of order, yet only on very rare occasions does the school ever appear to be chaotic.

For both teacher and researcher the lounge is an escape from the students. Like all other parts of the school, the teachers' lounge is divided by gender. Women, both teachers and staff, sit at two tables located on a small dais close to the door. Male teachers and staff, who are the clear majority in Arab schools, sit in the main part of the room. Opposite from the women's dais, the kitchenette is raised slightly above the men's area. There are two tables here where, unlike in the classroom, both men and women sit.

The lounge is a pretty comfortable place. As teachers walk in, they are greeted or teased by others. Coffee and tea are always available as well as the occasional pastry and soft drink. Teachers have at least one, if not several free hours a day when, unless they are assigned to patrol the halls, or sit in study hall, a euphemism for detention—they will sit and work in the lounge. At any given hour, six or more teachers will be sitting around the tables speaking in Arabic, or preparing for class. Between classes and during lunch break the lounge is filled with teachers and can be quite noisy and smoky. For both the teachers and me, as researcher, the teachers' lounge was a welcome reprieve from the classroom and students. Some of my best research actually took place in the lounge by listening to and participating in conversations among teachers. I was always relaxed there and felt much more at home there than in the classroom. Indeed, after leaving Al-Aqsām, during my tenure in Gourmetim and Rimon high schools, the welcome and greetings I received when entering the lounge for the first time in six months was wonderful. I can only assume that, for the most part, teachers feel the same way.

If the teachers' lounge is a welcoming place for the teacher and researcher, the classrooms are a different story. Walking into a high school classroom anywhere can be intimidating, and these were the first classes I had attended since my own graduation 14 years before. After the initial shock, what was most striking was the huge variation between different tracks within one school and, as I was to see, between schools and, consequently, between ethnic groups.

Twelfth Grade Classes in Al-Aqsām General

Local politics do not stop at the classroom door; rather, they determine how the classroom operates and who studies what. In this section I will describe three different classes at Al-Aqsām General that I observed during the 1999-2000 school year. Each of these classes is tracked, that is, each concentrates on or majors in a particular topic and, consequently, is directed towards a particular future: university, community college, teachers' college, or the labor market. Although almost all conversation in the school, from classroom to the lounge is in vernacular Palestinian Arabic, the naming schema runs according to the Hebrew alphabet, beginning with *alif*, A, and running through D, *dalet*.[15] Although it is not necessarily universal, in Al-Aqsām the A-level students were the most likely to matriculate to university, while the D-level students were least likely. Indeed, I heard that for the 2002 school year, the letters would be randomly assigned, in an attempt to minimize possible self-fulfilling prophecies. Tracking is begun in the tenth grade and carried through graduation.

It was clear, when even glancing into the top ranked senior class in Al-Aqsām, 12A, that this class and these students were the cream of the school and the community. While I have no evidence to suggest that they were the smartest, they were, for the most part, selected as the best students. They were also, not incidentally, the children of important, wealthy, and notable local figures. Their class schedule was science-oriented and had been so since the tenth grade, when the state curricula allowed for elective classes. Their studies in the sciences and math were, by American standards, quite advanced; In addition to the required English and Hebrew, they studied calculus, and the equivalent of advanced placement[16] physics, chemistry, and biology. Notably, they were not studying literature, or social science classes. With few exceptions, 12A was, from a teacher's point of view, an ideal class. The students actively participated and were relatively well behaved. The 12A teachers were, like their students, the cream of the crop; the highest qualified and most experienced teachers available. For the most part, these advanced students matriculated to Ben Gurion University in Beersheba and a few to a local Junior or Teachers' College.

The literature and humanities track, 12B, and management and business, 12C were remarkably similar classes. In fact, there was quite a bit of cross-over between them, with some B-level students attending C-level classes, and vice versa. A few classes, particularly the social sciences (geography, history, and sociology), were offered to both classes. The mathematics classes were interchangeable with a third of 12B attending 12C's more advanced calculus class. Both classes were filled with bright, but seemingly less motivated students. Most were not driven (by parents most likely) to

attend college as the 12A students were. In terms of social standing, the students were diverse. Unlike 12A, there did not appear to be any children of notable, wealthy, or politically powerful families. Rather, 12B and C students appeared to be a middle stratum of Arab society in Al-Aqsām. Their fathers[17] were employed in full time jobs as skilled laborers, or petit bourgeois. For the most part the students in 12B and C matriculated to one of four schools, Kaye Teachers' College in Beersheba, one of the two regional community colleges, or a technical college.

The general studies track, 12D was, as described by one teacher, a vocational track without vocational training. The class was composed of 26 boys and seven girls. The curricula, in Hebrew, Arabic, and mathematics were watered-down versions of the regular tracks. Science and history were replaced by extra religion and gym classes. It was not expected that any of these students would continue their education and, indeed, none of them received a full baccalaureate. One student however, matriculated to a seminary to study the *Sharī'a*, Islamic religion and law.

There was a definite hierarchy between the classes. While the history of tracking in Israeli schools is detailed in chapter 2 (see page 78), there are significant differences between vocational tracking and major subject tracking. For the most part in Israel, students are either vocationally or academically tracked. While the distinction between academic and vocational tracks has been extensively documented in Israel (Shavit 1990; Swirski 1999) and elsewhere (Collins 1979; Oakes 1985), there is remarkably little discussion of the distinctions between different subject concentrations within these tracks. As my data from both Al-Aqsām and Gourmetim suggests, the distinction among

different concentrations within the academic track may be as important as that between vocational and academic tracks.

Gender, Class, and Classes in Twelfth Grade

The differences between the science (*'ilm*) track, 12A, and management (*idāra*) track, 12C, in Al-Aqsām were immediately obvious to the most casual observer. The students were of the same age and both classes had an equal number of students from Al-Aqsām itself and from outside. Gender differences were notable and significant. In 12A, there were 17 boys and nine girls, while in 12C, there are 15 boys and 14 girls. Generally, science tracks, in Al-Aqsām and all of the Arab schools in the Negev, have a significantly higher number of boys than girls. Tracks specializing in the humanities and social sciences and, to a lesser extent, management have a more equal gender distribution.

Socio-economic class distinctions, while less apparent than that of gender, are of equal importance. It is not easy from appearances to be able to distinguish class divisions in a population, particularly one in which you are a stranger. The small codes and subtle indicators that are taken for granted by natives are all but invisible to the visitor or novice anthropologist. The distinction between clothing, one brand of jeans versus another, or sandals versus boots, or dialect was all but impossible for me to judge in my first year of research. Indeed, it was not until I asked or was told that *Fulāna* was *Abu Fulān's* daughter that I was able to begin to make these distinctions. In the school, I found that the more important or wealthy the family, the more likely the student would be in the science track. There was a clear class division within the classroom. The students of 12A were, in

general, of higher socio-economic status than their peers in 12B, C or D. The gender and class divisions were consistent throughout Al-Aqsām.

Three Students, Two Classes

Jihād came to symbolize, in my mind, the typical 12A student. In some senses my choice of Jihād was unfair and slightly inaccurate since he was clearly one of the more popular students in the school. He was good looking, tall, polite, and funny, everything one would expect out of a high school football (soccer) star. After graduation from Al-Aqsām with a full baccalaureate and good scores on the *Psycometry*, the statewide post-baccalaureate exam, he matriculated to Ben Gurion University majoring in Biology. Jihād's extended family, while not of high origin status, was well regarded, and his father, while uneducated, ran a very successful building supplies business, which had won a very lucrative seven year contract with city hall. His father was an important employer and supplier in town and this had helped him become a major figure within local politics. While Jihād was a good student, he was, in the judgments of his teachers, no brighter or more capable than Farḥān, a student in 12C.

As much as Jihād symbolized 12A, Farḥān appeared as the best example of the students of 12B and 12C. Although Farḥān's teachers estimated that he was very bright, they thought him lazy, not living up to his potential. Indeed their shared mathematics teacher thought Farḥān brighter than Jihād, but lacking in motivation. It does seem a bit odd, in retrospect, that this was the case since Farḥān's father was a schoolteacher. In response to his teachers' opinion that he had a motivation problem, Farḥān insisted that

there was no point in working any harder since he only wanted to attend a teachers' college and did not need a full baccalaureate to do so. While Farḥān's self-expectations were low, they reflected those of his surroundings. His father and family expected him to be a teacher and he internalized those goals. In any case, as Farḥān and others pointed out, being a student in 12C pretty much precluded matriculation to university since it did not provide the necessary background in mathematics and English. In Farḥān's case, he was limited by the opportunities offered to him in his classroom environment and by the expectations of his teachers and his parents. The expectations foisted upon Jihād, however, were quite different: 12A provided the background necessary to matriculate to university, it was clear that he, his teachers, and his parents expected it of him.

So, does tracking allow students to fulfill different expectations and desires, or does it create a self-fulfilling prophecy? The answer is not clear, since tracking itself does neither. Rather, I argue that tracking is a fairly accurate expression of social structure and of the processes of social reproduction. Despite the fact that both Farḥān and Jihād have remarkably similar abilities, more was expected of Jihād. His placement in 12A is no accident, but a reflection of his social position.

An excellent example was Rūqaya, also in 12C. She was a black Bedouin, a descendant of former slaves (*'abīd*). Her family, while living in a different area, was still associated with the large and powerful ḥamūla who once held them as slaves. Although the black Bedouin had been freed from bondage for more than a century, there has been, to my knowledge, no inner-marriage between the Bedouin of Arab and African descent. While there have been occasional marriages between the other castes, particularly

between ʿaṣlī men and ḥumranī women, the isolation of the black Bedouin is quite marked. Rūqaya was, by most standards, an ideal student. She was obviously very bright and was particularly gifted and interested in history. Her interest in history should have placed her in 12B, the humanities and social sciences track, however she was placed in 12C, management. Most of her teachers although admitting that she was as capable as any of the students in 12A or 12B, thought that "it would be a waste" to put her in either 12A or 12B since she would never attend university. It was unclear to me why exactly she would never attend university since it was abundantly clear that she had the capabilities to do so and her parents had no objection to it. It was my assumption, based upon vague or half completed sentences uttered by teachers and administration, that her racial and family status, as a black Bedouin, had determined, in advance, which class she was placed in and her future.

The decisions about placement are usually made in the summer between the ninth and tenth grade. It is only after beginning the tenth grade that the state curricula allows for elective courses and, consequently, for tracking and specialization. The decision of placement is begun by recommendation, allegedly based upon past performance and capabilities, from the student's ninth grade homeroom teacher (*meḥanekh*) in consultation with the student's parents. The parents may or may not participate, depending upon whether the parents of the child know that they have a say in the matter, or if they choose to do so.[18] The recommendation is then passed on to a small committee, made up of the principal, vice-principal, councilor, and a few subject teachers. Ideally, the decision should be based upon the desires and capabilities of the student. However, as my

discussion above has shown, social hierarchy and its reproduction play a silent but central role.

Gourmetim

From the highway that connects Beersheba to Gaza and Ashkelon, there is no sign of Gourmetim. Only the presence of a large number of hitchhikers, mostly soldiers, at the intersection suggests that a city is somewhere close. In contrast to much of the Negev, Gourmetim is nestled in a lush and well-watered area between the agricultural land of a kibbutz and moshav. There is none of the dry soil and rock that characterize much of the Negev, particularly the areas near the Arab settlements.

The contrast between Al-Aqsām and Gourmetim, at first glance, seems immense. Gourmetim has no shantytown, the streets are paved, and the grass-covered ground is well kept. In contrast to Al-Aqsām's single-family houses, most of the residents of Gourmetim live in apartments in buildings ranging from three to six stories. There are, however, quite a few bungalows or single-family houses scattered around that, for the most part, appear to be older and in poor condition. The apartment complexes, particularly the newer ones on the south side of town, appear to be scaled-down versions of the low-income "project" housing seen in much of the east coast of the United States.

Gourmetim is a planned town, neatly laid onto a grid. Driving through town, one is struck by how well everything is planned. Coming in from the traffic circle at the town's entrance, one passes a number of small stores, a greengrocer, a few women's clothing stores, and baby stores. These stores are in small, single floor buildings. Behind

these buildings, off the main street, are residential buildings. Like everything else in Gourmetim, these buildings are made of tan stuccoed concrete. The larger apartment buildings have flat roofs while the shorter bungalows usually have red ceramic tiles on sloped roofs.

There are few people on the street during the day. Here and there, a woman, possibly religious (as indicated by the long skirt and head covering), walks with stroller and child in tow. A few city workers clean the streets or water the grass. Later, when school is out, teenagers wait and lounge at bus stations. Later in the early evening, women and men walk home from work. Like all of the cities of the Negev, the harsh sunlight, dusty winds, and dry heat determine the hours of activity. In the early morning and after sunset, the city seems to come alive; during the long summer these are the only hours that the desert climate is hospitable. Beginning before dawn, a hundred or more large trucks parked around Gourmetim slowly and noisily creep out onto the main highway, many carrying loads of chemicals between the refineries near the Dead Sea to the Haifa ports. Just at sunrise, an hour or so later, a fleet of smaller trucks moves towards Beersheba. By 7:00 AM the bus stops all over town are crowded with commuters going to work in Beersheba or to one of the factories scattered around the Negev. Shortly afterwards, students and teachers appear on the streets, moving noisily towards their schools. Afterwards, Gourmetim is again quiet. Perhaps an occasional university student or soldier waits at the bus stops, but for the most part, the streets of Gourmetim are abandoned until evening. Shortly before sun down, people once again appear on the

residential streets of Gourmetim. Families with children and strollers move back and forth between buildings and chat on the sidewalks.

Although the residential areas of Gourmetim are abandoned during the daytime, the downtown area is not. Composed of two groups of buildings, Gourmetim's commercial center looks remarkably similar to that of Al-Aqsām, in the shape of a caravanserai, an enclosed two-story structure overlooking a central courtyard. The upper level of the commercial center appears to be largely abandoned. Offices for a lawyer and an accountant still appear active, while all the other spaces are empty. In contrast, the ground floor is always packed and seems to be thriving. The two cafes next to one another with umbrella-shaded tables are always busy. At almost any time of the day, men gather at both of the large cafes, drinking coffee or beer. A smaller cafe, opposite the others, has only three tables located on a small raised platform and seems to attract mostly women. Small falafel, pizza, and ice cream kiosks face the street. The stores inside the commercial center sell stationery, religious goods, and assorted convenience items.

Next to Gourmetim's commercial center is city hall, a monolithic but decrepit building. The building is oddly shaped, the small ground floor, containing a few small clothing stores, holds up three larger stories. At the door of the building stands the ubiquitous security guard glancing through briefcases, purses, and bags. The inside of the building seems the opposite of the city itself. The halls and stairways are dark and inexplicably damp, in contrast with the Negev's dry heat and brilliant sun.

Development Towns

Gourmetim is one of the 28 development towns (*'irot pituaḥ*) which were established in the 1950s in outlying areas, particularly in the North and the South, areas which had only recently come into Zionist control and were sparsely populated by Jews (Cohen 1970:33).

> The Judaisation project aimed to exert Jewish control on the entire Israeli territory, which still included a Palestinian-Arab population of some 13-14% who remained after the 1948 war. Judaisation also aimed to block the potential return to their homes and villages of the 700-750,000 Palestinians who were driven out in the 1948 war (Morris, 1987). The strategy targeted two main areas as the country's principal frontiers: the Negev in the south and Galilee in the north. (Yiftachel 2000:420).

The Judaisation of the Galilee and Negev and an even dispersion of the population were state priorities. However, the Jews who were being settled in outlying areas were largely recent immigrants from Asia and North Africa.

In interview, a long-time resident describes the process, almost 50 years ago, by which he came to live in Ofaqim, another development town;

> I will never forget the night of April 19th, 1955. We were given 'numbers' on the ship, and later loaded onto trucks just outside the Haifa port. Nobody asked us, they just told us what to do… It was very, very hot. We were told it would take around 'half an hour', but went on for hours and hours on stiff wooden truck benches, with many kids, women, and elderly people. Once we got to the town, and saw the desert surrounds and only two small huts we refused to get off the trucks… government officials stood and argued with us for a long time, and then sent us to 'another place', but the truck actually returned in a circle to the same site… Only because of the unbearable heat on the crowded truck, and the weak and sick kids we agreed to get off… since then, we are here. (Yiftachel 2000:425, original omissions)

The quote makes the blindness and arbitrariness of this process clear; the new immigrants to Israel, the so-called *olim* (ascenders), particularly the Mizraḥim from North Africa,

were taken, without knowledge or agreement, to new towns, far from urban or developed areas.

It was feared that the new immigrants would settle in one of the larger cities, Tel-Aviv, Haifa, or Jerusalem, leaving the vast area of Israel unsettled and, consequently, in the possession of Palestinians. Judaisation and population dispersion were and remain central in the Zionist project. While the development towns were very much part of these efforts, the contribution and struggle of their residents have remained peripheral and devalued. Erik Cohen suggests that Zionist ideology, with its pioneering (*ḥalutz*) and agricultural bias, neglects and devalues the urban (Cohen 1970). In consequence, urban problems were never prioritized, never resolved, and allowed to decay. This is, Cohen suggests, particularly true within the immigrant towns.

> As the town did not gain any ideological importance until a very late stage, many of the urban problems went unnoticed and were allowed to grow into enormous proportions before they gained the attention of those responsible for the country's development. (Cohen 1970:55)
>
> It is obvious that the massive influx of immigrants immediately after the state was established would inevitably create some of these [urban] problems; but [the scope of the problems] would probably have been greatly reduced had urban settlement, during the period of the Mandate, enjoyed but a fraction of the attention given to agriculture. (1970:22-23)

While I have some reservations about Cohen's monolithic vision of "The Zionist Ideology",[19] it is clear that the residents and the development towns themselves were and continue to be viewed with disdain by those who were responsible for their design.

The location of the new towns in outlying areas, straddling national borders or wedged between agricultural settlements, is of great importance. Frequently the towns were established on land previously owned and inhabited by Arabs. It is possible to trace

some of the current antipathy between Mizraḥi Jews and Palestinian Arabs to the establishment of these development towns.

> Further, the settlement of peripheral development towns by Mizrahi Jews drove a wedge between Israel's Palestinian-Arab minority and low-income Mizrahi migrants, who shared many cultural and economic concerns. As the towns were often built with the explicit goal of 'Judaising' the country and quite often on confiscated Arab lands, hostility between the two sectors developed quite quickly and has remained evident to date. Needless to say, all this served effectively the interests of Israeli Ashkenazim. (Yiftachel 2000:428)

In addition, by straddling national borders, the development towns act as a buffer between the incursions of the Palestinian fighters, the *fidā'yīn* of the 1970s and the core Israeli population.[20] Lastly, the rural location of many of the development towns meant that their population served as sources of cheap labor for the near-by kibbutzim and moshavim, or to process their products.

These factors turned the future of these new towns into anything but development. There was some effort, in the early period of the state, to prevent homogeneity in the towns. However,

> most of the development towns quickly became dominated by low-income and low-skilled Mizrahi populations, mainly from North Africa… This ethnic concentration, and low socioeconomic background of most town residents affected a rapid transformation of the towns into conspicuous pockets of deprivation and poverty… The radical transformation of Israel's settlement system, including the isolation and deprivation of the development towns, cannot be merely explained as 'unintended consequences.' Rather, it reflected the hierarchy of values and political group power prevalent at the time, when 'national' goals (as defined by the Ashkenazi elites) took precedence over social justice or civil equality. (Yiftachel 2000:423)

In the 1990s, following the breakup of the Soviet Union, a new influx of poor immigrants settled in the development towns, this time from Russia and Central Asia. They now

constitute 19% of the population in these towns (Yiftachel 2000:427). Like the previous immigrants, those who settle in the development towns are the poorest and least educated, giving rise to anti-immigrant sentiment even among those who once felt the brunt of it (2000:427).

It is no coincidence that the last residence of Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, as well as his grave, are in Sde Boker, a kibbutz 50 km to the south of Beersheba, next door to Yeroḥam, a development town. Perhaps more than any other individual, Ben-Gurion actively supported, both by personal example and legislation, the Judaisation and cultivation of the Negev.

Gourmetim General High School

Further down from Gourmetim's city center on the main road is a massive complex containing the two high schools, Gourmetim Comprehensive General (*Makif Klalli*, herein: Gourmetim General) and Gourmetim Religious (*Dati*) High School. The complex is composed of four buildings. Gourmetim General stands in a large two-story building in the north of the complex. Standing to the east is the slightly smaller three-story Religious High School. Both buildings show their age. Built in the mid-1970s, the ubiquitous tan stucco is crumbling in parts. A recent mosaic, designed by American high school students,[21] covers a small wall on Gourmetim General that had been in particularly bad shape. Between the two buildings, in the northeast corner of the compound, is the structure of the original Gourmetim High School, built in the 1950s. The five rooms of the old building surrounding a central open-air courtyard are still in use. The physics lab,

shared by both high schools, as well as two tenth grade classes are used daily. One room, between the two classrooms, is used for furniture storage while the old administrative office contains a small store where students and teachers can buy drinks, candy, sandwiches, and stationery goods. A smaller building in the southeast corner of the complex contained a few extra classrooms which are used for the obligatory 12th grade military preparation classes and a few of the 11th and 12th grade elective courses, notably psychology and sociology. The building also houses a modern computer laboratory and an antiquated computerized learning classroom, shared by both high schools, primarily used for English.

Between the four buildings is a central courtyard that is, for most of the day, empty. The central fountain has been dry since the regional government declared a water shortage a few years after it was built. The courtyard is only used during the short lunch break at noon and when school ends in the afternoon. While the courtyard was built to encourage students from both schools to use it, students from the general and religious schools rarely mix. There is, to be sure, some banter and conversation back and forth in Hebrew, but, in general, each school body keeps to its own side of the fountain.

Mitziyunut*: Elite Education in a Public Institution*

It was well established that the elite students[22] in Gourmetim did not remain long in the local school system. Thus, the school lost its "brightest pupils and most active parents" (Lewis 1979:159). The best and wealthiest students were, by eighth or ninth grade, shunted off to a boarding school, often the local regional magnet school,[23] or one of the

better high schools in a nearby city or town. To help pay for tuition, a few scholarships were available from city hall, as well as an educational tax refund.

In 1998, shortly after his appointment, the High School principal, who had showed remarkable talent in turning around a number of poorly performing high schools, threatened to quit if the money for the scholarships and tax refunds were not surrendered to his school. A number of teachers and local politicians, in response to threats of receivership from the Shas controlled Ministry of Education, supported his position.[24] The principal's changes were implemented for the first time during the 2000-2001 school year. All monies, refunds, and scholarships became annual supplements to the educational budget and a new academic track, *Mitziyunut* (excellence), was established in the Gourmetim General for the students who would have otherwise gone elsewhere. The 11th and 12th grades were unchanged until the following year when Mitziyunut advanced. Like Al-Aqsām's science tracked classes, the school's investment in Mitziyunut was total, and the gap between the academic level of its classes and those of the other tenth grade classes was immense.

Mitziyunut was composed of 14 students, nine girls and five boys. Half of the students—four girls, three boys—were Russian immigrants, all from Moscow or western Russia. The remaining seven students were veterans,[25] whose families lived in Gourmetim for at a least a generation and, with one exception, were Mizrahim, mostly of North African parentage. The two distinctions I have highlighted, gender and origin, play an important role in determining the social milieu not only of the class but also of Gourmetim.

There was remarkably little social interaction between the Russians and the veterans. The students sat at the double-desks in pairs, separated by origin and usually by gender. Veterans sat towards the rear left of the classroom and Russians sat towards the front right. Boys sat toward the rear and girls sat toward the front. During recess the students would, depending upon the weather, lounge in the small courtyard next to their classroom. Some veteran boys and girls played a contained game of soccer with a tennis ball in the lounge while the others perched on tables and chairs that were being stored in the courtyard. The Russians and the Veterans kept close to one another although they seemed to have very few interactions. Two of the Russian boys, who were identified by the other students as "geeks", stood uncomfortably off in a corner while the other, who had been in Israel since the age of six and spoke unaccented Hebrew, moved between groups with more ease than the others. There was much more communication among the girls who stood or sat apart but broke the boundaries of origin more often than the boys.

For the most part the gender and ethnic politics of Mitziyunut parallel those of other classes in the Gourmetim General high school. The gender segregation among these students—like all teenagers—is the result of a budding and uncomfortable sexuality. As they get older the interactions are more comfortable and increasingly common. While there may be at times a de facto segregation between sexes, it is not enforced, as is the case in the religious schools. Similarly, the segregation between Russian and Veteran students is universal.

For the most part, there can be little doubt that the students of Mitziyunut performed better than their peers in other classes. In the classroom, they were

significantly more attentive and much quicker to answer questions. In general, the academic level of their classes was noticeably higher than that of the other tenth grade classes. Mitziyunut's subject matter was the same as the other tenth grade classes. However, not only did Mitziyunut go into much more depth than the other classes, they also finished earlier and spent significantly more time preparing for the *Bagrut*, the baccalaureate, and *Psycometry*—the statewide exams that determine not only matriculation but also major topic in the university. By January 2000, four months after Mitziyunut's first meeting, the students were at least two weeks ahead of the other tenth grade classes in almost all of their classes. In mathematics and English, Mitziyunut finished their course of study at least four weeks earlier than the other classes.[26] Some topics, such as History and Israel Studies,[27] went pretty much parallel with the rest of the tenth grade.

Despite the schedule and curriculum, I found the difference between Mitziyunut and the other classes was not so much the intelligence or abilities of the students—these appear to be similar among all the tenth grade classes—but rather attitude of both teacher and student. In most of the tenth grade classes there was a sense of fatalism and lackadaisicalness. The best that could be expected was graduation and, hopefully, employment. The so-called cycle of poverty[28] would not be broken. Mitziyunut on the other hand were "golden" children. They were all expected to graduate with full Bagrut and matriculate to university. Attitude was everything and it was undoubtedly the secret to their success and, perhaps, the key to explain the failure of the other classes to succeed.

The Mitziyunut track was different than the *aleph* or A-level classes in Al-Aqsām in that it is a general studies track without specialization. Before the establishment of the Mitziyunut track, the best, most successful, and most serious students were placed in the science track, as was the case with Al-Aqsām. The science[29] tracks of 11th and 12th grade were considered by both students and teachers to be the best classes. The students were expected to graduate and matriculate. I have not determined if there are differences between Mitziyunut and the Science tracks.

Student composition of the 11th and 12th grade science-tracked classes differs significantly from that of the tenth grade Mitziyunut. Notably, the 11th and 12th grade A-levels are almost entirely composed of veteran Mizraḥi Jews and are mostly male. The composition of the new Mitziyunut class, its newfound gender equality and its over-representation of Russians[30] are, I would suggest, a direct result of the origins of this class.

Local Politics and Education in Gourmetim

Mitziyunut is a product of pure politics. Conflicting interests led to the formation of this class. As mentioned above, the main impetus for the formation of the Mitziyunut classes was a conflict of interest between the school administrators, teachers, and the Shas controlled Ministry of Education. This conflict, while transient, provides a lucid means to explain the political dynamics of Gourmetim.

Shas (*Shomrei Torah Sefardi*, Sephardi Torah Guardians) was founded in 1984 in Jerusalem. Shas is a political party only in the narrowest sense. Like the Labor party and

other early Zionist parties before the formation of the Israeli state and similar to other newly formed religious-political groups in the modern Middle East, it is not only Shas's religious and political message that attracts, but Shas's huge network of social services. Shas's school system, El-HaMa'ayan,[31] is the centerpiece of Shas's social services.

> According to Shas figures released in early 1999, the party's educational network includes 146 elementary schools nationwide, 682 kindergartens, 50 junior high schools, and 86 day-care centers. Shas also claims to have a total of twenty-four hundred school teachers, principals, and supervisors and an additional twenty-two hundred kindergarten teachers and teacher aides. (Kamil 2001:141)[32]

From these numbers, it is obvious that the Shas school network is extremely popular, particularly within development towns such as Gourmetim. El-HaMa'ayan schools are able to fill needs that the Ministry of Education schools cannot. Despite being private, the El-HaMa'ayan schools are cheaper, have longer school hours, offer free transportation, and serve a hot midday meal (2001:141). However, as of 1999, the Shas school network did not contain any schools higher than junior high and do not directly compete with the public high school system.

The rise of Shas has been astounding. Even in its first election, Shas gained four seats in Knesset. By 1990, with ten members of Knesset, Shas replaced Meritz[33] as the third largest party and an obligatory member of any ruling coalition with the swing vote. That is, to create a ruling coalition, the dominant party, either Labor (currently Yisrael Aḥad, One Israel) or the Likkud must ally themselves with Shas (Usher 1998:34).

Like other religion-based parties in the Middle East, rather than directly confronting the state, Shas offers services that the state is unable or unwilling to provide.

> Adopting political strategies akin to the Islamist movements in Lebanon, Egypt and Algeria, Shas penetrated the state by bypassing it. It did so, as did the Islamists, by politically activating constituencies… that the state and Israel's main political parties had historically neglected. (Usher 1998:34-35)

The similarities with the Palestinian Hamas[34] and other Islamist groups in the Middle East are obvious: Shas is a grass-roots organizations that gains its political constituency through the provision of social services, very similar to the process by which Hamas has flourished.

However similar Hamas and Shas, the circumstances surrounding their origins are quite different. It is necessary to examine the political structure of Israel to understand how Shas came to be. Clothing is symbolic of this process: the men wear a black suit and white shirt, and the women wear scarves on their heads and loose fitting dresses—distinctly eastern European clothing. As Willis (1993) points out, Shas's leadership was educated in the Lithuanian Haredi tradition. Consequently, not only clothing style, but also many other aspects of ritual are derived from Eastern Europe.

> Middle Eastern Jews adopt haredi practice as a means to return to something authentic in the past, and yet they do so relying on fundamentally Ashkenazi models to suit their own values and ethnic identities, leading to the development of forms of Middle Eastern haredi practice which are creative "bricolages" of disparate elements. With each passing year these practices and identities have less and less to do with the Ashkenazi models. (Willis 1993:38)

There is no tradition of ultra-orthodoxy among the Mizraḥim. Rather, like so many other traditions, this one is of recent Israeli origins.

In many ways, Shas is reminiscent of the early Zionist parties, in which "macro societies" provided not only education but also employment, health care, housing, and much more (Swirski 1999:88). The contemporary educational scene in Gourmetim in

which Shas competes with the Ministry of Education schools is reminiscent of what happened following the establishment of Israel, when political parties competed for the souls and votes of the new immigrants through their schools (see discussion page 72) (Swirski 1999:103).

Conclusion: Tracking, Community, and Politics

I have attempted to provide two examples of how tracking mirrors the community's social structure. I show how hierarchies are played out within these tracks and express the social structure of these two different communities. The ways in which tracking intersects with local politics are a reflection of those politics and, in turn, reproduce them. In Al-Aqsām, competition between extended families, encouraged by Israeli educational and social policies, can be clearly seen within classroom membership and school administration. Similarly, the creation of a new excellence track in Gourmetim is caused by an ongoing conflict that is suspiciously similar to one which existed 50 years previously.

I have suggested that tracking can be seen as a reflection or indicator of the divisions within a community and that the way that these divisions are played out within the school reproduces them within the larger social system. However, this is not to say that educational success is a precise and absolute reflection of power. Rather, if one looks a bit deeper, forms of resistance to the dominant community powers are also evident. As I outlined above, the school administration in Al-Aqsām is controlled primarily by the large, ʻaṣlī families who are the primary landowners in the community. The hiring of

school administrators and the consequent control over schools and other institutions clearly reflect the difference between land-owning and landless families and creates cartels within the schools and city hall. Despite this, it is clear that school success is more likely to be achieved by the students from landless ḥumranī families. At the most basic functionalist level, this can be explained by the fact that poorer families are forced to rely much more upon education to make a living than landowning families. Consequently, landless families tend to accept more readily the myth of education as a social equalize, and believe that they have much more to gain from academic success than members of land-owning families do. Therefore, the membership of the academically tracked classes in Al-Aqsām not only reflects how power and land are distributed within the community but also resistance to that status quo. At the same time, however, there are limits to who can use the educational system. There are very real limits faced by women and the black Bedouin within educational institutions. Rūqaya's pigeonholing and being trapped in a class that did not meet her needs was typical.

While I have labeled this resistance, it can only be considered so within the community. Indeed, on the state level, conflict between Arab families feeds into the already established patterns of governmental control. Therefore, while struggling against their perceived inequality, landless Bedouin reproduce the larger conditions that created the struggle. In the same way, Rūqaya's struggles and those of Bedouin women begin the to break down the educational and social barriers between men and women, and families while increasing the internal conflict within the Bedouin community.

In Gourmetim, the tracking system was put in place after a struggle between two groups within the community: Shas was primarily supported by disenfranchised Mizraḥi Orthodox Jews, while the school administrators and teachers represented the more mainstream residents of Gourmetim, especially the wealthier residents and the more recent Russian and Central Asian immigrants. Many of the veteran residents who had grown up in Gourmetim felt that they were losing what little control they had over the schools. As explained to me by a Shasnik member of the Gourmetim city council, the values that he and the Orthodox community prized were not held as important by those in control of the school system. Of course, as the principal explained, the standards that Shas held dear were quite alien to the liberal values of the Israeli establishment.

The work of Shas is essentially one of providing an alternative to the Israeli mainstream with the hope of eventually replacing it. Within the education system, Shas's El-HaMa'ayan school system offers an alternative, adopting what Archer has called a substitutive strategy (Archer 1984:47-48). Shas's mission stands opposed to that of the liberal Israeli establishment, and can, in that sense, be called counter-hegemonic (Peled 1998). However, this is not to say that it is progressive in any sense of the word. Indeed, the Shas system prepares students, depending upon their gender, for either marriage or yeshiva, making no allowance for university or any form of vocational education, other than that of kosher homemaker or rabbinic scholar.

In Gourmetim, the new excellence track was established as a direct result of conflict internal to the community, and the origin of the students reflects this. In Al-Aqsām, the preexisting tracking system reflects social and economic hierarchy. In both

cases, the structure of the educational system demonstrates how social hierarchies are reflected, resisted, and reproduced. In both Al-Aqsām and Gourmetim, the institution in which formal learning takes place, the school, is rife with politics. The way in which students are shunted into their specific tracks or classes appears to have more to do with their social or economic status or background than their desires or abilities. Indeed, the very existence of these tracks is due to political machinations, social struggle, and economic interest. The communities that are formed within these classes, schools, or even towns, must, therefore, be understood not only as a collection of individuals who share interests, meanings, activities, or symbols but as groups defined by their common relationship to local power and state authority. All communities, not just the towns of Al-Aqsām or Gourmetim, are consummately political.

Notes

[1] Both Al-Aqsām, and Gourmetim are pseudonyms, as are all of the names of individual subjects.

[2] S*arif* is Hebrew, meaning hut, or cabin. The Arabic *kūkh* is hardly ever used.

[3] On several occasions I studied the city planner's map of Al-Aqsām, which was posted in his office in City Hall. From above, Al-Aqsām appears to be composed of areas bounded by one main oval road, inside of which are smaller ovals of individual residential roads.

[4] Both the Ottomans and the British attempted, at various times, to document land ownership and distribute land titles in Palestine. These attempts at documentation had only marginal success, since to possess a land title necessitated the payment of taxes, which was undoubtedly the motivating force behind the Ottoman and British drive to registration. In addition, under the Ottomans, it could also mean the military induction of men.

[5] As Dr. 'Amer Huzeil pointed out to me, the affirmation of the Bedouin as pastoral nomads, and thus semi-nomadic is of great political significance in contemporary Israel. Since the pastures were returned to year after year, and possessed by particular families, the Ottoman deeds to the land are historically valid although the Israeli government has rejected them as forgeries. In addition, while the maps drawn by the British during the Mandate, and the Ottomans before them, should be accepted as evidence of ownership, the Israeli government has summarily rejected ownership of land by the Negev Arabs on account of their nomadic lifestyle (personal communication, May 21 1999).

[6] Between 1947 and 1948 large groups of Palestinians fled to neighboring states. A small number of Palestinians however, remained in what would become Israel. According to Falah, between 1947 and the end of 1948 more than 88% of the Palestinians in the Negev had fled the violence of the war, and the terror inspiring tactics of the Israeli Army. (Falah 1985:37; see also Morris 1987)

[7] Tel Ṣeba' is the Arabic name. The Hebrew name is Tel Sheva. The city of Tel is named after the neighboring Neolithic archaeological site, where it is believed that the Biblical Patriarch Abraham/Qur'ānic Prophet Ibrāhīm watered his flock, and took an oath to his god. The name in both Arabic and Hebrew means Hill of Seven, although I have

heard that in Hebrew it could also mean Hill of Oaths. The name Beersheba has similar derivation, with *bīr* or *beer* meaning 'well'.

[8] In brief, the Bedouin can be divided into three groups that differ primarily according to origin. It is unclear if these origins are based upon historic migrations, or are ideological constructions. The so-called original Bedouin (*'aṣlī*) trace their perhaps mythic origin to the first Bedouin settlers in the region, from the Arabian Peninsula. Bedouinized peasants (*ḥumranī*, red ones) are thought to originate with Palestinian or Egyptian peasant groups who became nomads. Finally, black Bedouin (*'abīd*, slaves) were former slaves of African origin, freed by Ottoman decree in 1857 (Lewis 1990:80; Marx 1967:67). For more detail see Fenster (1991:101-116), Bailey (1985), Greenberg (1997) and Marx (1967:63-67).

[9] The ḥamūla is a clan or extended group of families (*'ā'ila*) who all bear the same family name; usually a derivative of the name of a distant possibly mythic patriarch, five or six generations in the past, who is considered the founder of the kinship group.

[10] This is assuming that the location in question has municipal status, which many Arab communities do not (see discussion "Local Communities and the Law of 1949" on page 70). If the community does not have municipal status, then the appointment is made by the Bedouin Educational Authority, under the authority of the Ministry of Education.

[11] It is not actually clear what happened during this event. A number of teachers reported that the principal was actively trying to break up the fight; however the newspaper, which is owned and managed by a member of a rival family, reported the opposite.

[12] Under the Netanyahu government, the portfolio (*tik*) of the Ministry of Education had been given Shas as a reward for their support during elections. Consequently, members of Shas, Orthodox Mizraḥi Jews, were appointed and, of course, paid, to be on Rahīn's council. It was not until August 2000 that Rahīn had elections, and the residents were allowed to appoint their own council.

[13] This is a direct translation of the official Hebrew name. The *Klalli* or general schools are secular, as opposed to the *Dati* or religious schools for Jews. There is no differentiation between religious or secular schools among Green-Line Palestinians.

[14] Except in Jerusalem, which has particularly inflexible building codes requiring that all buildings be faced with Jerusalem (or Hebron) stone, a white limestone.

[15] Only very rarely did I hear these classes referred to using Arabic letters. Also, the third letter of the Hebrew Alphabet is *gimel*, or g; however I translated it as c.

[16] That is, the equivalent of college level courses.

[17] Few women over the age of 35 work outside the home. Many, however, are employed in handicrafts, such as rug making, and some run small businesses, such as day-care or small convenience stores, which cater only to members of the extended family.

[18] It was unclear to me how many of the parents actually make any form of statement regarding the future of their children. However, from what I understand the number is very small.

[19] Cohen conflates Labor Zionism, an early and hegemonic incarnation, with all its other forms. Labor Zionism has roots in different forms of socialism that were partially responsible for its agricultural roots and pioneering spirit (Sofer 1998; Greenberg 2000). However, this was not the case with other forms of Zionism, such as that espoused by the Revisionists or by the National Religious Party.

[20] While driving through Hebron, I noticed a similar strategy employed in a few of the settlements. Ethiopian Jews were living near the outside fence, serving as a buffer between possible attackers and the core community of Ashkenazim.

[21] The students came to Gourmetim as part of a summer tour, sponsored in part by the United Jewish Appeal and the Israeli Government.

[22] Elite, that is, by virtue of their socio-economic status or exceptional performance in school.

[23] The magnet or regional schools are tuition-based schools that are open to any student from the area who pass the entrance exam and can afford the tuition. The regional schools were originally designed to serve the kibbutzim, moshavim, and numerous small settlements in the area.

[24] Teachers and politicians in Gourmetim suddenly supported the reorganization of education, after years of opposing it, in response to the increasing threat of receivership by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education was, at the time, a Shas portfolio, and Shas's private school system was in direct competition with the State school system, particularly in Gourmetim. Consequently, the threat of receivership was perceived as a real possibility unless the school showed a marked improvement in Bagrut scores.

[25] The term "veteran" is, in the sociology of Israel, used exclusively to refer to those Israelis whose families immigrated before the establishment of the state; see Eisenstadt's *Absorption of Immigrants* (1954). The term is used as an attempt to explain why post-1948 immigrants to Israel fared less well than those who immigrated before independence. In reality, the term is a euphemism for Ashkenazi, and does not include the autochthonous Palestinian Jews, or those Yemenites who immigrated in the late 19th century.

[26] Two of out of five tenth grade classes did not finish their textbooks by the end of the year and, thus, did not complete the state determined curriculum.

[27] This would be the equivalent of Social Studies and Citizenship in the US.

[28] Although it has fallen into disuse in the social sciences due to its failure, as a theory of social reproduction to account for structural forces which prevent upward mobility, the "cycle of poverty" is a term I heard used fairly frequently by teachers in Gourmetim,

[29] Gourmetim used the specialization terms to distinguish between classes in an attempt to the ranking of *Aleph*, *Bet*, *Gimel*, et cetera.

[30] Russians and other recent immigrants from the Soviet Union, primarily Central Asians, made up approximately 20% of the entire population in both town and school.

[31] The full name is *HaMa'ayan Haḥinouch HaTorani*, the Wellspring of Torah Education.

[32] Although I have cited Kamil, I do so with some reluctance. There are a number of errors in his essay "The Synagogue as the Civil Society" (2001). For example, the fees

for the *Shas* schools, listed at $250 per month, are most certainly incorrect. He may have meant 250 Israeli Sheqels, about $80, although even this is high. In addition, I have some serious questions about his use of the concept of civil society, as he appears to have conflated civil society with social organizations.

[33] *Meritz* is a liberal-left party in the scheme of Israeli politics, usually identified with the urban, and professional Ashkenazi left.

[34] I realize that this is a comparison that most Israelis and Palestinians will find highly objectionable. However, as Usher, quoted above, suggests, Shas's political strategies are similar to those of the Islamist groups. I do not mean to suggest that violence, which Hamas has used to achieve its political and social goals, is or will be part of Shas's strategy.

CHAPTER 4

TEACHERS AS INTELLECTUALS,

INTELLECTUALS AS TEACHERS

> The rapport between teacher and pupil is an active one, with reciprocal relations and one therefore in which every teacher is always a pupil and every pupil a teacher. But the pedagogical relation cannot be limited to specifically 'scholastic' relations by which the new generation enter into contact with the old, absorbing from them experiences and values. Each rapport exists in the entire society in its complexity and for each individual in respect to other individuals between intellectual and non-intellectual circles, between the governors and the governed, between elites and followers.
>
> —Antonio Gramsci, *La Filosofia di B. Croce* (Bernstein 1984:96)

In 1999, as novice fieldworker, I observed an event in an academically tracked history class in an Arab school that both confused and elated me.[1] It was, or so I thought, exactly what I had been looking for: a sign of resistance in the classroom. I later wrote,

> fighting his students' waning interest and growing restlessness at the close of a long hot day, [a high school teacher], while lecturing on the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, made an abrupt turnabout and expressed his disgust with how the state-sanctioned text book was biased against Arabs. The students, their interest peaked, began actively participating, suggesting other more pro-Arab readings of the events which led to the war. Before dismissing them, [the teacher] reminded the students that they would be taking the Bagrut, the Israeli baccalaureate exam, and that the textbook version of history had to be recounted, not alternatives. [The teacher] confessed that afternoon over coffee that he was unsure whether or not this was an effective teaching method. While this technique interested his students and made them critical of received knowledge, he suspected that it alienated them from the state educational system, and ultimately limited their ability to matriculate to university.

I expected to witness similar events within development town schools, new towns established in the 1950s for the settlement of the Mizraḥi Jews, who immigrated from North Africa and the Middle East. I had assumed that since both groups shared similar social and economic circumstances, their reaction to the curriculum would be similar. In fact, despite clear evidence of bias against Mizraḥi Jews in the humanities and social science curricula (see Alcalay 1993; Firer 1986; Shohat 1988), nothing I saw indicated resistance on the part of these teachers to the state-imposed texts or curricula.

In contrast, it was the students in the development town schools who questioned the texts and decried bias, while the teachers appeared to passively accept the curricula and texts. One of the more extreme examples was during a 12th grade sociology class. The teacher, explaining S. N. Eisenstadt's theories of modernization and immigration,[2] was interrupted by a student interjecting, with some hostility, "So this means that Eisenstadt says we [as Mizraḥim] are primitives?" Other students also objected to their newly discovered status. The teacher did his best to calm his students, explaining that Eisenstadt's work attempted to explain what he observed in good faith, and, like the actions of the Israeli state, was done with the best intentions. In private conversation, many Mizraḥi teachers acknowledge the presence of inconsistencies and bias within the curricula, but counter that national interests are far more important then ethnic or regional ones. One teacher remarked, "Yes, it is true that the history I teach leaves out much of my family's experience [as Moroccans] and those of my students, but children are easily angered, and to turn them against our nation would be wrong".

Why, if Arab and Mizraḥi teachers face similar contradictions within the curricula, do they resolve them in such different ways? What can this tell us about the position of two communities, both alienated from the state's economic and social mainstream, and what can it tell us about the position of the teacher within these communities? The way that teachers resolve conflicting interests and loyalties, making conscious and unconscious decisions between identities and priorities, reflects their function and position within their community.

Images of the Teacher

Plato's image of the cave is a remarkable, if flawed, metaphor for understanding the role of teachers. Inside the cave, which is our perception of the world, nothing appears as it really is; everything is a pale reflection of reality.

> Behold! Human beings living in an underground den… they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite side of the cave. (Plato 1998)

This is Plato's dismal image of our reality. To save ourselves, we must build a fire bright enough to let us see things as they really are. For Plato, this was the role of the state led by intellectuals and teachers. Contrasting Plato's optimistic view of the power and agency of teacher is that of Louis Althusser who, 2400 years later, suggests that the very act of teaching often "contributes to the maintenance and nourishment of [a false] ideological representation" (Althusser 1971:157). However, as any teacher will tell you, the act of teaching is much more complex than simply reproducing, or resisting hierarchy.

Returning once more to the two classroom examples above, it would appear that teachers are able to act in very different capacities: The Palestinian teacher is, as Plato would have it, differentiating objects from shadows, attempting to show his students a historical truth of Arab experiences in Israel. The Mizraḥi teacher, however, by diffusing the anger of his students, may well be maintaining and nourishing a false "ideological representation" as Althusser suggests. These two possibilities invite a discussion about the roles of teachers within the state and the process of social reproduction. In particular, I am interested in how schoolteachers can be understood as intellectuals. This chapter explores ways that teachers resolve the economic, political, and social contradictions of their work and lives, how this affects their relationships with students, and how it reflects their status within their community and the state. In so doing, I hope to elucidate how intellectuals function within a state.

Teachers as Intellectuals, Intellectuals as Teachers

On the subject of intellectuals, few authors have been more eloquent and thought provoking as Antonio Gramsci. In an attempt to understand his own role as teacher and writer within the Italian Communist Party, Gramsci constructed a theory of intellectuals. In doing so, he was able to contextualize the role of the intellectual within his theory of the modern state and hegemony, and consequently, provide an explanation of and possible solution to the lived contradictions that prevent teachers from doing their job. There is much to be gained from seeing teachers as intellectuals. Most notably it allows a reconception of the work and social position of teachers, providing a framework to

understand their position vis-à-vis class-structure and social reproduction. Specifically, Gramsci's distinctions between the roles of different kinds of intellectuals enables a nuanced and meaningful discussion of why Arab teachers are more likely to express and resolve the contradictions inherent within their work than Mizraḥi teachers.

Gramsci's basic argument is that intellectuals are firmly rooted within a particular state and class, and their production, whether a poem, song, academic text, or teaching is a form of labor that must be understood and contextualized within the organization of social and economic relations that we call the state. Within the state intellectuals have the basic function of providing and creating culture and, consequently, manufacturing or resisting hegemony. Culture and ideology are not epiphenomena of the economic base, or false consciousnesses,[3] nor are they eclipsed or enslaved by the economy. Rather, they are necessary components of both change and stagnation. The role of those intellectuals who shape culture is as essential as politicians, industrialists, and revolutionaries. No society can reproduce itself without the legacy of morality, ideology, and culture, and no revolution can succeed or survive without radically new modes of thinking and complete cultural change.

Gramsci defines two forms of intellectuals and intellectualism, the traditional and the organic intellectual.

> The intellectual function in society… can be divided into two types: first; traditional intellectuals such as teachers, priests, and administrators, who continue to do the same thing from generation to generation; and second, organic intellectuals, whom Gramsci saw as directly connected to classes or enterprises that used intellectuals to organize interests, gain more power, get more control. (Said 1994:4)

The traditional intellectuals, especially the ecclesiastics, appear "to represent an historical continuity uninterrupted even by the most complicated and radical changes in political and social forms" (Gramsci 1971:7). However, the clergy, like all intellectuals, was at one time "organically bound to the landed aristocracy" (1971:7). In time, as the power of the aristocracy declined, the allegiance of the clergy, particularly the Protestant clergy, shifted and they were assimilated by the rising bourgeoisie.

> One of the most important characteristics of any group that is developing towards dominance is its struggle to assimilate and conquer "ideologically" the traditional intellectuals, but this assimilation and conquest is made quicker and more efficacious the more the group in question succeeds in simultaneously elaborating its own organic intellectuals. (1971:10)

Here is the most essential point in Gramsci's writings on power and domination: hegemony over the state is gained, not by force or coercion, but by the assimilation of the traditional intellectuals and the ideological conquest of culture.

Organic intellectuals, on the other hand, are intimately tied to their class or social group, striving to make sense of the world and their place in it. Intellectuals speak to and sometimes for their class, providing some sort of meaning or raison d'être.

> Every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata… of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. The capitalist entrepreneur creates alongside himself the industrial technician, the specialist in political economy, the organizers of a new culture, of a new legal system, etc. (Gramsci 1971:5)

For the working classes the organic intellectuals are more difficult to identify, as they do not figure largely in the nominally intellectual sections of culture. One might expect to find a particular form of bourgeois intellectual writing in the Book Review or Op-Ed

page of *The New York Times*. However, organic intellectuals are just as likely to be found in the Entertainment section of the *New York Post*. At least at present in the United States, R&B and Hip-Hop artists appear to be able to speak to and often for the angry and stymied black youth, and thus a few of these musicians have become the organic intellectuals of the inner-city youth.

By Gramsci's definition, teachers are traditional intellectuals. They appear, like the clergy, to exist outside of class and state structure. Indeed, teachers are normally held responsible for teaching students to be good citizens and thus reproduce in the classroom the values of bourgeois culture. However, Gramsci uses distinctions and definitions that are nebulous, porous, and at times contradictory (Anderson 1976). Thus, Gramsci's distinction between the traditional and organic can be taken as a framework and continuum for understanding intellectuals, not an absolute typology. Teachers are never completely traditional or organic. Rather, they are, like their contradictory roles in society, a composite. The contradictions inherent within the work of teachers—divided loyalties and uncertain roles—are never completely resolved. However, at times, teachers are able to temporarily resolve these contradictions and express them to their students and the community.

Contradiction and Class Origins

All humans live with contradictions; there is no avoiding this. The way we deal with them, however, is a different matter: Do we acknowledge and attempt to resolve the contradictions between our belief systems and behaviors, or do we reject them, allowing

them to remain unacknowledged and unconscious barriers to understanding our own role in society? The contradictions faced by teachers affect the way that they interact with their peers and students, and determine the roles that they play within their communities.

Teaching is far more than just the transfer of objective information from one individual to another. There is much more to be learned in history or mathematics classes than dates or formulae. While I do not mean to reinvent the "hidden curriculum" theory (Apple 1990; Giroux and Penna 1988), it is clear that the function of the classroom goes far beyond what is printed on syllabi and curricula. While I have yet to run into any teacher who believes that schools should be abolished or drastically changed (Illich 1971), most are aware of the contradictions they face and the compromises that they make to resolve them.

If this is the case, and teachers are, for the most part, aware that the curriculum is flawed, or hidden, why don't they do something about it? In an attempt to explain why teachers do not behave like Plato's luminaries, Michael Apple suggests that teachers are in a paradoxical and contradictory class position that prevents them from realizing their full potential as educators and intellectuals. Their economic, social, and cultural interests are at odds, which places the teacher in an ambiguous social position.

> When I say that teachers have a contradictory class location, I am not implying that they are by definition within the middle-classes, or that they are in an ambiguous position somehow between classes. Instead, along with Wright, I am saying that it is wise to think of them as located simultaneously in two classes. They thus share the interests of both the petty bourgeoisie and the working class. (Apple 1989:32)

Apple draws his argument from Erik Olin Wright's assertion that the class position of teachers is contradictory since their cultural or social identification lies with the

bourgeoisie, yet their economic status and affiliations are closer to the working classes (Wright 1985). Wright has since revised this argument, suggesting that it is better to understand the contradictory position as an aspect of their high level of skills. Thus, a "skill rent" would account for their position and their interest in continuing to promote their skills as valuable, and thus deserving higher wages (Wright 1997). However, in either case, the position of teachers vis-à-vis their working-class origins is conflicted.

To a similar end, Kevin Harris suggests that, despite their working-class origins, teachers are unable to break free of the bonds that hold them to their task of being the enforcers of social reproduction. "Even given the most able, enthusiastic, and idealistic teachers, teacher-failure-in-general is inevitable in that it is brought about through the conditions placed upon teachers or the structural circumstances within which they work" (Harris 1982:11). Thus, rather than assert a false-consciousness or malicious intent, Harris posits that structural constraints prevent teachers from being successful at liberating or at least speaking truth to their students. Few, however, have been able to define these "structural circumstances".

Class is really only the first of several distinguishing factors that are important to understanding the relations among the state, teachers, curricula, and students. Here and in the final chapter I examine several major divisions that affect how teachers approach their subjects and students. The distinction between Northern and Southern Arabs, as well as between Mizraḥi and Ashkenazi Jews, influences attitudes towards curricula and students. Similarly, there are significant differences between male and female teachers. Differences of class, ethnicity, origin, and gender create a network of distinctions and

identities that affect the individual teacher's understanding of her position within the state and community, and her reaction to it.

Israeli Teachers: History and Hegemony

Following Gramsci's definition it is possible and at times likely for Palestinian teachers in Israel to function as organic intellectuals. On the other hand, it is much more difficult for Jewish teachers, both Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim, to remain tied to their community. The reasons for this are found within the historical development of the Israeli educational system and the political-economic structure of the state.

In education the deep rifts caused by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict often eclipse other very pertinent social differences. Distinctions based on gender, class, and region for example, were in evidence long before the end of the 19th century and the demise of the Ottoman Empire. However, they have been significantly altered through the influx of capitalism, colonialism, and Zionism. The history and experiences of teachers in Ottoman Palestine, under the British Mandate and the Israeli state reflect many of the difficulties and contradictions faced by all residents, and as such are worth investigation. Moreover, they provide the necessary background to understand the evolution and roles of teachers and teaching in Israel.

A Brief History of Teachers

In the Middle East as well as Europe the social origins of formal education and teachers lay within the clergy and organized religion. Like the rest of Greater Syria (*Al-Shām*) and

the Ottoman Empire, teachers and schools in Palestine were identifiably religious: sheikhs taught in kuttābs, rabbis in ḥeders, and priests, monks or nuns in Christian schools. In the rural communities, where much of the population lived, teachers were also scribes and judges. They were easily identifiable as religious functionaries. As local traditional intellectuals they were, for the most part, allied with the local elites.

The growing interest of Europe in the Ottoman lands, the loss of Egypt to Napoleon and then Muḥammad ‘Ali Pasha, and internal economic chaos proved to the Ottoman leadership that the empire was in desperate need of rejuvenation. The Ottoman Education Law of 1869 (A.H. 1286), part the larger reform movement called the *Tanẓīmāt*, created a system of state military schools, which later became a public education system. The Ottoman schools, however, were few and far between. The Tanẓīmāt and the earlier Capitulations to European economic and mercantile interests provided the legal structure that enabled the establishment of European missionary and philanthropic schools throughout the Middle East and North Africa. By the end of the 19th century a significant number of Christian and Jewish schools were established in the Ottoman territories by Europeans.

For the most part the schools did not diverge from the earlier model of each religious and ethnic group *(*millet) organizing its own education. However, while the Christian schools clearly preferred teachers who were members of the clergy, the graduates of these programs, both Christians and Muslims,[4] would form the first generation of professional Arab teachers in Palestine. On the other hand, the European philanthropic (missionary) Jewish schools, such as the French Alliance Israélite

Universelle, the German Lämel School, and later the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden, made a point of training local students as teachers, preferring local administrators and teachers to those from the metropole (Laskier 1983:33). It was not until the British Mandate that public state education and the corresponding transformation of teachers from religious functionaries to trained laypersons was institutionalized. This transformation—the professionalization of teaching—significantly altered the relationship of teacher to community (Ben-Amos and Tamir 1995). With the de facto establishment of the Mandate in 1917, education was shifted from being a disconnected hodge-podge of community-run one-room schools to a state controlled bureaucracy.[5]

In this transformation, control over schools and teachers, shifted from the local level, whether Palestinian Notables (a'yān) or local Zionist authorities, to the newly established and centralized Department of Education and the Zionist National Council. This centralization of educational authority affected teachers in remarkably different ways. For the Arab teachers, the state system meant that they were freed from some of the bonds that had held their predecessors; they were no longer indebted to the local notables who held purse strings or the religious authority (*'ulamā*) that had trained them. Rather, they were now part of huge statewide bureaucracy, which, despite its hostility, allowed the teachers more professional and intellectual freedom, and enabled a few teachers to, in Gramsci's terms, become organically linked to the community. Likewise, for the Jewish teachers the incorporation into the bureaucracy meant that bonds to the community were replaced by the state. However, this meant that connections to the

community were much more difficult to forge and the possibility of making organic links to the community, or to ones students, was all the more difficult.

This is an ironic reversal. In the Yishuv, the Zionist colony in Palestine before the establishment of the Israeli state, Hebrew teachers were key intellectuals, speaking for and about the goals of the Zionist movement, as witnessed by the major role they played in the establishment and legitimization of the Hebrew language (Bentwich 1965:14-15). However, after the establishment of the state school system in 1953, it was clear that the Hebrew teacher was no longer expected to be or wanted as intellectual. As Swirski points out, "the primary agent of Israelization was the one clearly 'Israeli' institution created in 1948—the Israel Defense Forces". The educational system had failed since it "left intact the major dividing line, that of religiosity" (Swirski 1999:112). Consequently, the role of teachers was made redundant by that of the Israeli Army. Following this transformation, their allegiance passed from community to state, severing the ties that once bound them to the local. Today, the minor and essentially irrelevant public role Jewish teachers play outside the school is indicative of this change. This disconnection from community is particularly palpable within the Mizraḥi schools. By end of the Mandate, the once well-established community schools of the Mizraḥi Jews had been absorbed by the Zionist school system and local Mizraḥi teachers were replaced by Ashkenazim (Eliachar 1983:178; Swirski 1999:51-52).

On the other hand, Arab teachers, who had been quite marginal characters previous to the establishment of state education, were suddenly in a central position as intellectuals, since the majority of whom had fled or were expelled during the 1947 War.

The role and position of Arab teachers, who at the end of the 19th century were beholden to the religious hierarchy and local notables, radically shifted after the Nakba, the catastrophe of Israeli independence. In Gramscian terms, I am suggesting that a major historical movement occurred wherein teachers, who formed a large group of Arab traditional intellectuals, were removed from their positions as dependents of the landowning class by the violence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the influx European capital. At the same time, the organic intellectuals of the European Jewish settlers were assimilated by the new state and bourgeoisie and became part of the traditional intellectual structure.

Likewise, the establishment and unionization of teachers created separate segregated tracks for Arabs and Jews, isolating them from one another. The Federation of Hebrew Teachers, first established in 1903 in Ottoman Palestine, was initially not a union in the modern sense of the word. Rather, it was an early incarnation of the Jewish Agency's Department of Education, which attempted to lay "the foundation for the new Hebrew schools" (Bentwich 1965:13). In 1919, the Federation of Hebrew Teachers, which was then composed of 525 registered teachers, became a section of the Histadrut (Bergson 1980:14). Apparently there was also a Federation of Arab Teachers that had been established during the Mandate. However, like most other Arab organizations it was closed soon after the establishment of the state and "Arab teachers were requested [by the Ministry of Education] to join the Federation of Hebrew Teachers" (Al-Haj 1995:171). In fact, the Federation of Hebrew Teachers, along with the leadership of their parent organization, the Histadrut, wanted no Arab members.[6]

> The leadership of the Federation of Hebrew Teachers… eventually agreed [in 1951] to the formation of a nationwide organization for Arab teachers as a formal unit beside the Federation for Hebrew Teachers and as part of the nationwide Arab Labor Organization… But it was not until 1953, when the Organization of Arab Teachers was dismantled, that Arab teachers were accepted as equal members in the Federation for Hebrew Teachers. Yet, as in other official organizations in Israel, a separate department was set up to handle the affairs of Arab teachers [which] was eventually abolished in December 1981… Since then, the interests of the Arab teachers have been handled by the district branches of the General Federation for Teachers. (Al-Haj 1995:172)

Today most teachers, both Arabs and Jews, are members of either the Histadrut, or the Agudat Morim, the Teachers Union.[7]

In the early years of the state Arab teachers faced conspicuous discrimination in both pay and individual job security (Al-Haj 1995:171-172), and were prevented from union membership. There was, however, little fear that they, as a group, would lose their jobs, since the Arab schools were notoriously understaffed due to a lack of qualified teachers. Mizraḥi teachers faced significantly different challenges.

The schools established by the Yemenites in Jerusalem and the older Sephardi schools received little philanthropy,[8] and nothing from the £P. 20,000 ($80,600) grant-in-aid given to the Va‘ad Leumi by the Mandate government in 1926. According to Eliahu Eliachar, any attempt to raise money for these Mizraḥi schools was blocked by “the various Jewish national funds [who] persisted in preventing any separate appeals by Sephardi representatives” (Eliachar 1983:178). In fact, the National Religious Party (NRP)[9] opposed any aid given to these schools, which forced the students into the NRP network, thereby increasing its stature and funding (Swirski 1999:52). Thus, the firmly established community schools of the Mizraḥi Jews were virtually absent by the end of

the Mandate. Until the so-called mass immigrations of North African and Middle Eastern Jews in the 1950s, there was very little concern with their education, and few attempts to incorporate Mizraḥi teachers into the fold.

Israeli Teachers and Ethnic Hegemony

My brief history of teachers attempts to demonstrate their remarkably different experiences and reactions to their incorporation into the state. How are these differences manifested in the day-to-day behavior of teacher? To better understand this, I examine how Arab and Mizraḥi teachers understand and resolve for themselves and their students the contradictions inherent within the state educational curriculum. For both Arabs and Mizraḥim in Israel, the curriculum, particularly within the social sciences and humanities, can appear foreign, alienating, and, frequently, humiliating. For the Green-Line Palestinians this comes as no shock, for they have learned from experience that the state is no friend of theirs, and its education is alien and often hostile. On the other hand, for the Mizraḥim, this is more difficult, since the state is supposed to be for all Jews, regardless of origin or ethnicity. How do teachers deal with this?

One way teachers attempt to deal with the contradictions inherent within the educational system is, as witnessed by my example of the history class (page 147), by exposing bias within the curriculum and providing a different interpretation. However, it is clear that doing so is another way of suggesting to students, albeit indirectly, that state education is an alien institution, and that their interests are peripheral to those of the state. Paul Willis, in his study *Learning to Labor* (1977), shows that social reproduction is a

complex affair; As Willis's lads resist in school what is being foisted upon them as an underclass they, paradoxically, guarantee the reproduction of their class positions. Although invisible in Willis's work, teachers also resist their role within this cycle. However, like their students, they can and do fall into other behaviors, which may reproduce those very structures that they struggle against.

Contested History

Of all the subjects within the state high school curriculum in Israel, history has been the most debated and commented upon by academics. For the most part, academic writings on the history curriculum deal with how textbooks in Israel show a significant bias towards a European Jewish past, ignoring the Mizraḥim (Chetrit 1997), and turning the past of the Arabs into barbarism (Mar'i 1978). While many academics have pointed out the flaws in the history curriculum vis-à-vis the Mizraḥim (e.g., Alcalay 1993; Firer 1986; Shohat 1988; Swirski 1990), it appears that few Mizraḥi teachers have taken up the call in the classroom. On the other hand, a significant number of Arab teachers have been quite critical of the Arab history curriculum, and students often more so than teachers. In the following pages I discuss two teachers, Abu Nai'ma and Neely,[10]

Abu Nai'ma, a 29-year-old teacher of history, born and raised a few miles from where he teaches, is a very vocal critic of the currently available texts and curricula. Pointing out that the current text for early Middle Eastern and Islamic history, *Tarīkh lil-Sharq al-Awsaḍ wal-Islām*, History of the Middle East and Islam, (Barghūthī et al 1995) is a history of "assassination, war, deception, sin [*ḥarūm*], and failure".[11] How could, Abu

Nai'ma asks, a student come to any sort of understanding or respect for his own people or heritage with this sort of history being taught? On the other hand, he is quick to point out that the history text used in modern European and Jewish history focuses on the successful struggles of the Jews against adversity, culminating in the establishment of the Jewish state.

As far as he was concerned, the issue was one of *istashrāq* or orientalism, which, in combination with Zionism, had nothing positive to say about Islam or Arabs. Abu Nai'ma explained that his solution was to provide, alongside the textbooks, a commentary on other possible views of the same history. He realized, however, that he could not change the *Bagrut*, the Israeli state baccalaureate exams, or what he was required to teach. His answer, therefore, was to "arm" (*taslīḥ*) his students with alternative histories, which could be deployed to raise their self-confidence.

A similar technique is described by Sami Chetrit, a Mizraḥi teacher and activist; "I divided the blackboard into two, and told the students on one side we would study 'the material for the examination', and on the other side I would attempt to teach the history which the state refuses to teach" (Chetrit 1997:30). However, if I witnessed a significant amount of resistance to the curricula and texts in Arab schools, I saw nothing even resembling it in Jewish history classes. This difference was stark. It was as if the students and teachers in Jewish schools were learning history as scripture. Not once did I hear so much as a question regarding the veracity of the texts or the appropriateness of the curriculum. For the most part, Jewish teachers seemed to think that "national interests" were far more important then ethnic or regional ones. In addition, unlike the Arab

teachers, most Jewish teachers felt that it would be far more alienating to their students to point out how the state has systematically denied the interests of the Mizraḥim. Rather, as Neely, a 36 year-old resident of Gourmetim and recent Jewish convert to Orthodox Judaism,[12] remarked, "yes, it is true that the history I teach leaves out much of my family's experience [as Moroccans] and those of my students, but children are easily angered, and to turn them against Jews and our nation would be wrong". While the government has made mistakes, its essential interests represent the good of all of its Jewish citizens. Most of the Mizraḥi history teachers I spoke with agreed with Neely that the curriculum left out the history and contributions of the Mizraḥim. However, unlike Abu Nai'ma or Sami Chetrit, most felt that to point this out to the students would do much more damage than good.

Arab teachers vocally express a very ambivalent relationship to the state. While as civil servants Arab teachers owe at least economic allegiance to the state, as Arabs they, for the most part, feel that the state is a foreign body lacking moral authority. As bureaucrats they are responsible for making sure that their departments follow the prescribed rules. However, at the same time, being too docile in the face of the state demeans them in the eyes of their students and community. Most admitted that they felt that their circumstances as Arabs in a Jewish state were improving and that slowly there was some, albeit very slow, progress towards equality.[13]

On the other hand, Mizraḥi teachers initially expressed none of the overt ambivalence of Arab teachers towards the state. Rather, most expressed a view of the state that was nationalistic. They described Israel as a state that, while struggling against

many hardships, tried in good faith to be a true and democratic expression of the Jewish people. However, when pushed, many of the Mizraḥi teachers expressed a view that was quite different from the initial one, in which the state was no longer a friend, or even a neutral force, but one that had consciously deprived a significant portion of its Jewish[14] citizens from equality and power. Thus, most Mizraḥi teachers are aware of the contradictions within the curriculum and are very concerned with the needs of their students. However, their behavior is much more proscribed and limited by their allegiance to the state. This is suggested by the way Hebrew is taught.

Unofficial and Vernacular Languages

In Israel Hebrew, Arabic, and English are the official languages; government services are required by law to be available in all three languages. Practice however differs from policy. For instance, street signs, which should be printed in the three official languages, are usually only in Hebrew and English. Arabic signs are rarely seen. Russian, although not an official language, is spoken by a significant number of Israelis, many a recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Hebrew is the primary language of communication between Israeli-born Jews and Arabic is the primary language of communication between Arabs in Israel. English is widely spoken and is a high status language. Most communication between Jews and Israeli Arabs is through the medium of Hebrew. Although a few Jews speak Arabic, they often speak North African dialects that are incomprehensible to Arabs in Israel. Many Arabs in Israel speak Hebrew, although young children and older people who have not received a formal education or worked outside the home do not. Television and radio broadcasts are primarily in Hebrew,

although news is also produced in Arabic, English, and Russian. In the Jewish schools instruction takes place in Hebrew. English is taught as a required second language and Arabic or French as optional languages. In the Arab schools, instruction takes place in Arabic.[15] Hebrew is taught as a second language and English as a third. There are significant differences between the official and vernacular forms of these languages. Hebrew is discussed below and Arabic in "Origins and Local Distinctions", page 170.

If history is the most contested subject among the Arabs in Israel, in the Mizraḥi schools it is the Hebrew language (*lashon*), particularly its pronunciation. All instruction in the Jewish state schools takes place in Hebrew. Mizraḥi teachers find themselves in a similar position to that of English language teachers in poor, urban, predominantly Black neighborhoods of the United States, where the unofficial or vernacular language spoken is markedly different from the official or Standard English required by the schools (Labov 1972). Both groups must cope with tiered linguistic systems in which the pronunciation and grammar of the students, whether Mizraḥim or African-Americans are noticeably different from the standard. Israeli Hebrew, despite ancient roots, is a very new language which originated in Eastern Europe and turned into a mother-tongue among the Ashkenazim in Israel (Spolsky and Shohamy 1999; Amara and Mar'i 2002). In Israel, dialectal differences are indicators of status and class, with the more guttural Mizraḥi Hebrew[16] often thought to be "Arabic in a Jewish disguise"[17] and marked as lower class (Matalon 1979). Much in the same way that schoolteachers in the United States are faced with a dilemma over Black Vernacular English (Spears 1989), teachers in Mizraḥi schools in Israel are in a difficult predicament in regards to their own dialect and

that of their students. Should they use the standard dialect, reinforcing the Israeli linguistic hierarchy, alienating their students, and putting them at a disadvantage? Or, should the teachers accept the vernacular dialect and build the self-confidence of their students, while neglecting to teach them the linguistic skills necessary to gain entry into the middle and upper classes. Many teachers feel forced to choose between these approaches.

The vast majority of teachers dismissed Mizraḥi pronunciation as incorrect and attempted to impose standard Hebrew in their classes. However, for a few teachers, particularly those who had grown up in development towns, the distinctions between standard and variations of Mizraḥi Hebrew were of immediate concern. Attitudes about vernacular pronunciation and how to deal with them in the classroom appear to be a direct reflection of how teachers viewed their own position within the community.

The distinctions between how two Mizraḥi teachers, Ella and Pnina, dealt with the contradictions inherent within teaching standard Hebrew to speakers of a non-standard variety indicate how attitudes about self and position within community influence one's the role as a teacher.[18] Few distinctions could really be made to differentiate these two teachers by virtue of background, class, or ethnicity. Both had originated in the town they taught, had attended private religious schools on scholarship, and after graduating from university had returned to their home town to teach Hebrew. However, their attitudes towards the language were remarkably different. Ella held that since Hebrew was a Semitic language, it should be pronounced as one, and thus as far as she was concerned, the Mizraḥi pronunciation was correct; gutturals should be pronounced as gutturals. Her

classroom policy was to encourage and cultivate this in her students. Pnina, on the other hand, held the opposite view. Her students should, as much as possible, abandon their Mizraḥi pronunciation and adopt standard Hebrew. She would correct and discourage her students from using what she believed to be incorrect vernacular pronunciation in class.[19]

The ideological differences that Pnina and Ella showed in relation to language seemed to have no equivalent in their attitudes towards their students; both projected equally glum views of their future. There were, however, noticeable differences the role and place that they saw for themselves within the school and community. Pnina hoped, as soon as possible, to leave this town since, as far as she was concerned, it had no future. Ella, on the other hand, while very critical of the town politics and its dire economic situation, was clearly committed to the community and school. However Ella would go no further than taking an unpopular stance on language and having an outspoken commitment to teaching in her community. She refused to take any public stance, in school or out, on the socio-economic position of the Mizraḥim. Her attitude towards the Palestinians was primarily distrust and she had no faith in a promising peace initiative. Most importantly, she refused to explain for her unconventional views on language to students, peers, or foreign researchers. In short, Ella refused to take any role that could, in any way, be construed as being intellectual.

From State to Community

Ella and Abu Nai'ma suggest very different ways of understanding teachers and their potential to be intellectuals tied to a community. Both take a stance in the classroom that

is clearly counter to how the curriculum, whether in language or history, is required by the state to be taught, making it more palatable and understandable to their students. On the other hand, when asked about the significance of their actions, they took opposite perspectives. Abu Nai'ma embracing his role as teacher and intellectual felt that he had an obligation to his students to provide an alternative worldview. Ella denied any significance to her classroom behavior. She insisted that she had not made an ethical or moral decision based upon student or community needs, but rather was simply teaching what she believed intellectually to be correct.

For Abu Nai'ma, the failure of the curriculum was politics, pure and simple. The educational policies of the state reflected its economic and social policies towards Arabs; consequently, the curriculum was politicized and could only be countered by politics. Ella, however, rejected immediately the suggestion that the curriculum, the Ministry of Education, and the State would consciously adopt a curriculum hostile to her students. Although she faulted the curriculum, she did not find a deceptive or malicious intent in its formulation. These differences result from dissimilar attitudes not only towards the state, but also towards community. Local distinctions among Arabs and Jews reflect and, in part, create different attitudes towards the community.

Origins and Local Distinctions

This project was initially formulated with a specific question: why would a teacher, who understands the struggles of minority students against a seemingly hostile educational system, act consciously to reproduce this structure? The fault with my question was that I

made the assumption that Mizraḥi teachers would be more aware of the struggle of their students and more driven to assist them than Ashkenazi teachers, just as Arab teachers would be more aware of their student struggles. I failed to realize that I had assimilated the struggles of both populations into a bifurcated and simplified version of identity, ignoring the importance of local politics. While attitude about the intentions of the state accounts for the significant difference between Arab and Mizraḥi teachers, attitude towards local community plays a role in distinguishing individuals within these groups.

All Palestinians share a similar culture and history. However, regional differences between the urban (*madanī*) Palestinian residents of central Israel, the *fallāḥ*, the villager or peasant from the Galilee and Little Triangle regions, and the *bedū*, Bedouin or nomad[20] from Southern Negev region are apparent in dialect. Few, if any Arabs speak Standard Arabic in their day-to-day doings. Rather, different forms of vernacular Arabic, *'āmmīya*, are employed. Among Palestinians, these differences are primarily pronunciation. The status of every group is reflected by attitudes towards its vernacular; the guttural Bedouin dialect of the South is thought to reflect their primitiveness or toughness, and that of the Northern Palestinians, their effeteness or sophistication. As with Hebrew, attitudes towards pronunciation and towards the vernacular reflect regional and local hierarchies among the Palestinians living in Israel. These differences are also apparent in economic, social status, and educational achievement.

Nowhere are these regional differences so apparent than in the rear of a class or the teachers' lounge in the South. Sitting among the students, particularly during a boisterous class at the close of a day, guarantees overhearing complaints. Particularly

interesting to me was complaints, insults, and jokes directed at, but very rarely heard by, the teacher, and also those made by teachers about their students. In the Arab schools, the most common insult I heard was in reference to origin: "Peasant! Doesn't understand anything", "Dirty Bedouin! Stinks like sheep".[21] The students were quick to point out to me that this or that teacher was a peasant and thus was ignorant of the rules that govern Bedouin life, irrevocably an outsider, who could never understand. One teacher, from Jerusalem, recounted a story in which he placed himself between two fighting students and was rebuffed by both: "what do you care if we kill ourselves, peasant? This isn't your business, go back to your village".

Among the Northern Arab teachers, this prejudice appears as a form of paternalism in which the teacher is on a civilizing mission to elevate the lives and cultural level of the Bedouin students. One teacher told me, "As teachers, our job is to provide an example to our students of how to live a modern life without primitive tribal prejudices and violence".[22] Another commented,

> When I first came to [town name] I was very angry about the [miserable] situation in the school. But soon I realized that the problem is not the government but, in truth, that the students and parents don't want to learn. I try to teach as best I can but realize that until we can raise them to our level, it is hopeless.[23]

Non-local Arab teachers from the North of Israel, speaking between themselves or to researchers, complain of the primitiveness, dirtiness, apathy, and stupidity of their students. The vast majority of teachers take their task lightly, feeling that little can be done. However, a few teachers take their burden very seriously, attempting to establish societies for the aid of the Bedouin; women are particularly singled out for assistance.

Arab teachers from the South therefore, must not only confront the contradiction of being an Arab teacher in a Jewish state, but also significant rifts within their community of teachers. Regional differences in attitude towards their students and community figured largely in my early understanding of teacher-student relations. I had assumed that local teachers would be more aware of the needs of their students, much more so than a teacher from the North. As among Jewish teachers, it was suggested that teachers from far away, whether fallāḥin from the villages of the Galilee, or Ashkenazim from the suburbs of Tel Aviv would, by virtue of their ignorance of local dialects, power structures, culture and experiences, fail to connect to their students or community.

There appeared to be some truth to the matter. Local Arab teachers were more optimistic about how many of their pupils would graduate with a full baccalaureate.[24] In addition, local teachers were less likely to feel that their students were alienated and more likely to find teaching at their local school easier than elsewhere. There was no significant difference between teachers in terms of their own alienation; both groups largely agreed that they had no ability to change the poor educational situation and that there was little respect for their positions as teachers. However, I only later realized that these differences were being reproduced by the politics of classroom assignment, the local power structure, as well as corruption and nepotism, and not by the ability to understand or resolve local contradictions.

Corruption, Nepotism and Regional Difference

Between consent and force stands corruption. (Gramsci 1971:80 n. 49)

Differences in attitude, particularly those that are related to teacher origin, need to be understood in terms of local politics and, on a larger level, government policy towards education and local politics. *Protectzia*, a Hebrew word meaning nepotism or favoritism, derived from the Italian *protezione*, or patronage,[25] is frequently used in the context of local government. Protectzia is a fairly common practice in both Arab and Hebrew schools as well as in most Israeli businesses and government operations. While within the Arab communities in Israel there are particular social structures—such as the extended family—which make nepotism and favoritism more obvious, it is hardly more prevalent among Arabs than Jews. Indeed, the fact that the Arabs in Israel use the Hebraized protectzia rather than the Arabic *muḥābāh* should be an indication of how widespread it is. There are, to be sure, Ministry of Education rules which are aimed at preventing protectzia, such as a ban on siblings and spouses working in the same school. However, these policies are based upon an assumption of small or nuclear families. In the case of the Arab extended family, the restrictions lose much of their force. Indeed, the word nepotism, derived from the Latin *nepos,* nephew, suggests that nepotism is something which functions best with larger family groups.

Nepotism, favoritism, and local politics allow for the exchange of educational positions as a commodity. Thus teaching and administrative positions are exchanged for other goods. In almost all of the Arab villages, towns, and cities of the South, schools are owned or managed by particular extended families. This is not to say that the principals

of these schools are necessarily unqualified. Rather, they have been chosen from among a group of candidates based primarily upon family and political concerns, and secondly on merit.

Regional Difference and Protectzia in Practice

Abu Ghōrī and Marwān provide excellent examples of the difference between local and non-local teachers, and how the local power structure plays to a home-team advantage.[26] Abu Ghōrī, a teacher in his late 20s, lived in his father's house less than 100 meters from the school. His extended family was respected in the community for their achievements in education and business. Abu Ghōrī was well known and well liked throughout the community. He had taught in this school for two years. Previous to this he had taught in a neighboring Arab community. In the school he was remarkably active, being the homeroom[27] teacher of the top-ranked class, as well as the director of mathematics in the school. All of his elite students took the baccalaureate exam in mathematics.

Marwān fared less well, although he had the same experience and education as Abu Ghōrī. Marwān was from a village in the Galilee. His accent, while less apparent than many and easily comprehended, clearly marked him as alien. He and his wife, also a teacher, lived in an Arab village only a few kilometers away, in a rented house. Marwān had been teaching in this school for four years, twice as long as Abu Ghōrī. However, Marwān was given the second-tier classes; in the 11th and 12th grades these were composed of the management and humanities track. Only half of his students would take the baccalaureate exam in mathematics. Like many non-local teachers,[28] Marwān felt that

his job security was minimal and his chance of a promotion was nil. Indeed, at the end of that year, Marwān was not invited back and was replaced by a younger, less experienced local teacher.

Abu Ghōrī and Marwān were equally qualified on paper: both had a bachelor's degree and teaching certification in mathematics. Both had identical experience, although Marwān was more senior. One real difference between Abu Ghōrī and Marwān stands out; Abu Ghōrī had a respected local family and a number of powerful friends in the local council. Positions in the local government—including schools—are often gained not by merit or qualifications, but through connections.[29]

Abu Ghōrī was considered a more successful teacher because his students had a higher rate of success on the baccalaureate exams. It is, of course, fairly easy to explain this: Abu Ghōrī's students were the elite of the school and Marwān's the undistinguished remainder. Thus, it is no coincidence that non-local teachers in Arab schools have, on average, significantly lower expectations of their students. They are generally given poorer performing classes and the length of their appointments also tended to be shorter. It is, then, no wonder that non-local teachers have lower expectations of their students.[30]

Understanding Differences Among Arabs

I came to the field with a number of hypotheses. Identity (in this case, as determined by residence or ethnicity) should correlate with effectiveness as a teacher because local teachers could better understand and, therefore, address the difficulties faced by students. These conjectures were based upon observations I had made in 1995, when I saw that

local high school teachers appeared more competent and more sympathetic to their classes. In addition, I saw that the students were at times hostile to non-local teachers. Empirically—statistically, that is—this thesis is quite sound: the classes taught by local teachers have significantly higher rates of passing the baccalaureate exam.

Local teachers, in general, teach students who are more interested in learning and have more active parents. Thus, to an observer they may appear better teachers, more attuned to their students, or more charismatic. What these observations and numbers leave out are local politics and the politics of being a teacher. In the Arab schools, the distinctions between local and non-local, or Northern versus Southern Palestinian, are significant. Local teachers, although frequently under-qualified, are given better classes to teach than Northerners. While given time and seniority Northern teachers are gradually assigned better classes, they almost never have parity with local teachers. This is particularly noticeable among the administration of Arab schools in the South where very few schools are administered by Arabs from the North. In fact, there are more Arab schools in the South with Jewish administrators than Northern Arabs. For the Arab teacher from the North, this means that the classes they are given to teach are the more difficult lower-ranked or tracked classes. It is no wonder then that the classes they teach are less successful and that their attitudes towards their students express the fact that they teach the second tier classes.

This is not to say that teachers from the North are discriminated against simply because they are Northerners. Rather, it is due to the fact that, for the most part, they are not part of the local power structure. Thus, in order for the behavior and attitudes of

teachers to be understood, they must be contextualized within the local power structure. Schools are named after families and managed by those same families. Positions within the school, like positions within the local council, are distributed as political rewards. Teachers, particularly those from outside the community, are easily replaced by those whose families are due. Thus, much more goes into the act of hiring a teacher than simply looking at educational qualifications and teaching ability.

While there are basic Ministry of Education guidelines for hiring, which must be followed in all state schools, the hiring and firing of Arab teachers and administrators occurs in a much more local and public sphere than within Jewish schools. Although local politics also influence Jewish schools, that the kind of politics which influences hiring and firing is noticeably different and relates the nexus of local and national level power structures. Local power within the entire Arab community in Israel, particularly in the South, is located within a web of relationships and politics normally identified as familial.

The Ministry of Education is often accused of turning a blind-eye to the machinations of local Arab politics. However, it is quite clear that the Ministry does far more than this: The Ministry, through its politically informed choices of principals and school locations, encourages and increases the level of local politics within the schools. The Ministry appoints principals by merit of familial power and schools are given to families who ostensibly donate land to the Ministry. This, in turn, increases interfamilial struggles.

Politics and the Development Town Teachers

The heavy-handed politics of the Arab communities appears conspicuously absent from the development towns. The extended family is, for the most part, absent from local politics, as are the politics of security. Rather, the internal dynamics of the development towns reflect the dynamics of the Israeli state. The notable conflicts of ethnicity—between Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim—and of religion—between the secular and orthodox—have been reproduced in recent years inside the development towns as clashes between the veteran Mizraḥim and recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union,[31] as well as between these two groups and Ethiopian immigrants.

Ethnic and religious conflicts are apparent in the social networks and local politics of the development towns. They are reproduced by voting patterns and the consequent distribution of power and position is controlled by the local branches of political parties. This springs from the early history of Zionism. During the British Mandate, the four main political parties—Labor, General Zionist, National Religious Party, and Agudat Yisrael—had separate tracks of education for its members. With very few exceptions, all schools were affiliated with a political party.

While the educational trends were dissolved by the Education Law of 1953, the legacy of the trends survives within the established power structures of the local political parties, where leaders and protégés are chosen, not elected. Although the schools no longer have any official identification with the political parties, they remain part of the protégé system in which the school is controlled by the local Education Council, which is appointed by city hall, whose bureaucrats are appointed by the dominant parties.

Principals and, to a lesser extent, teachers are appointed by City Hall's Education Council.

The Education Law of 1953 technically freed schools from politics and prohibit teachers from "conducting propaganda for a party or other political organization among the pupils of an educational organization" (Stanner 1963:173). While not a common occurrence, as among the Arab teachers, it isn't unheard of that a teacher be removed from their post for the spreading political "propaganda". However, even more that the distant threat of removal, an extremely widespread notion of national pride, patriotism, or loyalty to the state and the Jewish people prevents Jewish teachers from criticism. The history teacher, Neely, explained that to be critical of the curriculum and, consequently, of the state is tantamount to teaching treachery. There are no such inhibitions among the Arabs in Israel, for to be loyal to their own people necessitates a criticism of the state.

Teachers in the Public

The position of the Arab teacher is much more of a public role then that of a Jewish teacher. Arab teachers, particularly local ones, often play a role within the culture and politics of their communities quite different from their peers in the development town. In any Arab town hall, one would be hard-pressed to find either elected official or bureaucrat who had not, at sometime in their lives, been a teacher. In the mosques, there are few imams or sheikhs who have not been teachers. Community activists and youth workers are all current or former teachers. In town meetings the majority of those who speak are, or were, schoolteachers. In contrast to this, in the development towns, teachers

are conspicuously absent from public life. Local politicians or bureaucrats are rarely ex-teachers. Community activists and social workers begin their careers straight out of college, rarely pausing, as do most educated Arabs, to teach for at least a few years.

This pause is the difference and speaks to drastically different understandings of the career and role of teachers. One of the major differences I noted between Arabs and Jews is how they envisioned the role and career of teacher. These groups also demonstrated internal differences. I found that, most strongly among Southern Arabs, but also among Northern Arabs and Mizraḥi Jews, the decision to become teacher is made because there are no other options. Almost all Southern Arab teachers in both formal and informal interviews claimed that after graduating from college or university they had few other job options and became teachers by default. About 50 percent of Northern Arabs, 25 percent of Ashkenazim, and 45 percent of Mizraḥim also became teachers because they had no other options. Arab teachers, particularly men, wished to stress during interviews that even if they wanted to find other work, their identity as Arabs in the Jewish state put most work out of reach. Arab women also had little choice in the matter, not directly due to the state, but rather to community notions of propriety and control over women.

Arab high school teachers in Israel are frustrated by their lack of choices. Particularly within the communities I studied, many of the teachers were originally star students from those towns, who, for lack of other opportunities, returned to teach. This is especially clear among the Arabs where year after year the star pupils return to school as teachers. While a longitudinal study is necessary to prove this, it was my observation that

becoming a teacher was, for many students, reason enough not to matriculate to university. Both Arab and Mizraḥi students who had dropped out, or were considering to do so, would report that after finishing university they would simply end up returning where they came from—high school.

Most of the educated Arabs in Israel are likely to be teachers at one point in their lives. The default reason for being a teacher, at least among Southern Arabs, is simply the lack of anything else to do, since Arabs are prevented, either due to security restrictions, or the lack of an appropriate infrastructure, from finding other rewarding jobs. For most college educated Arabs there is no shame in being a teacher; it does not signal the inability of the person to find a better job, rather, it reflects the failure of the state to provide one. On the other hand, for Jews, particularly inside development towns, teaching is often seen as a sign of personal failure; it is a sign that they couldn't find a "better" job.

Teachers as Organic

The social status and role of Arab teachers is significantly different from that of Jewish teachers. The high visibility of current and former Arab teachers within the greater community and the much more active role of political and social struggles which go into teacher placement are two critical aspects that distinguish them from their Jewish counterparts. The role of the teacher outside of the school is significantly more important among Arabs.

The historical conditions that made it possible, previous to the establishment of the state, for Jewish teachers to be organic intellectuals have radically changed. Indeed,

since the establishment of the Israeli state, Jewish teachers have become, in Gramsci's terminology, technicians; their allegiance has passed from community to state, severing the ties that once bound them. The minor and essentially irrelevant role that Jewish teachers play outside the school is indicative of this change, as is the remarkably low social status of teachers. On the other hand, the role and position of Arab teachers, who were at the end of the 19th century bound to religious hierarchy and local notables, has radically shifted. While they are hardly on the radical fringe, it is clear that Arab teachers are firmly tied to their community. In an odd contradiction, protectzia and nepotism ties the teacher tighter to the community, defining their social roles. In short, within the current structure, Arab teachers are more likely to be organically tied to their community. Jewish teachers, however, become bound to the state, and thus it is significantly more difficult for them to remain as part of their community.

What can this tell us about the utility or applicability of Gramsci's theory of intellectuals in a world far distant in both time and place from that which he knew and described? There is a remarkable fluidity between categories or kinds of intellectual. The movement between traditional and organic intellectuals is not only, as Gramsci describes, a historical one involving the movement and assimilation of whole classes of intellectuals, but also an individual process of development and movement. Teachers and teaching cannot be reduced to any particular social task. Rather, as both individuals and as a profession, teaching is a remarkably complex endeavor. The social background of teachers cannot be dismissed as either irrelevant or inconsequential. Teachers, regardless of social origin, are in a bind. They are, at least in the small sample I know, in the odd

predicament of being on both sides of the issue. Like Michael Apple's suggestion that the position of teachers vis-à-vis the working classes is conflicted (1989:32), the position of teachers is must also be seen in terms multiple identities.

Notes

[1] A version of this chapter, "Teaching Failure: Israeli Teachers and the Reproduction of Ethnic Hierarchy", was presented to the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association, New Orleans, LA, November 2002,

[2] Eisenstadt is the doyen and founder of Israeli sociology. For more details see Ram (1995) or my discussion of him in chapter 1, page 7-8.

[3] The ideological state apparatus outlined by Althusser in his essay "Ideology and the State" (Althusser 1971:127-186) appears comparable to Gramsci's hegemony. Yet, as has often been argued, the ideological state apparatus is interpreted as both a false consciousness and inescapable.

[4] Indeed, there is some anecdotal evidence that a number of Jews, particularly the autochthonous upper class, may have also attended these schools (Eliachar 1983).

[5] In fact, this began to occur slightly earlier among the Jewish schools established by European concerns, such as the Alliance Israélite Universelle, or the Lämmel School.

[6] The Histadrut did not allow Palestinian members until 1959 (Swirski 1999:147). However, "The Jews from Arab lands were entitled to membership, but that did not open doors to privileged labor markets and income protection, but rather to… relief work and seasonal employment" (1999:147).

[7] Agudat Morim, which represents many secondary teachers, split from the Histadrut in 1960, arguing that the higher education and skill level of its constituency required different representation than that of other teachers (Swirski 1999:187).

[8] Zionist philanthropic societies had, by the early twentieth century, been able to control access to all of the donations that had previously gone to the Jewish religious community schools.

[9] On my naming of the National Religious Party, see note 21 on page 93.

[10] The interviews with Abu Nai'ma took place on 19 November 2000 and 5 February 2001. The interview with Neely took place on 13 March 2000. All interviews

were recorded and later transcribed and translated. All names are pseudonyms. For Arabs, I most often refer to them as I was introduced to them, based on the formula *Abū Fulān* (father of so-and-so), *Umm Fulān* (mother of so-and-so), generally the name of their oldest male child. For Jewish teachers, I usually refer to them by first name, as was customary in the staffroom.

[11] Abu Nai'ma pointed out the fact that the author, 'Aṭāllah Qubṭī, is the Ministry of Education Inspector of History for Arab schools and thus responsible for approving textbooks. This ensures that Mr. Qubṭī's text has a complete monopoly, and is indicative of the corruption within the textbook industry. I have heard similar complaints about an "English Mafia" which controls the production of English textbooks.

[12] The Hebrew *ḥoze be-chuva*, return to the answer [of God], is a neologism used to refer to secular Jews who converted to Orthodox Judaism.

[13] Most interviews were conducted between 1999 and 2000, before the "Second Intifada", the Al-Aqsa Uprising. In recent conversations (2003) with teachers, the optimistic attitudes expressed during these earlier interviews are absent, or less marked in the face of the current violence and stress.

[14] No Mizraḥi teacher ever tried to related their relationship to the state to that of Arabs or Arab teachers.

[15] With the exception of mathematics, which was taught primarily in Hebrew. Most of the teachers noted that, despite the cultural connection between Arabs and mathematics, they simply did not know the Arabic terminology, so they taught in Hebrew. Hebrew language textbooks were also only used in mathematics classes.

[16] One marked difference between the dialects is the pronunciation of the guttural Hebrew letters. Standard Ashkenazi Hebrew makes *ḥey* and *khet* as well as *'ayin* and *alif* indistinguishable, while in most Mizraḥi dialects *ḥey* and *'ayin* are guttural, while *khet* and *alif* are not.

[17] I recorded this quote from a Hebrew teacher in an *ulpan*, a state language school for immigrants, which I attended between June and August of 1997.

[18] Interviews with Ella took place on April 6 2000, and with Pnina on April 10 2000. Observation of both classrooms took place between March and June 2000.

[19] Despite these opposing attitudes towards the language of their students, there was little difference in the success rate of the teachers; both teachers taught similarly tracked classes at the same level that had almost identical rates of success on the baccalaureate exams.

[20] Because of the massive changes which occurred in the lives of the Palestinians during the first half of the twentieth century, the actual meaning of these terms are of dubious value today. Few if any of the fallāḥīn till (*falaḥa*) the soil, and very few of the nomads, *bedawīn*, are nomadic, even if most still live in the *bādiya*, the desert. Today these terms are most apt to describe significant regional differences between Arabs living in Israel.

[21] In 1991, I witnessed a northern Arab high school teacher screaming at one of her misbehaving pupils, calling him a "dirty Bedouin". The Hebrew, *'aravi melukhlakh*, dirty Arab, is a frequent insult which Jews hurl at Arabs. It is ironic that both the "dirty Jew" and the "dirty Arab" became the hurlers of such insults.

[22] Interview with a 26 year old male Physics teacher from the "Little Triangle", January 23, 2001

[23] Interview with a 32 year old male English teacher from the Center of Israel, December 3, 2000

[24] In a questionnaire I distributed to 267 teachers in Southern Israel in March 2000, I found that local Arab teachers were more optimistic about how many of their pupils would graduate with full a baccalaureate. Whereas Northern Arab teachers only predicted a 25% pass rate, local teachers predicted 38%. Less marked variation could also be seen among Jewish teachers, with an estimated 35% graduation rate from teachers who were not from development towns, and 40% who were.

[25] I have also heard that the term may be derived from the English word "protection", however, the Italian seems more fitting, since nepotism is not about protection so much as patronage.

[26] Interviews with Abu Ghōrī took place on January 14 2001 and February 3 2001. Interview with Marwan took place February 21 2001.

[27] I have rather loosely translated the Hebrew word *meḥanekh* into homeroom teacher but its literal meaning is educator. The meḥanekh is responsible for all of the students in his or her "homeroom" class, serving as teacher, advisor, and counselor. The Arabic term, *rabb al-ṣuff,* master of the class, has an entirely different meaning, suggesting different attitudes towards the students, however the job is the same. Homeroom or *ḥinoukh* classes, unlike those in the United States, are a combination of current events, ethics, and community service.

[28] I found that local teachers were almost twice as likely as non-local teachers to expect promotions. This held true in both Arab and Jewish schools.

[29] As of September 2001, Abu Ghōrī had won appointment to a fairly high position working in the local government. He was only teaching part time, although remained the director of mathematics.

[30] My survey only examined the expectations of teachers. Thus other than my field notes, I have no data which would indicate that local teachers have much higher prospects for advancement. However, I observed that administrative positions, homeroom classes, subject directorships, and better teaching jobs were held by local teachers in much higher proportions than their numbers.

[31] There have been many notable and violent clashes over the sale of pork and other non-Kosher foods in Russian-owned stores.

CHAPTER 5

AFTER THE ETHNIC GAP: CLASS AND GENDER IN SCHOOL

The ways that teachers are linked to their community and students vary immensely between different groups in Israel. Due to economic and historical circumstances, many Arab teachers in Israel are able or are forced to remain linked to their community of origin. On the other hand, Jewish teachers, particularly Mizraḥim, remove themselves—physically, emotionally, economically and culturally—from their communities of origin and identify themselves as agents of the state. However, the relationships between teachers and students are remarkably complex and cannot be reduced to the attitudes of individuals. As I have argued, the affects of origin or ethnicity do not neatly collapse into simple categories and the importance of local politics is tantamount.

However, by distinguishing between Arab and Jewish teachers, students, and schools, I have neglected once again my task of showing how these identities, while very important for understanding Israel, are also a veneer that hides other characteristics and identities. In the previous chapter I attempt an explanation of the different relationships between teachers and students based upon these ethnic or racial divisions. In this final chapter I complicate my race-based conclusions through an examination of how social class and gender differentially affects the status of teachers within their communities and, consequently, affects teacher-student relations. My goal is not to diminish the importance

of racial or ethnic distinctions in Israel, but rather to show that they cannot be understood outside of other social divisions.

Disciplining Education: Class and the Status of Teachers

> In a word, civilization has necessarily somewhat darkened the child's life, rather than drawing him spontaneously to instruction as Tolstoy claimed. If, further, one reflects that at this point in history violence was common, that it did not seem to affront anyone's conscience, and that it alone had the necessary efficacy for influencing rougher natures, then one can easily explain how the beginnings of culture were signalized by the appearance of corporal punishment. (Durkheim 1961:189)

Walking into the high school in Rimon, the chaos, noise, and general disorder are striking. Students lounge in the hallways, listening to headphones, and sleep in the garden. In the classroom one is greeted by a similar anarchy. Students chat in the background or write notes to one another while a teacher traces mathematical equations on the board. This is not, contrary to what one might think, a low-achieving working-class school. Rimon is one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in all of Israel and its high school consistently ranks among Israel's top ten high schools. In complete contrast is Al-Aqsām General High School, which, even between classes, remains quiet. Students are mostly invisible during class hours except the small groups cleaning the bare schoolyard. Students sit quietly in the classrooms, boys on one side and girls on another, listening to the teacher and dutifully copying the blackboard. Yet, without fail, Al-Aqsām high school ranks among Israel's poorest performing schools. Somewhere in between these extremes is Gourmetim General. The school is noticeably quieter then Rimon, yet even during class times, the existence of the student body is evident and loud. Students mill

around the lobby and schoolyard, and the ever-present security guards shoo students into classrooms. Inside the classrooms the noise level is higher then in Al-Aqsām. Students whisper to one another and pass notes, yet it is much quieter than the din of Rimon.

More confounding yet are the rumors, exchanged between teachers-in-training at Ben Gurion University in Beersheba: Chairs are thrown at teachers in Gourmetim by grass-smoking students and teachers are stabbed in Al-Aqsām during tribal battles. These teachers-in-training hope for teaching appointments in higher income schools, believing that the students will be more respectful and, consequently, their job easier. To be sure, a chair was thrown at a teacher in Gourmetim several years ago by a student after he had been caught with hashish. Likewise, serious fights are not unknown in Al-Aqsām. Yet teachers who have worked in several schools consistently report that the students in lower income schools are better behaved and more respectful towards teachers. So why these rumors? Why is it thought that there is a correlation between lower-income or minority schools and bad behavior, rather then the reverse? I answer this question by exploring the role of discipline in the school and, consequently, how the social position and class status of teachers within a community affects their authority within the classroom.

On Discipline

> That working-class parents seem to favor stricter educational methods is a reflection of their own work experiences, which have demonstrated that submission to authority is an essential ingredient in one's ability to get and hold a steady, well-paying job. That professional and self-employed parents prefer a more open atmosphere and a greater emphasis on motivational control is similarly a reflection of their position in the social division of labor. When given the opportunity, higher-status parents are far

> more likely than their lower-status neighbors to chose "open classrooms" for their children. (Bowles and Gintis 1976:133)

At very different historical periods and to very different ends, Foucault and Durkheim argued that discipline enables education and socialization. Durkheim's stern assertion that civilization and corporal punishment are soul-mates (1961:189) is only matched in pessimism by Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1979). For Foucault and Durkheim punishment and the consequent internalization of authority and morality are necessary components of education.

In Durkheim disapproval and its necessary partner, punishment, lead to self-correction and the development of morality (Durkheim 1961:167). "Only disapproval can warn [the child] that not only was the conduct nonsensical but that it was bad conduct violating a rule that should be obeyed. The true sanction, like the true natural consequence, is blame" (1961:180). Socialization is, therefore, the inculcation of morality through the vehicle of blame. Children are educated in home or at school to be moral: to internalize and accept the moral and ethical standards of their society. For Durkheim,

> punishment in the schools bolsters the authority of society's moral form of life by confirming that social ideals and practices cannot be encroached without proportionate repercussions… Punishment's primary purpose, then, is not to rehabilitate criminals or even to deter those contemplating whether to commit a crime; its fundamental aim is to strengthen shared social sentiments. (Cladis 1999:5)

Thus discipline and punishment are the forms by which social bonds are expressed. While both Durkheim and Foucault understand this expression as the key to social reproduction, they fundamentally disagree on the effect of this upon the individual.

> Durkheim typically rejected the very idea of a fundamental antagonism between social constraints and the happiness of the individual… Foucault, in contrast to Durkheim, sees punishment in schools and in prisons as an

> oppressive instrument that works the mind, body, and soul into a conformity via social constraints. Punishment and education, in Foucault's view, are vehicles of discipline, and discipline is the means to painful "normalisation". (1999:4-5)

Both however see auto-regulation and the internalization of authority as the goal of education. A moral education will inculcate these values, enabling them to be reproduced from generation to generation.

Despite the clear correlation, neither Foucault nor Durkheim pays much attention to a differential application of punishment and discipline between genders and different social classes. Notions of crime and criminality, like discipline and punishment, are applied differently to different sorts of people. The opponents of capital punishment in the United States are quick to point out that the vast majority of inmates on death row are black men; thus illuminating an unequal balance between punishment, race, and gender. What these statistics suggest is that discipline and punishment need to be understood through the filters of gender, race, and class, since discipline, punishment, and authority are not uniformly employed.

Culture, Tradition, and Authority

It is often assumed that tradition means respect for authority; children are taught to respect authority from a very early age; beginning within the family and then extending outside. The Palestinians and Mizraḥim in Israel, in both popular and academic thought, are assumed to be more traditional and, consequently, more respectful of authority figures. Arab youth in Israel learn that age and authority are to be respected. The same argument is made about the Mizraḥim. Yet at the same time, it is often suggested that

during the process of modernization traditional structures of power or authority have, or are breaking down (Eisenstadt 1985). Consequently these groups have lost any sense of respect. This loss of tradition is thought to account for the disproportionate percentage of delinquent Arabs and Mizraḥim in Israel (Hilo 1991).

However, this deportment has nothing whatsoever to do with modernization or loss of tradition. Rather, as both Durkheim and Foucault point out, conceptions and enforcement of discipline are directly linked to socialization or social reproduction. While authority and discipline are frequently located and defined within cultural or ethnic groups, they are also class-bound and must be understood as such. Similarly, gender, notably absent from most discussions of discipline, plays a very important role in understanding the relationship between school discipline and reproduction of power.

The classroom is an ideal place to examine discipline. Not only does classroom crime call for no trial or jury (Durkheim 1961:203), it is also an excellent vantage point to watch the dynamics of class, gender, and race. In the next few pages, I will examine a few classroom crimes and subsequent punishments, attempting to outline a more inclusive theory of classroom discipline.

Classroom Discipline: 'Ali hates Englishmen

'Ali will never be, by any stretch of the imagination, a good student. He drags from class to class in the Al-Aqsām General High School, sitting in the rear of the classroom far from the gaze of the teacher. It is, however, quite clear that 'Ali like many other marginal students has the capacity to excel in almost any subject as his conversations with me and

his middle-school grades suggest. Yet by his own admission he chooses to fail because school is both boring and irrelevant. After some initial suspicion following my appearance in his 12th grade English and Mathematics classes in October 1999, ‘Ali decided to befriend me, making sure that I sat next to him during class hours and calling out to me—loudly—in the hallway in the presence of his cohort.

While ‘Ali and the *shabāb* (Arabic; ‘youth’ or ‘lads’) rebelled against the school, they did so quietly and without much outward show. In class, ‘Ali was quiet and rarely disturbed anyone. He usually napped through class or idly sketched inside textbooks or on desktops, occasionally whispering to his desk mate. ‘Ali usually held his rebellious feelings under tight control. His repulsion against authority figures in the school rarely saw the light of day other than snide comments to students and occasionally researchers.

English class however was an exception for ‘Ali. He despised the teacher, Zack, a Jew of Asian origins. Zack thought that ‘Ali was “sheep brained”. The tension and hatred between teacher and student was not only personal. For both teacher and student, the other symbolized all that they disliked about that group. To the teacher, ‘Ali was lazy, obstinate, and stupid. To the student, Zack was self-righteous, hypocritical, and bigoted. Rarely did a day go by in which ‘Ali was not disciplined by Zack. In this atmosphere of racial stereotypes, a particularly paternalistic kind of discipline could be observed. Zack felt that it was his obligation, as a fellow “Oriental”,[1] to improve the status of the Arabs in Israel. In an outpouring of understanding and sympathy, Zack knew that the only way of improving their lot was through strict discipline and hard work. Thus, Zack rode ‘Ali, seeing him as a typical less-than-modern Oriental. Upon any infraction of the rules that

sprang from ‘Ali’s region of the classroom, no matter how minor or who was responsible, ‘Ali would be chastised.

It was clear, however, that Zack chose ‘Ali for reasons other than his behavior. While he was a poor student and expressed little interest in school, he was hardly the most disruptive. Yet Zack constantly identified him as the culprit. ‘Ali was chosen by virtue not only of his poor grades and interest, but also by his appearance and the status of his family. His family was renown for criminality and poor school performance. Equally important, ‘Ali looked the part of criminal-to-be. His hand-me-down oversized cheap clothes were bought in the West Bank or the Thursday market in Beersheba. His dark complexion, while a source of pride for ‘Ali, was for Zack, who was often embarrassed of his own *Mizraḥiut* (Orientalness) even more evidence of guilt.

The final crime and punishment that led to ‘Ali’s permanent removal by the principal from Zack’s 12th grade English class, was when ‘Ali, coerced by Zack into reading a passage about Queen Elizabeth, announced, “I hates Englishmen”. He was summarily expelled from the class. Zack later expressed feelings of failure. He had failed to help his charge. ‘Ali was delighted to be removed from the class and asked to be placed in an 11th grade English class with a different teacher.

Classroom Discipline: Disciplining Aviva

Aviva’s family was, by most standards, rich especially for residents of a development town. They were also unusual in that they, unlike other development town residents who had made good, still lived in Gourmetim. Aviva’s father owned a chain of very successful

restaurants and a number of other small businesses in Gourmetim and Beersheba. The previous year, in a bold move intended to prevent the best students from leaving to the regional magnet schools and the possibility of receivership under the Ministry of Education[2], the town council, supported by the principal and director of education, imposed a tax upon all students attending schools outside of Gourmetim. The schools, expecting to receive new students because of this law, set up a new mitziyunut, excellence, track for these academically gifted students who would otherwise be attending one of the quasi-private regional schools. Aviva, in tenth grade in the 1999-2000 school year, was a member of the first cohort of this new class.

Aviva and her classmates were undoubtedly very gifted students. Her class was composed of 14 students, but no matter how brilliant her peers, it was Aviva who stood out. This is not to say that she was the most intelligent. Rather, she was by far the most energetic, charismatic, and self-possessed. A teacher confided that her poise was a sure sign of her wealth since "only rich people have such arrogance". Whether confident or arrogant, Aviva was also an attention seeker who couldn't stand having other students attract attention. She constantly interrupted by speaking to the teacher about extraneous subjects, answering questions without waiting to be asked, and chatting with those around her. The other students were, it seemed, resigned to Aviva's constant interruptions and self-centered activities. For the most part, most teachers simply accepted her behavior as part of her birthright. They would, half in jest, chide her and remind her not to speak during class or interrupt other students, yet this never appeared to have any effect upon her behavior.

Clearly her worst or most out-of-control behavior was during modern European History. Neely, the history teacher, a Mizraḥi *ḥoze be-tchuva* or "born again" Orthodox Jew, appeared to be more lenient with Aviva then most other teachers. It was, however, quite clear that Neely was also playing favorites. She clearly liked Aviva and was, I suspect, drawn to her wealth and charisma. Perhaps more importantly, she disliked and actively ignored the recent immigrants from Russia.[3] The seating arrangements isolated immigrant from veteran. The Russians were seated to one side of the classroom and the veterans were seated on the other side, with Aviva in the middle. Neely, who was seated off center, directly in front of a table with the two veteran girls, rarely looked towards the Russians, but spoke directly to Aviva and the other veterans. Consequently, the Russians played very little part in the class. They mostly remained silent, taking notes or daydreaming. The veterans on the other hand played very active roles answering and asking questions.

This state of things went on throughout most of the fall and winter. The Russians were quiescent while the veterans, led by Aviva, dominated almost every aspect of the class. However, by spring something had snapped. It is unclear to me whether it was due to the Russian students and their parents complaining, or something else,[4] but by April Neely was clearly trying to pay more attention to the Russian students. She had even shifted her desk slightly towards the middle of the room and was consciously trying to call on more of the Russians.

Although the students were always civil, if not friendly towards one another, it was clear that Neely's new egalitarianism was increasing the stress between groups.

Aviva's behavior became more and more outrageous, interrupting both teacher and student whenever she was not the center of attention. Neely's chiding became more and more serious, responding in darker and darker tones, although one could see on her face a sense of amusement and enjoyment with Aviva even though she attempted to hide as much as she could. She was clearly torn between identifying with Aviva and the other Israeli students, and her desire to treat all of her students equally. Eventually, Aviva simply became too outrageous.

One Friday afternoon in early spring, shortly before school let out for the weekend, Aviva announced during break time that her father was throwing her mother a surprise birthday party and that Yigal Golan, a singer who had recently topped the Israeli pop-charts,[5] would be the entertainment. Moreover, she would not only meet him, but also sing with Golan on stage. Well into the class-hour, as a Russian student was answering a question, Aviva burst into Golan's "Don't Toy with a Man's Heart", her rendition was both a sincere appreciation of Golan and a wicked mockery of his over-blown style of singing.

While the Israeli students found her imitation particularly funny, it was quite clear that Neely did not. The Russian students were silent. Furiously pointing to the small courtyard through an open window, Neely said nothing. Hiding her shock with blithe disdain, Aviva waltzed through the door while continuing to sing Golan's sappy lyrics. That afternoon, Neely spoke to the principal who telephoned Aviva's father. Aviva, following this half-day suspension, was never punished. What surprised me, the students in the class, and many of the teachers was how long it took Neely to discipline Aviva.

Most teachers claim they would have punished Aviva much sooner. Most students complained that had they acted like Aviva, they would have been expelled, not just disciplined. Aviva was, undoubtedly, protected by her father's legacy and her own intelligence. As both daughter of local-boy-made-good and a gifted student who should have attended a private school, Aviva had some immunity to the discipline imposed upon other students. It was not until Aviva had gone way beyond the limits of other, less gifted, students that she was disciplined.

Classroom Discipline: Albert in Two Schools

Albert's schedule was remarkably complex. I was never sure how he managed to keep it straight. Not only did Albert share a full time schedule between Rimon and Gourmetim, he was also a partner in an engineering firm in Beersheba where he apparently also worked full time. Yet, Albert always seemed relaxed and able to spent time with both students and researchers. Albert's family had immigrated to Israel from Morocco in the 1950s, a few years after his birth and had been settled in a transit camp near Gourmetim. He had, up to two years ago, been a full-time teacher in Gourmetim. However, he received a very attractive offer from the high school in Rimon, which allowed him to teach a full time schedule in only three days and work in his Beersheba office in the afternoons. In addition, Albert worked a two full days teaching high school pre-calculus in Gourmetim.

There can be no doubt that Albert was an excellent teacher. I originally observed his classes in Gourmetim, but when he spotted me in Rimon, he insisted that I also attend

one of his classes “for comparison’s sake”. After less than a minute, I realized why he had insisted that I observe both classes. His class in Gourmetim was one of the best-taught and best-behaved classes I observed. Albert was gentle in class, but also very efficient. Discipline in Gourmetim mostly consisted of a hand on a shoulder, a glance, or occasionally asking the student if she or he understood. Albert was, in Gourmetim, the only teacher I knew who did not once during the school year raise their voice or send a student out of the class. Albert in Rimon was a different person all together. There he was impatient, strict, and uninterested in his students. In short, Albert became like most of the other teachers.

It took a bit longer to realize why Albert invited me into his class in Rimon. After all, it made him as a teacher look bad. For Albert, the students in Rimon were rude, disrespectful and “they treat me like a salesman”. The students were quite different from those in Gourmetim. The deference, which the Gourmetim students paid to Albert in class, was absent. Rather, the Rimon students treated Albert not as an authority, but as servant or, at best, a peer.

Teaching and Authority

As an observer, the most notable difference between Rimon and Gourmetim, between the privileged Ashkenazi students and poorer Mizraḥim, was their attitude towards the teacher. The students in Gourmetim, even if they despised their teachers, always treated them as authority figures. Consequently, oppositional behavior was more apparent. On the other hand, the students in Rimon treated their teachers at best with the deference that

one would pay to an older sibling. Notably, in Gourmetim, it was only Aviva, a student from a privileged background, who refused to treat her teachers as authorities.

The distinctions and deference accorded to teachers reflect the social and economic status of teachers within their communities and consequently spring from the social and economic rewards for educational success. Among the Ashkenazim, the rewards for educational success are large. To be a teacher suggests failure. It means that one didn't do well enough in high school to matriculate in anything other than a faculty of education. On the other hand, for both the Mizraḥi and Palestinian citizens of Israel, the returns for educational investment are small. Becoming a teacher is about as good as it gets. Thus, teachers within these communities are the local image of educational success. There is no suggestion of personal failure, but rather the collective failure of Israeli society to incorporate the successful members of their communities. Israeli Arabs with advanced degrees often expect to do nothing other than teach. A master's degree or doctorate in physics or chemistry, that should promise a great industrial or academic job among Jewish Israelis, is of little practical use since these jobs are pretty much out of the question for Arabs due to alleged security concerns. Similarly, while there are more rewards for success among the Mizraḥim, most are funneled into teaching positions.

Consequently, the status of being a teacher is quite different in these three communities. Thus, differences in the relationships between teachers and students, particularly in respect to deference and authority are not necessarily due to the cultural differences between Arabs and Jews, or Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim in Israel, but rather reflect the status of the community to the state and the economic returns for education.

Within these poorer communities, the established hierarchical relations between teachers and students reflect the class-based relations of the community to the outside.

Disparate Returns for Academic Success

Expectations for the future, career opportunities, and social hierarchy all play major roles in student and community attitudes towards teachers and the role of education. Using a different vocabulary, different returns for educational investment greatly influence attitude and opinion about education and the status of teachers within a community.

There can be little doubt that for educated Green-Line Palestinians finding employment that utilizes their education is very difficult (Semyonov and Lewin-Epstein 1993; Wolkinson 1999). Government jobs on the national level are almost impossible to obtain and high-tech or industrial jobs are very difficult to find. No matter how well qualified the applicant many jobs are out of the question without a security clearance, which requires military or national service. An Arab in Israel with a degree in nuclear physics is unemployable except as a teacher.

In her study, *The Profitability of Investment in Education in Israel* (1966), Ruth Klinov-Malul shows major ethnic discrepancies in economic returns for education, suggesting that income inequality and educational inequality are indivisible. “At every level of education persons of Asian-African origin receive lower income than persons of European origin” (Klinov-Malul 1966:22). Although some of the conditions that Klinov-Malul describes are quite different today,[6] differential rewards for education among

ethnic groups continue to exist and can be seen all the more clearly if Green-Line Palestinians are taken into consideration.

Klinov-Malul bases her argument upon the assumption of a unitary system of rewards for educational success. That is, she assumes that all Israeli citizens are on something akin to an equal playing field as revealed in her suggestion that if all Israelis have equal access to educational facilities, in time the ethnic gap will close (Klinov-Malul 1966:64). Had she examined patterns among Arabs in Israel, she would have noticed that the economic returns for education are decreasing in time, not—as she would have predicted—increasing. Today, the current cost of secondary schooling is close to nothing and selectivity is greatly reduced. Yet among Arabs and Mizraḥim returns are lower than ever. This is particularly the case among Arabs.

> Arab workers, especially younger cohorts, receive lower returns on education in terms of occupational status… by 1983, Arabs of all age groups experienced "labor market discrimination" and their actual occupational status was lower than one would predict based upon their market-relevant attributes… Indeed, the 1980s have seen growing difficulties for Arab workers, and especially newcomers to the labor market, to convert their human capital resources into socioeconomic rewards. (Semyonov and Lewin-Epstein 1993:57-58)

Profitability in educational investment appears then not to be about equal access to education, but rather equal access to employment and less social and labor-market discrimination.

Security concerns and outright discrimination are frequently cited by Arab university graduates as the primary reason for their failure to find jobs. Wolkinson has shown that, in the vast majority of cases, security is but "a subterfuge by which to discriminate" (Wolkinson 1999:61).[7] It is telling that Arab university graduates are more

than twice as likely to work as teachers then their Jewish counterparts. Forty percent of all Arab graduates work as teachers as compared to only 15 percent of Jewish diploma holders (Al-Haj 1988a:14-15). Despite the increase in educational achievements among the Arab citizens of Israel, there has not been a concomitant increase in employment possibilities. "On one side, the number of Arabs with academic degrees entering the labor market is increasing, and on the other side, the chances of employment is decreasing" (1988a:14-15). Semyonov and Yuchtman-Yaar suggest that,

> the subordinate group is more likely to face tougher competition and to be driven to peripheral economic sectors and poorer jobs. Consequently, its members will have greater difficulties in the utilization of human capital (e.g., education) for the achievement of higher status, better paying occupations. (Semyonov and Yuchtman-Yaar 1992:216)

Consequently, the "occupational achievements of minority members who participated in [the state-wide] labor market were inferior to those operating within their own [community]" (1992:216).

Labor market discrimination is not isolated to Arabs. I met a young Mizraḥi engineer who, after failing to receive any responses to his employment inquiries, substituted on his curriculum vita an Ashkenazi name in place of his typically Mizraḥi name, and sent it to the exact same companies. Almost all of the businesses responded positively to his doctored identity, asking for an in-person interview. For the young engineer and the people who brought him to my attention, no more evidence was needed to prove racial or ethnic discrimination.[8]

Educated Arabs and Mizraḥim in Israel find the school as well as local government to be among the few places of work that allows them to take advantage of

their education. Minorities, in Israel and elsewhere find that working within their own community is much more rewarding since it is there that they face the least amount of competition and get the best returns for their education (Semyonov and Yuchtman-Yaar 1992:223).

Many see teaching as a stepping-stone, a first job that is respectable and provides income until a better job can be found. About 20% of one of the cohorts of teachers that I followed who graduated from university in 1994, had, by 2001, found jobs outside of teaching. Most worked in the local town councils or city halls with jobs ranging from treasurer to youth leader. Yet, like teaching, the new jobs remained within their community, offering more safety and security than outside employment. For both Arabs and Mizraḥi Jews in Israel, the unfair competition that they face on the national level drives many of the best students to return to the community, year after year, to teach.

Three Different Versions of Success: Abu Sharīf, Orly, and Riyāḍ

In 1997, Abu Sharīf sold his dump truck to his cousin and enrolled in university. At 28, married and a father, Abu Sharīf decided that he was through with being a driver. A younger brother had just completed a degree in mathematics. It was the perfect time to matriculate. Although Abu Sharīf had been an excellent student in high school he began driving soon after graduation in order to help pay for the construction of a new house for his family.[9] Once given the opportunity, Abu Sharīf matriculated in Ben Gurion University's Faculty of Education, intending to get a bachelor's degree and teaching certification.

There was, according to Abu Sharīf, no question that he would become a teacher. Similarly, there was no question that being a teacher was significantly better than being a truck driver. While "better" was primarily defined in terms of work hours, paid vacation time, and salary, Abu Sharīf was also looking forward to being proud of his profession and being respectfully called *ustādh*, teacher, by both pupils and peers. Abu Sharīf felt that becoming a teacher would be a welcomed change and was synonymous with success.

Orly was born and raised in Gourmetim. Owing to her father's death in the 1982 Lebanon War, she received a scholarship to attend high school at a private religious boarding school in a nearby city. She easily avoided national service since she had attended a religious school.[10] Following a five-month tour of South Asia, she matriculated to Ben Gurion University. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in Linguistics and a teaching license for Hebrew Language in 1994. It was obvious to others, although not to her, that she had little choice but to become a teacher. Teaching was, according to Orly, the last resort, although she had no other options. She was easily appointed to a job in the Gourmetim Comprehensive high school. However teaching was a certain sign of failure. It proved to Orly that her skills and education were of no use in the real world. Teaching was a dead end, with little hope of advancement, no future, and worse, she would never be able to leave Gourmetim. Consequently, after teaching full-time for two years, she changed her schedule and worked only part-time, spending a few hours a week in another nearby school working as a private tutor. She matriculated to Tel Aviv University, studying for a master's degree in public relations, with the hope that it could provide her with an escape from Gourmetim.

Riyāḍ was born and raised in Al-Aqsām. His excellent grades, good behavior, and ambitious father won him a scholarship to attend a private Arab school in a predominantly Christian village in the Galilee. After completing high school, he matriculated, the same year as Orly and Abu Sharīf, to Ben Gurion University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in mathematics and economics. By Riyāḍ's second year of university, he was already teaching mathematics in Al-Aqsām. It mattered little that he was unqualified since the Arab schools in the South were always under-staffed, particularly in mathematics and science. A few years after completing his degree, Riyāḍ had tripled his wages, cut his in-class teaching time in half, and had been hired in a newer high school as the mathematics department head. Riyāḍ was clearly on the road to success. Eventually, if he played the politics correctly, he might become principal or inspector. However, like Orly, Riyāḍ had no plans to remain a teacher. Immediately after completing a master's degree in management in 2000, he had begun to search for new work and quickly won a very powerful and lucrative bureaucratic position within city hall.

These three examples serve to demonstrate the point that there are remarkably different attitudes about teaching in these communities and very different attitudes about the community itself. Orly wanted to leave Gourmetim, while Riyāḍ could not imagine leaving Al-Aqsām. However, in both cases, the community offered what the outside could not: employment and security. Neither Orly nor Riyāḍ were able to find these things outside their community. It is, however, notable that both Orly and Riyāḍ continued to feel that education was the best route to self-improvement despite their own

experience to the contrary. Both completed master's degrees in the hope that it would assist them in finding a better job.

Teaching as Failure

To be a teacher means very different things in different communities although it is reasonably safe to say that being a teacher anywhere in Israel ensures a low salary. In most communities the majority of teachers become so because they have little choice; that is, there are no other ways in which they, as individual or group, are able to apply their skills. Being a teacher frequently means that all other opportunities are closed. Teaching is often held as a last resort, something that no one really wants to do, but for personal or social reasons, they have no other choice. However, the circumstances surrounding failure are remarkably different and speak to the differences between communities. Personal failure is, after all, very different from the failure of society to provide appropriate employment.

To be a teacher in a wealthy community such as Rimon suggests personal failure, as if the teacher was not successful or intelligent enough to secure better employment. An engineer teaching mathematics in Rimon, such as Albert (page 200), must be a poor engineer. To be a teacher means that all other avenues of employment are closed. For the highly educated Russians teaching in Rimon with doctorates in physics and other technical subjects, this is true. They teach there because they could not find other employment within their fields. Thus, in Rimon, both teachers and their students often believe that they are failures, whether they chose to teach or had little or no choice.

On the other hand, while teaching in Al-Aqsām also has connotations of failure, it suggests a more general failure, the failure of Israeli society to live up to its promise of democracy and equality. No one can blame an Arab with a degree in economics for not getting a job in a bank or with the government, nor can they blame a chemist who could not find employment. It is assumed that the fault is not with the individual, but with Israeli society. The ethnic hierarchy of Israeli society determines that teaching is one of the only options available.

Gourmetim is somewhere between these two extremes. It is well accepted by many of the residents of Gourmetim that they struggle against a system that makes it very difficult for Mizraḥim and other residents of development towns to succeed. At the same time, the barriers faced by the residents of Gourmetim are not as limiting as those faced by Palestinians in Israel. Residents of development towns have achieved—albeit infrequently—elite positions and careers in government, business, and industry. Thus, teaching in Gourmetim is understood as both personal and social failure. It is very difficult to move out of the ghetto of the development towns, yet it is possible.

Discipline, student comportment, and respect towards teachers are directly and causally connected to the economic position of teachers within the community and state. However, the role of teachers goes far beyond their actual economic niche, reflecting the economic and social realities of their community. In chapter 4, I argue that the role of teachers and their relations with students are curtailed, perhaps defined by their position within the community. In the present chapter, I add that these relations, as observed through student comportment and attitudes towards their teachers, are also circumscribed

by the position of the community within the state. While this argument correlating ethnic employment possibilities with the authority of teachers provides a basic framework for understanding the socio-economic status of teachers and education within certain communities, it fails to provide an adequate explanation for why some students perform better in school and are more successful than others. Notably it fails to explain why women, who receive lower rewards for educational success than men, have consistently higher success in school (Semyonov and Kraus 1993). This is my final task.

Gendering Success

> At the turn of the century… the dearth of boys in high schools—increasingly referred to as "the boy problem"—came to be explained as the result of the "feminization" of public education. Some doctors and psychologists now worried that the high school was too masculine for the health of the girls, while others depicted the high school as too sissy for the boys. (Tyack and Hansot 1992:145)

I have asserted throughout this dissertation that the school both reproduces and reflects social hierarchies. However, academic success and social equality are not the same. It is abundantly clear that despite their inequality in Israeli economy and society, women are more successful than men in high school. How does education play a role in the reproduction of gendered inequality? To answer this, I start with the obvious but often forgotten assertion that gender is not only about women, but also about the relationships between women and men. Gender differences in the school and social inequality do not only affect women. Men are touched in ways both beneficial and detrimental. Gender plays a central role in the reproduction of educational failure between Mizraḥim and Palestinians in Israel. In order to understand how, it is necessary to examine how

gendered differences are played out in the home, school, and workplace and, most importantly, how these differences are performed and understood within different communities. The gendering of educational success governs who succeeds in school and who becomes a teacher.

As caveat, I feel apprehensive about using gender as a means to differentiate between communities in Israel. It is far too easy and inadequate to simply note that Green-Line Palestinian communities are more traditional than the Jewish population. In the same way, the Mizraḥi communities are often understood to be more traditional, especially in terms of family and gender, than the Ashkenazic. As I hope to show, these stereotypes, while perhaps reflecting some truth, obfuscate other important differences. To say that Mizraḥi or Arab communities tend towards more traditional gender roles than Ashkenazim belies the fact that Mizraḥi and Arab women are, relative to their male counterparts, more successful in school than Ashkenazi women. As I hope to show, the reason for this difference has much more to do with the economic and social positions of each of these communities within the state than it does with community-wide ideologies of gender.

Gender Equality in Israel

> On average, working women in Israel are recruited from high social origin, are better educated, and hold more prestigious occupations than men. Nevertheless, women's average income amounts to only 73% of the men's income. (Semyonov and Kraus 1993:107)

Apologists and supporters have long touted Israel's egalitarian gender relations, pointing to its policy of drafting both men and women to military or national service. This

argument quickly falls apart, however, when examining the situation critically. Women spend a significantly shorter time in national service than men, 24 months versus 36. It is also much easier for women to avoid service altogether (Izraeli 1993:133). More importantly, the training women receive during their service speaks much more to their assumed future roles. *Ḥayelot,* female soldiers, are usually found behind desks, working as secretaries and as teaching-aides in disadvantaged schools, or working in hospitals as nurses' aides. Men are more commonly assigned to combat squads and jobs such as driving trucks, construction, and engineering (Azmon and Izraeli 1993:135). Pilots, the most prestigious position in national service, were all men until 1998. The acid test, however, for gender inequality is wage differentials; Israeli women make less than 75% of men's salaries, even within the same field and with indistinguishable qualifications (Izraeli 1993:171; Semyonov and Kraus 1993:107).[11]

Across the boards, women achieve higher grades in high school and on standardized testing than men in Israel. This appears counter-intuitional. One would logically assume that within societies where there is significant and palpable discrimination against women, men would perform better then women in school. Men's tests scores should be higher, they should attend better schools, and be in more prestigious subjects. However, things are not so simple. On average, Israeli women pass the baccalaureate exam, the *Bagrut*, with higher marks and more regularity, and matriculate at a higher rate to university.[12] Despite their higher average educational level, women still earn less then men.

Understanding these facts and numbers becomes even more complex when ethnicity is considered. The relationship between the gendering of academic success and ethnicity is complex and is not a simple statement that one gender or ethnic group does better. Mizraḥi and Green-Line Palestinian women are appreciably more successful than their male counterparts in high school and in the *Bagrut*. However, their success is oddly represented. Mizraḥi women are over-represented on the university level while Arab women are under-represented.[13] This is particularly apparent in the South of Israel where this research took place.[14]

While a recent study in Israel suggests that gender discrimination has a stronger determining affect upon income than ethnicity (Semyonov and Kraus 1993), it is clear that this is not the case with education. In terms of income, "Asian-African men are disadvantaged relative to European-American men, but Asian-African women are not disadvantaged relative to European-American women" (1993:108). However, within the school Mizraḥi men are disadvantaged relative to all Ashkenazim as well as all Jewish women. Similarly, Mizraḥi women are disadvantaged relative to all Ashkenazim. In addition, according to Shavit, Mizraḥi men are disadvantaged relative to Arab men (Shavit 1990). What can this complex web of disadvantages tell us? The role that gender plays within each of these ethnic communities is quite different. It is also able to tell us a significant amount about the internal gender dynamics of each community and provide a vantage point from which to compare groups. I will begin with a brief description of the gender dynamics through classroom examples.

Gender and the Bedouin Community in an Advanced Mathematics Class

Like most Israeli high schools, the Al-Aqsām General High School imposes a system of subject tracking upon its students. Beginning in the tenth grade students are placed in the track that is deemed most appropriate for them. In the 1999-2000 school year, the school offered four subject tracks: science, management, humanities, and general studies. The science-tracked class, 12A, was composed of 12 boys and ten girls. Calculus met eight hours a week. The teacher was remarkably conscientious in the classroom, carefully calling upon both boys and girls. He responded to them equally, making clear that he would treat everyone identically and would expect the same from all. Like most of the baccalaureate exams, mathematics can be taken at three different levels, basic, intermediate, and advanced.[15] Most of 12A students planned on taking the intermediate baccalaureate with the exception of two students, Ziyād, a boy, and Ibtisām, a girl, who were considering taking the advanced exam. In the end, neither Ziyād nor Ibtisām took the advanced exam. This is not interesting in itself, however I received remarkably different explanations of this, predicated upon gender.

Ziyād explained that both the teacher and principal had expressed doubts as to his ability to pass and that they all felt that it was too much to risk the failure of one of their best students. While Ziyād's father continued to push for him to take the advanced exam, the teacher and principal remained adamant that he should not take the exam. In the end Ziyād and his father acquiesced and the issue was silenced. Ibtisām, on the other hand, wanted to take the exam. However, her father was opposed. While the teacher remained neutral during their meetings, he told me that he was sure that Ibtisām could pass while

expressing doubts about Ziyād. However, he was unwilling to interfere in family decisions. He refused to even suggest to her father that she could pass. His behavior and that of the principal, who both interfered to prevent Ziyād from taking the exam, are inconsistent. While they were willing to intervene in family affairs within Ziyād's family, they were unwilling to do so with Ibtisām. All parties involved, including the school counselor, an outspoken proponent of women's education, demurred when Ibtisām's father refused to allow her to take the test, stating that it would be too much stress for her to handle.

The most obvious and perhaps deceptively simple message is that the various school figures would not interfere with a girl's family matters, but felt no such compulsion with a boy. Most explanations of gender differences among Israeli-Arabs tend to explain and reduce it to religion and issues of family honor. Recently, Ron Hoz and Anat Kainan of the Kaye College of Education in Beersheba produced a large report on female dropout among the Negev Arabs. They found that parents' explanations for school leaving were primarily based on either health concerns or the fear of boys and girls mixing. This mixing was thought to be un-Islamic since it could lead to sexual contact (Hoz and Kainan 1997).

As mentioned, among all Arabs in Israel but particularly among those in the South, women have a higher rate of passing the baccalaureate than Arab boys, but a lower rate of college attendance. What happens between secondary school and university that convinces these young Arab women to dropout or discontinue their studies? Is it safe to conclude with Hoz and Kainan that for these Arab women, family, religious, and

community pressures convince them not to continue? While viewed externally, this may be true or, as a number of teachers who read the report suggested, intuitively obvious. However, this explanation does not provide a resolution to the reverse correlation between religiosity with level of education. I found, through questionnaires and interviews, that families who professed higher levels of religiosity also had higher rates of educated females than families who reported average to low levels of religiosity. Additionally, it is worth noting that among the Arabs in the North of Israel, who have a higher rate of professed religiosity than in the South, dropout is significantly higher among boys than girls. There is, therefore, a paradox between religion and education that tradition-based explanations cannot resolve.

If tradition only provides a partial explanation of the behavior of Arab women in school, it has even less value in understanding the behavior of Mizraḥi men and women in school. Mizraḥi men have a significantly higher rate of dropout and lower rate of matriculation than Mizraḥi women. In addition, Mizraḥi men have significantly higher rates of failure on the baccalaureate (Swirski and Swirski 1998:14). How can this be explained? Obviously an explanation based upon traditional gender roles in the Mizraḥi community would not appear to provide much of value. Mizraḥi men drop out, stay home, and have a much higher rate of unemployment. These apparently reversed gender roles among the Mizraḥim are the key to understanding the success in high school of Arab and Mizraḥi women. To understand this, I will examine how perceptions of both schooling and particular subjects are gendered.

Much as academic success is gendered, perceptions of academic subjects are gendered as well. This seems particularly obvious with perceptions of the so-called hard sciences. In high school classrooms the distinctions and perceptions felt by students are less than obvious and often hidden since students do not have much say in their subjects. However, in last two years of high school, when students have more choice in their classes, the gendering of subjects becomes more obvious. Nowhere were the distinctions clearer then between sociology and physics classes in Gourmetim Comprehensive High School. All 19 students in 12th grade sociology were girls while all eight students in 12th grade physics were boys.

The physics teacher, a recent immigrant from Russia who was popular with his students due to his young age and relaxed manner explained that it was much easier for boys to understand physics than girls. He provided no real explanation for this observation, but simply noted that boys were able to abstract better than girls, as documented by their better performance in advanced mathematics. Their mathematics teacher however, an ornery man in his early 60s with a master's degree in physics, vehemently denied that there was any difference in the capacity of boys and girls to understand or do mathematics. He did note, however, that girls tended to perform better in his class and did better on the baccalaureate.

These distinctions became clearer in a discussion I observed in the 12th grade biology class. Like mathematics, all 12A students took advanced biology. The teacher, Estella, had an excellent rapport with the students. One day, halfway into the class, all the

boys from the physics class came in late, apologizing and explaining that their experiment had taken much longer than expected. Unexpectedly, Estella burst into a bitter tirade against how biology was treated as a "little science", a "girl's science", while physics and chemistry were treated as if they were more serious, more difficult, and "macho". The boys, of course, protested that they had no such attitudes and that they were taking biology seriously. Estella predicted to me later that afternoon that the boys would all take the advanced Bagrut in physics and most of them would fail.

Sure enough, all of the boys took the advanced four-point baccalaureate exam in physics and the intermediate three-point exam in biology. All but one of the boys failed the physics exam and were disqualified from matriculating in any of the sciences. Had they passed the three-point exam in physics, they could have matriculated in either chemistry or biology. A few months afterwards, Estella explained:

> The boys believe that they have to study physics. I don't know why, but they believe that it is a macho science. They are dooming themselves to failure since we [in Gourmetim] cannot compete with the [wealthy] schools. Seeing that girls do well in biology, sociology, or [literature], the boys reject them and move towards a subject that guarantees failure.

The sociology teacher reported a similar trend. The boys would not take sociology, or the baccalaureate exam because it was a "girl's subject".

As the teachers explain it, the boys, seeing the success of the girls in certain subject matters, judge it as feminine and, subsequently, reject it. However, this obscures the fact that the teachers themselves view subjects as gendered and. consciously or not, encourage, or discourage their students. Boys and girls, therefore, see certain subjects as

appropriate or inappropriate, depending upon their gender. On a much broader scale, boys and girls see schooling and education as more feminine than masculine.

Why Girls Do Better in Gourmetim: A Tentative Explanation

The success of women in schools and the feminization of teaching have gendered educational success and made school, particularly within the Jewish sector, the domain of women. Within these communities, most men expect that they will spend their lives working in minimal skill jobs. Like their fathers, neighbors, and friends, they are inescapably manual laborers. Paul Willis' *Learning to Labor* (1977) shows how in England of the 1970s, the process of identifying oneself as a worker comes concomitantly with a disdain for brain-work. Being working class becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy for men. For a man to do well in school throws doubt upon his masculinity. Men work with their hands and are not intellectuals.

For many women, on the other hand, education offers an exit from the working class that men appear less willing to take. A teacher in Gourmetim, who had recently begun an master's degree in journalism, compared her future possibilities to that of a childhood friend who had dropped out of high school to take a job in a now closed textile factory.

> She dreamed that the factory job would lead her out of here, but there is nothing for her now. She works as a cashier in an old grocery store, making enough money to pay her [subsidized] rent. Her dream was to move to Haifa, to the North. She will never leave.

Lois Weis, in her book *Working Class without Work* (1990) sketches a similar pattern of the gendering of education among working-class women in a de-industrialized U.S. steel

town. The mechanisms and responses men and women employ to cope economically, socially, and emotionally with a de-industrializing economy, their lost jobs and changed lifestyles are very different. Women, much more than men it seems, use education as a way out of their troubled city and economy.

In brief, Weis suggests that men do not adapt as quickly as women to the requirements of a changed economy. The men appear oblivious to the fact that the new economy of high-tech and financial capitalism has replaced the industrial economy that had provided a single (male) income that could support a household. In her interviews of male high school students in a Rust Belt town, most expect their future wives to stay home and take care of the children. The future wives, on the other hand, are not so sure about the desirability of these plans. Rather than become dependent upon their future spouses with no independence or financial security,[16] these high school girls actively look for careers and use school as the means of obtaining one. Clearly, not all of these girls are looking to matriculate to university. Many plan to obtain vocational training after graduation. The boys, on the other hand, with few exceptions, appear to be unaware of the fact that the steel mills have shut down and that as unskilled laborers they have few prospects for the future.

A career is able to provide what the single-income household cannot, both economic and emotional security. Work, as Weis might suggest, is quite different than a career. These young women are interested in having a career in which they invest both time and effort. In addition, Weis's interviews with high school girls illustrated the fear

of divorce, abandonment, and financial dependency was the apparent reasoning behind many girls desiring a career (Weis 1990:66).

The Rust Belt is six thousand miles from the Negev development towns and the languages, histories, and economies are vastly different. Yet the globalization of economy has brought about a series of changes that are visible almost everywhere. One of these changes is the demise of industry in the so-called industrialized nations. Like the Rust Belt, the economic structures of the Negev have rapidly changed in the past 30 years. Originally designed as sites for light industry and agriculture, the development town experiment, while never very successful, had completely failed by the early nineties. These towns are now home to some of Israel's highest unemployment rates.

In the early 1990s the Israeli economy shifted away from agriculture and light industry, which had sustained the development towns, towards the so-called new economy of high-tech, computer hardware, and software design. Intel and other such firms in Israel offer good wages and a bright future for many trained engineers and technicians. For the hundreds of thousands of unskilled and unemployed manual laborers in Israel, these firms offer very little, other than the odd job of security guard and janitor. With little to no infrastructure to tie them to the rest of the world and the rising costs of production in Israel, the textile mills could not survive. One after another, the mills in Gourmetim and the other development towns closed, leaving the workers unemployed and unemployable.

If Mizraḥi women use education as a means of escape, why don't the men? Klinov-Malul (1966) has shown that Mizrahi men have the lowest rewards for

educational success. In other words, the wages Mizraḥi men receive is practically unrelated to the amount of education they receive. A truck driver, custodian, or security guard receives wages roughly equivalent to that of a teacher. For women on the other hand, the returns are much higher since many of the more lucrative semi-skilled or unskilled jobs are limited to men. In any case, among Israeli Jews teaching is a low status job with minimal economic returns and is most certainly gendered feminine.

Mizraḥi Women, Arab Women

While the Green-Line Palestinians face the same de-industrializing economy, their position within it is quite different than that of the Mizraḥim. Following the establishment of military rule in 1948 and the consequent seizure[17] of significant acreage of cultivable and pasture land, it was difficult for the Palestinians in Israel to survive on agriculture and animal husbandry, their former occupations. This, in combination with taxes and rent, forced many into the labor market, particularly in agriculture (Lustick 1980:188; Marx 1984:42-58; Zureik 1979:40). Some 50 years later, as the Israeli economy moves away from agriculture and light industry, the Arabs are again left in the lurch. One of the responses, by both men and women, has been to look towards local government and social services as a source of employment (Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov 1994). Thus, the response of Arab women to education and their success, at least in secondary school, is remarkably similar to that of the Mizraḥim.

As I have suggested, Mizraḥi women tend to see education as one of the only means by which they can escape the trap of unemployment and poverty in their

communities. For Arab women, education is a way out of the guarded isolation of the village. An Arab woman, who was studying at a teacher's college offering licensure, explained quite simply that college was far more interesting than remaining home. For her, college was a means out of the dull, humdrum existence of women in the village.

> When I am home, my mother, sisters, and aunts always have something [for me] to do; clean the house, help with the weaving, watch the baby. Its not that I dislike these things, but I can't do them all the time. They are boring. When I am home I have no time to do the things I like… I want to marry, but will my husband allow me to teach?

Mizraḥi women, knowing that there is little if any future in the development towns, often move towards education as a means by which they can escape to a larger, more prosperous city. Arab women have fewer illusions and perhaps less desire to escape from their communities since they have nowhere to go. They cannot easily or comfortably move to a Jewish city.

The low cost of living in the development towns and Arab communities promotes the continuance of low wages and allows a family to survive on a single income. Unlike women living in the larger Israeli cities, Arab women and women in the development towns were only later obliged to work for a second family income. In the development towns and in Arab communities,[18] the cost of living is much cheaper than elsewhere. In the development towns the cost of living is government controlled, rents are subsidized, and tax rates are substantially lower. While the Arab towns and villages are not subsidized,[19] residents usually resist paying the local taxes.[20] Living is substantially cheaper than in cities due to communal living, access to goods and labor from the West Bank and Gaza, and small-scale agriculture and animal husbandry. These economic facts

have historically led to fewer Arab and Mizraḥi women in the labor market. This, however, has changed or is changing. While the reasons for these changes between Arab and Mizraḥi women are vastly different, they are rooted in a similar economic structure.

I have argued, up to this point, that the differences between these social groups, between Jews and Arabs, Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim, as well as Northerners and Southerners, can be understood as historical and economic distinctions, reflecting their differential incorporation into the Israeli state. These distinctions are mirrored in the extremely different attitudes about community and state, as well as the status of teachers. The examples I have shown, whether classroom dynamics, attitudes towards teachers or community, or the gendering of academic success, have illustrated that economic differences between groups have been a primary factor in prevalent attitudes towards education.

While different economic structures, opportunities, and limitations have molded these attitudes, they have also molded the very different social structures of these communities, and, in turn, have been molded by these structures. I have tried to show how a limited and inequitable labor market has affected school performance in these different communities and how reactions were mitigated differently by Mizraḥi men and women, depending upon their relationship to the labor market. While I stand by this economistic explanation, it should also be clear that while sharing certain economic circumstances, Mizraḥi Jews and Arabs have been incorporated into the Israeli state in vastly different ways. Consequently, it is not enough to paint in broad strokes, as I have so far, a picture of social structures within the Israeli state. Rather, the distinct social

structures within these communities and the subsequent details of local politics have broadly affected the way in which education, particularly of women, has been understood and utilized.

Social Structure and School Performance: Arabs in Israel

Despite their superior performance in high school and on the baccalaureate exams, Arab girls are frequently discouraged and occasionally forbidden by their families from continuing their education to university or college (Hoz and Kainan 1997). The reasons behind this are many and it is far too simplistic to say that the traditional structure of Arab society prohibits it. Rather, the Israeli state and governmental policies have acted to augment and sustain a number of pre-existing kinship structures which, not by chance, have come to bear upon the day to day relations of Arab men and women.

The relations between all men and women are, to a great extent, mitigated, understood, and restrained through kinship structures (Collier and Yanagisako 1987). Kinship, like gender, is about hierarchy and power. It differentiates individuals and shapes their relationships. This appears to be particularly the case among Arabs in Southern Israel where the vast majority of all marriages occur within the extended family, often between paternal first cousins (*ibn* or *bint 'amm*). Arab society in Israel has a particular socio-economic structure that has slowly changed over time. There is nothing primordial, mediaeval, or primitive about it, or at least no more than any other form of hierarchy. Gran usefully suggests that this is a particular variant of a political-economic strategy for rule, which seeks to reproduce hierarchy through kinship and gender (Gran 1992, 1996).

While the "traditional" kinship structure of the Bedouin is discussed in detail in many other publications,[21] it must be stressed from the onset that this structure has been transformed dramatically over the past 100 years in response to political, economic, and social changes. In no way can kinship be considered an unchanging aspect of Arab social structure. The existence of social categories is no assurance that functions, history, or politics have not changed over time.

The *ḥamūla* (clan or extended family) is an excellent example of how social categories change and, importantly, are changed, by those within and by the state. While the ḥamūla may reflect pre-sedentarization kinship structures, it is a modern phenomenon, not a vestige. The decreasing importance of other kinship structures and relations in the period after the British Mandate substantiate this conclusion (Asad 1975). Nahla Abdo-Zubi argues that it is possible to chart the changes of the ḥamūla in accordance to changes in both rule and economy. In the Ottoman period (16th to early 20th century), the ḥamūla was not only

> an organization of kinship and reproduction but also a social organization of production and labour within the village. [The] Hamula was not a homogenous entity... but rather a differentiated group with gender and family inequalities being characteristic of its structure. (Abdo-Zubi 1987:60)

Thus, the ḥamūla is, among other things, a form of economic organization transformed by the changing economic and political structure of Palestine. Towards the end of Ottoman rule and into the British Mandate, the importance of the ḥamūla and its leadership declined (Abdo-Zubi 1987:61-62). However, since the establishment of Israel, "the

proletarianization of the villagers led to a strengthening of family ties" (1987:34). The family

> was transformed from a productive and reproductive unit—producing agricultural commodities as well as reproducing a new generation of workers—into an almost exclusively reproductive unit. [Thus] the so-called adherence to traditional ways within the Arab family was a revival based on the modern economic and political conditions of the Arabs in Israel. (1987:30)

Thus, the current structure of Green-Line Palestinian society is a product of proletarianization and underemployment as well as governmental policies (Lustick 1980).

The government policies that strengthened the ḥamūla were originally designed and implemented during the military administration of the "non-Jewish" residents of Israel. In brief, Emanuel Marx, anthropologist and advisor to the Israeli government on Arab, specifically Bedouin, affairs,[22] argues that

> The Military Administration has, at various times, augmented the chief's authority in numerous other ways, through not always intentionally. One of the most effective means was the channelling of many of the contacts between Bedouin and government departments through the chiefs. Thus, 15 out of 18 tribal chiefs have also been appointed as salaried village headmen (*mukhtār*). (Marx 1967:44)

These "chiefs" were given the sole right to distribute subsidized foods (1967:41), lease and allocate State land (1967:42), obtain permits for tractors (1967:43), and determine the location for the building of schools (1967:44). In addition, the administration turned a blind eye to illegality such as smuggling by chiefs or their families (1967:41). The expansion of the powers and authority of the "chief" meant a simultaneous growth in the importance and scope of the ḥamūla.

Between 1948 and 1966, all Arabs who wished to work outside of their villages or towns that offered little or no wage-labor had to apply for a work-permit through the

"chief". These permits were scarce and were made available only to men. Consequently, for almost 20 years wage labor was limited by both law and newly established "custom" to men. While the effects of male-only earning cannot, as yet, be determined, it is certain that family-centered productivity, such as small-scale farming, ceased. The family unit became, as Abdo-Zubi suggests, "an almost exclusively reproductive unit" (1987:30). Thus, the structure of the family, particularly its economic structure, was significantly changed after the establishment of Israel. Women's roles changed from being producers to reproducers. Their vital economic roles within the family changed once livestock rearing and agriculture became untenable.

The effects of this change are still clearly visible today and are a lucid explanation of why Arab women in Israel, particularly in the South, despite their extremely high rates of success in school, continue to be under-represented in the work place and, consequently, in university. School appears to offer to girls, even if only temporarily, a way out of a stifling home environment where women's roles have been reduced to reproductive ones. Thus, to put effort into schooling means an increased chance for economic independence, yet without the alienation and isolation that leaving the community would bring. One 17 year-old high school student, remarked quite succinctly,

> I know that my father would never let me go to college, even with [a full scholarship]. He doesn't like me to leave home. Anyway, my mother needs me here, at home, until my sisters are old enough to do the work that I do. I keep hoping my grades will somehow convince my father to let me go to college.

Ben Gurion University's Department of Education houses a program that financially supports Bedouin women for three years of university education. Funding like

this is not available for men. Professor Ismael Abu-Saad of Ben Gurion University, the director of the program, explains that many families are unwilling to invest such a significant amount of money (around $3,500 for a full year) in their daughters. The parents feel ambivalent about their daughters leaving the home and that the investment is lost after marriage.

The program has faced a significant amount of criticism from both men and women. In the words of a local teacher, it is an "attempt to correct something in Arab society through [Israeli Government] action. As such it will only receive antagonism and even more youngsters will leave school". As example, he mentioned a mutual acquaintance, Reema, a young Arab woman who was attending law school. "This program will create a generation of highly educated women, but who will marry her? Her drug addict cousin who has demanded [to marry] her?" The teacher's fears are colored by a very conservative outlook on gender. Marriage and raising children are inescapable tasks of both men and women. However, his criticism is founded upon very real fears faced by both Arab women and men, that the Israeli government is trying to change or "modernize" the Green-Line Palestinians by the manipulation of gender roles. To a great extent, this fear is well founded. There can be no doubt that the most acerbic criticism used against the Arab communities in Israel is gender inequality. Thus, the program led by Ben Gurion University, while having the best of intentions, is often accused of being part of a larger plan to destroy or change Palestinian culture.

Conclusion: Gender, Class, and Education

As the example of Reema demonstrates, there is no doubt that girls receive conflicting messages about doing well in school. If they do too well, it reduces their desirability. However, if they do poorly, they may never find the freedom that work outside of the home can offer. For all women in Israel teaching provides one of the most accessible, rewarding, and appropriate careers. For Arab women, education provides the only probable path towards independence. Teaching, along with child-care and secretarial work, is one of the only socially acceptable forms of employment for these women. It provides an atmosphere in which women's activities are monitored, and yet impart economic independence and a certain degree of freedom. While there are more employment and career options open for Mizraḥi women who live in development towns, teaching is one of the best means of escape from limited economic and social possibilities.

The social relationships between teachers, students, and community are affected, if not determined, by the larger currents of history, economics, and social hierarchy. The economic and social rewards for educational success both reflect and determine the attitudes that students and parents hold about education. Whether they are men who see little reward for success in school, or women seeking to escape from or find independence within their community, educational success can have very different meanings and results. Being a teacher in one community is quite different from being a teacher elsewhere. These are not random vicissitudes, but rather reflect the status of the communities within the state.

Notes

[1] The English word choice was Zack's, directly translating the Hebrew word mizraḥi.

[2] See discussion of this on page 131

[3] The recent Jewish immigrants to Israel from Russia or Central Asia are usually referred to as immigrants from the 'ex-Soviet Union', including Russians, Georgians, Uzbeks, Tajiks, and others. However in this elite class all the students were of western Russian origin.

[4] I may have been partially responsible for this change since my research assistant, who was a part-time teacher in the school, mentioned to another teacher that Neely was clearly playing favorites with the Israeli students and ignoring the Russians. I believe that this was reported to either Neely or the principal, and, consequently, affected Neely's behavior in class.

[5] Golan had been an unsuccessful professional soccer player in Israel and after an early retirement, he became one of the most popular singers in Israel. His Mediterranean style of singing (see Horowitz 1994) and his love ballads made him very popular among Mizraḥim.

[6] For instance, secondary schools no longer charge tuition fees since the Free Secondary Education Law of 1980 (Gaziel 1996:45, 74), and high school selection is no longer as stringent.

[7] Arabs in Israel are not hired in certain fields because of alleged security concerns and the potential of Green-Line Palestinians to be fifth columnists. Consequently, Arabs are excluded from many factories and industries. However, in a study of these security concerns, Wolkinson concludes that for the most part, these security concerns are falsehoods that serve to legitimize discrimination (1999:61).

[8] For discussion on discrimination against Mizraḥi Jews, see the following: Bernstein and Swirski (1982), Kraus and Hodge (1990), Menahem (1983), Nahon (1984), Smooha (1978), and Swirski (1995).

[9] While plots of land in the seven Bedouin townships are highly subsidized by the government, they are far from free. In addition, while mortgages are available for both land and building, a significant amount of cash is necessary as a down payment. Much of Abu Sharīf's salary, as well as that of his father and older brother, went towards this. This is yet one more may in which settling in the townships forces these Arabs into the wage economy.

[10] Religious Jewish women are exempt from national service.

[11] Izraeli (1993:171) cites two research reports written by Linda Efroni, "Promotion and Wages in the Public Sector: Are Women Discriminated Against?" (1980, Jerusalem: Work & Welfare Research Institute of the Hebrew University) and "Women in Government Service: A Comparison 1979-1988" (1988, Jerusalem: The Civil Service Training and Education Service). For more on gender discrimination and inequality in Israel see; Ayalon and Yuchtman-Yaar (1989), Azmon and Izraeli (1993), Semyonov and Kraus (1993), and Swirski and Safir (1993)

[12] According the 1999 *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, of those students who take the exams, 72% of Arab girls versus 61% of Arab boys pass individual advanced (4 point) exams, while 74% of Jewish girls versus 69% of Jewish boys pass the exams (Central Bureau of Statistics 1999:22.23). In addition, according to the Israel Women's Network's publication *Nashim beYisrael 1998*, slightly more girls than boys sit for the exams (2000:60). In university, women make up 58% of all first year students in Israel. (Central Bureau of Statistics 1999:22.36)

[13] Women make up 52.1% of Ashkenazi university students, 59.3% of Mizraḥi students, and 44.1% of Arab students (Swirski and Swirski 1998:14, Table 12). It is notable that of the Arab students who passed the *Bagrut*, 24% of the men would matriculate to university, but only 22% percent of the women (Central Bureau of Statistics 1999:22.26).

[14] For example, 34% of sitters nationwide fail to qualify for the Bagrut. In the Southern District 39% of all sitters fail to qualify. (Central Bureau of Statistics 1999:22.22)

[15] These levels are defined in terms of points. The basic two-point exam was the minimum required to obtain a diploma. The three-point intermediate exam was required for entrance to teachers' college and some university programs. The four-point advanced *Bagrut* was necessary for matriculation to the more prestigious university programs.

[16] Another important point of Weis' book is that young women seek financial independence because, learning from their parents' generation, they are fearful of the high rates of divorce and, thus, afraid of being financially dependent upon their spouse (Weis 1990:66).

[17] There is a significant amount of literature on land seizures, both Lehn (1988) and Lustick (1980) offer excellent discussions. For specifics on the Negev and the Bedouin, see Hamaisi (1990) and Falah (1985; 1989).

[18] There are several Arab cities in Israel, such as Nazareth, Rahaṭ and Umm Al-Faḥem. With the exception of Nazareth, all the Arab cities are defined as such purely by virtue of their population, rather than infrastructure, lay-out, or industry. Rahaṭ and Umm Al-Faḥem are both bedroom communities and have much more in common with the thousands of Arab towns and villages than with other cities.

[19] The Negev Bedouin who live in one of the seven planned townships are an exception since they can purchase land (one *dunam*) of land at a substantially discounted price.

[20] The locality tax, the *Arnona*, is one of the major sources of revenue for most local authorities in Israel. Most local councils require the Arnona, but many do not have the means to enforce payment. For instance I was informed by the treasurer of one Arab city that over 90% of the residents do not pay the Arnona.

[21] Anthropology has made much of the contemporary existence of tribes. In particular, Israeli anthropology is rather fixated on the Arab family structure, and especially with Bedouin tribalism. It should be stressed that while there are differences between the family structure of the Palestinian peasantry and Bedouin (Fenster 1991; Al-Haj 1988b), just as there are differences between the family or kinship structure between Mizrahim and Ashkenazim, and that these differences not only speak to the different lifestyles, but also the different histories and economies. For details on the kinship structure of the Negev Bedouins see Marx (1967), Ginat (1987), and Lewando-Hundt (1978).

[22] For more on the role of Arabists, anthropologists, and Orientalists in the administration and control of Israeli Arabs, see Abed (1986) and Teeffelen (1977). On the effects of Zionist ideology on their role as academics and administrators, see Asad (1975) and Morsy (1983).

CONCLUSION:

RESISTANCE, HEGEMONY, AND EDUCATION

Two themes have run throughout this project. The first of these themes is a reconception, or reassessment of the political economy of the Israeli State in which ethnic and racial hierarchy—the social and economic position of Ashkenazim (European Jews), Mizraḥim (North African and Middle Eastern Jews), and the Green Line Palestinians, Arab citizens of Israel—is explained in relational terms. Rather than bifurcating Israeli social structure into a series of conflicts—Arab and Jew, modern and traditional, Mizraḥi and Ashkenazi, East and West, bourgeoisie and proletariat—I have attempted to position these divisions and conflicts within the shadow of the state. It is easy and correct to believe that exclusion from power is based upon or defined by racial, class, or gendered identities. And yet these categories and hierarchies are socially, historically, and economically constructed. The site of this construction is the state. Therefore, in order to understand how one group becomes, in Gramsci's terms, hegemonic it is necessary to look not only to class structure, racial hierarchy, and gender inequality, but also to the structure and history of the state itself.

My second theme is the place and role of formal education, specifically teachers, within community and state. Theories of education tend towards polarization, explaining the school as a site of socialization or reproduction; schools therefore serve to either prevent or foster social mobility and change. Modernization theory and functionalism explain that the role of the school is to sort the wheat from the chaff, the modern from the

traditional. Those who fail do so because they have refused, morally or intellectually, to accept their role in society. Yet this is unable to account for why certain communities, often ethnically or racially defined, consistently succeed while others fail. Alternatively, the school is a site, a factory, for social reproduction where the working class learns to work and the bourgeoisie learns to rule. Yet even in some of the most sophisticated analyses and formulations, the agency of teachers is lost, their predominantly working-class roots and identities forgotten. Indeed, any sort of statistical analysis of teachers will reveal that they are primarily working-class women. How then can teachers be held responsible for ensuring that each new generation is reproduced to be just like the last, what to they possibly have to gain?

Schools are complex institutions composed of real people who often have conflicting interests. Consequently, the function of the school is often contradictory. Perhaps the best-known example is Paul Willis's ethnography *Learning to Labor* (1977). Willis shows how the "Lads", working class boys in England, recognize and resist the machinations of capitalism and in the process end up reproducing those very same conditions. In their rejection of bourgeois values the Lads ensure that they remain factory workers. Yet, despite all of its nuances, Willis's ethnography fails to recognize that these same contradictions are present in the actions and thoughts of teachers. Of the teachers I met in both Arab and Mizraḥi schools, most recognized their predicament, understanding that they are expected to teach the values of the dominant Ashkenazim while rejecting those of their Arab or Mizraḥi students.

History and the State

While these parallel themes of political economy and education make up the bulk of my writings and descriptions, it is the intersection or nexus of these two themes—the central and irreplaceable role of the state—that is the implicit substance of this project. The role of the state, however, is often difficult to see since it is not an actor in the strict sense of the word, but rather the stage upon which all action takes place. In other words, the structure of education is built upon the foundation of the state. Therefore in order to understand the current shape of education, it is necessary to trace the development of the state.

My historical analysis attempts to show how the state and structure of society in Palestine and Israel formed the school in its image. I have argued in chapter 2 that the way that education has been structured has served to isolate Jews from Arabs and Mizraḥim from Ashkenazim. Under the Ottoman millet system schools, while identifiably ethnic and religious, were locally controlled, and reproduced local and regional identities over national ones. Following the imposition of the British mandate, from 1917 to 1947, Arab and Jewish schools were forcibly integrated into two large standardized and parallel systems. Schools that did not fit within the system, such as the autochthonous Jewish or locally controlled Arab schools, were abandoned or absorbed by the larger systems. As schools were taken away from local control, the well-funded Zionists were able to ensure that all Jewish education was to be placed under their jurisdiction. Palestinian schools however, lacking outside funds, were surrendered to British colonial administrators.

Very little changed following 1948. Educational policies and structures, which had been put in place during the mandate, were reinforced, continuing the policy by which control over schools and teachers was further and further removed from the community. Indeed, it appears as if the so-called rupture of 1948—Israeli independence and the catastrophe of Palestine—hardly affected the structure of education. Levels of educational success and failure remained the same. Why hasn't the structure of the state and education changed? I assume that the form or shape of the state is not a vestige—like our wisdom teeth whose purpose seems only to cause pain—but rather it serves particular, albeit nebulous, purposes. A Gramscian view of the state, in which social groups form alliances (hegemonic blocs) to struggle for domination over the state's mechanisms of civil and political control, provides a means to understand why, despite so many nominal alterations, so little had in fact changed. Whether called the *Nakba*, catastrophe, or *Atzmaout*, independence, the events of 1948 were hardly revolutionary, since the mechanisms of the state, class structure, and racial hierarchy that had been established during the waning years of the Ottoman Empire and strengthened during the Mandate, remained essentially unchanged after the formation of the Israeli state.

Teachers as Intellectuals

The historical development of the state and state education in Palestine ran parallel to the professionalization of teachers. However, like their communities and schools, teachers were incorporated into the state in very different ways. The affect of this upon the roles

and personas of teachers in contemporary Israel has created vast differences between Arab and Jewish teachers.

It was not uncommon to find, in Arab schools, widespread and open criticism of the textbooks, curricula, and the state. I never saw this in a Jewish classroom. More importantly, within their communities Jewish teachers were largely invisible. Few if any played significant or marked roles outside the school. In contrast, Arab teachers and former teachers, were much more likely to be public figures within their communities, playing significant roles in local politics and society. An easy explanation of this might be found in the suggestion that Jewish teachers identify with the Jewish state, while Arab teachers, logically, do not. Yet there is something missing from this explanation, as it cannot explain why Mizraḥi teachers, the teachers I spoke with in Gourmetim and elsewhere, were willing to criticize the schools, curricula, and texts among themselves and to me, but were unwilling to do so in a public forum or in the classroom.

Antonio Gramsci's writings on intellectuals provide a framework that allows for a reconception of both the work and social position of teachers, explaining their position vis-à-vis the state and local community. I argue that it is possible and at times likely, for Palestinian teachers in Israel to function as, in Gramsci's terms, organic intellectuals. They are able to speak for and to their community, making sense out of its place in the state. On the other hand, it is much more difficult for Jews, both Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim, as teachers to remain tied to their community. The reasons for this are to be found within the historical development of Israeli education and current political-economic structure of the Israeli State. Arab teachers had been traditional intellectuals,

bound to local notables and religious authority, but were torn from them by the changing location of power and capital, and the violence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. At the same time, the Jewish teachers, the organic intellectuals of the Jewish colonialists in Palestine, were assimilated by the new state and bourgeoisie, to become part of the traditional intelligentsia. Thus, the real difference between Arabs and Jews, Ashkenazim and Mizraḥim is how they, as different groups, have become historically, economically, and ideologically integrated into the state. It is this, in Gramsci, which makes up hegemony.

Respecting and Gendering Success

Like their roles, the respect and authority accorded to teachers was remarkably diverse. Teachers in the poorest communities in Israel were much more respected than in the wealthiest. At the same time, the economic rewards for educational success in these poor communities are the lowest in Israel. Having a bachelor's degree in either Al-Aqsām or Gourmetim provides, in terms of income, no more rewards than a high school diploma. On the other hand, in wealthy communities the income differential between those with a university diploma and those without is significant.

The respect accorded to teachers therefore reflects the social and economic status of teachers within their communities and consequently springs from the social and economic rewards for educational success. Among the Ashkenazim, the rewards for educational success are large and to be a teacher suggests failure. On the other hand, for both the Mizraḥi and Palestinian citizens of Israel, the returns for educational investment

are small: becoming a teacher is about as good as it gets. Thus, teachers within these communities are the local image of educational success. There is no suggestion of personal failure, but rather the collective failure of Israeli society to incorporate the successful members of their communities.

Just as notions of respect and authority reveal the economic underpinnings of education, the success of Israeli women in schools and the gendering of educational success reveal the differences between communities, genders, and family structures. For Mizraḥi women, education offers an exit, a way out of the troubled development towns. Arab women however, despite superior performance, are frequently discouraged and occasionally forbidden from continuing their education to university or college by their families. The reasons behind this are of recent origin, revealing how the family structure of Palestinians in Israel has been manipulated through the process of sedentarization and governmental decisions allocating power, land, and labor.

Reproduction and Resistance

I have suggested so far that the reasons behind the success and failure of students, as well as the role of teachers within their communities is the result of the historical, economic, and political structure of the state, and as such is a reflection of hegemony in Israel. However, as a manifestation of hegemony, education can never be a precise or absolute reflection of power since forms of resistance are always evident.

In Al-Aqsām the school administration is controlled primarily by large high-caste land-owning families. The hiring of school administrators and the consequent control

over the schools clearly reflects the difference between land-owning and landless families, creating cartels within the schools and city hall. Despite this, school success is more likely to be achieved by landless lower-caste families. Therefore, the membership of the academically tracked classes in Al-Aqsām does not only reflect how power and land are distributed within the community, but also, to some extent, resistance to that status quo. While I have labeled this resistance, it can only be considered so within the community. On the state level, the conflict between Arab families or origin groups feeds into the established patterns of governmental control. While struggling against their inequality, landless Arab families reproduce the larger conditions that created this situation. In the same way, women's struggles begin the act of breaking down the educational and social barriers between genders, families, and castes, while increasing the internal conflict within Arab communities.

In Gourmetim, the "excellence" track was established after a struggle between two groups within the community. Between Shas, a religious political party primarily supported by disenfranchised Mizraḥim, and the schoolteachers and administrators who represented the more mainstream residents of Gourmetim. The work of Shas is one of providing a religious alternative to the Israeli mainstream, with the hope of eventually replacing it. Shas's mission therefore stands opposed to that of the liberal Israeli establishment, and can be seen as counter-hegemonic. However, this is not to say that it is progressive in any sense of the word.

These two examples suggest that resistance and reproduction are intimately or perhaps inexorably linked, and that what may well be a form of resistance to one

structure or authority may also serve to reproduce other structures. Like Shas, it is often difficult to imagine that the Islamic movement is a form of resistance. Islamism appears to carry a very conservative message and is rarely thought of as a progressive force. However, in much of the Islamic world and the Middle East, the message of Islamism is very much one of resistance to the secular domination of capitalism and the modern state. It is in this context that one must consider the roles played by some religious functionaries in Israel, particularly those representing the Ḥaraka Islāmīya, the Islamic movement in Israel, and by Shas.

Gramsci, Education, and the State

Michel Foucault, writing about the prison, suggests that rather than asking what purpose the prison serves, "perhaps one should reverse the problem and ask oneself what is served by [its] failure" (Foucault 1979:272). Like Foucault, I find it more interesting to ask, what is served by the failure of the schools. Educational institutions distinguish between students, determining their futures and identities, and are part of the mechanisms of domination. However, at the same time the control and definition of education and institutions is a struggle between groups and alliances of differing power and social origins (Archer 1979:2).

The school is far more than a machine that weaves the raw material of youth into the fabric of society. It is an institution that is historically, economically, and ideologically tied to the state and, consequently, a site of struggle. The social relationships between teachers, students, and communities are affected, if not determined

by the larger currents of history, economics, and social hierarchy. The economic and social rewards for educational success both reflect and determine the attitudes that students and parents hold about education. Whether they are men who see little reward for success in school, or women seeking to escape from, or find independence within their community, educational success can have very different meanings and results. Being a teacher in one community is quite different from being a teacher elsewhere. These are not random vicissitudes, but rather reflect the status of the communities within the state. Despite the fact that these different meanings of education and schooling appear to be imposed from above, they are also manipulated and resisted by the students and teachers, and consequently open a venue for future change.

The social, political, and economic conditions of Italy in the first half of the 20th century which Gramsci describes are vastly different from those of Israel in the early 21st century. Israeli class structure and social hierarchy is infused with racial and ethnic distinctions, and only a glimmer of Italy's "Southern Question". Yet Gramsci's connections between state and education, and his analysis of the transformational power of intellectuals allows us to escape a monolithic and pessimistic vision of the school. Following Gramsci, we examine the distinct histories, economies, and ideologies that configure and maintain education and schools, and look to the alliances and struggles that have shaped and structured the state. It is here, in the fight for hegemony, that we see Gramsci's optimism. Hegemony is not only the process by which the state forms the school in its image; it is also the reverse, the conception and development in the old schools of a new, embryonic state.

Judging by other countries in the Middle East, and the current situation in Israel, this new state may not be so far away. The rising power of Shas and the Ḥaraka Islāmīya, the Islamic movement in Israel, may well eclipse the so-called liberal values of the Israeli state. Shas and the Ḥaraka Islāmīya are, like Hamas in the West Bank and Gaza, and other Islamist movements throughout the Middle East, providing vital social services which the state seems unwilling or unable to provide, and have harnessed the power of teachers and education, using them to conceive and develop their own embryonic state. However, this new state, like the current, will not be based upon the equality of Jews and Arabs, Mizraḥim and Ashkenazim, men and women, and between social classes. Rather, it will be one based upon religious exclusivity. I am not sure how different this new state might in fact be from the current, where individuals and groups are excluded on other, ostensibly not religious, criteria. I am, however, still hopeful.

So, you men!
And women!
You Sheikhs, Rabbis, Cardinals!
You, nurses, and girls in factories—
How long must you await
The postman with those letters
You so anticipate,
Across the dead-dry barriers?
And you, you men!
And you, women!
Don't wait still more, don't wait!
Now, off with your sleep-clothes
And to yourself compose
Those letters you so anticipate!

—Samīh al-Qāsim

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