State Control Policies and the Path Towards Ethnic Cleansing: The Case of the Palestinian Arab Bedouin in Israel

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ABSTRACT. The notion of nation is quite recent. It is intertwined with that of equal citizenship and nationality, the aim of the state is to uniform those who are going to become its citizens, under a homogenous state design. But it is this process of state uniformity that is flawed: state's mechanisms of categorization result from a process of inclusion and exclusion—majority and minority—that cannot help but create marginalization. For this reason, gypsies, vagrants, nomads and pastoralists (Berbers and Bedouins) become national minorities to be controlled under the majoritarian power of the state. Because "all majoritarianisms have in them the seeds of genocide" (Appadurai 2006: 57), states tend to pursue a policy of ethnic cleansing in order to eliminate the dirty spots from their national purity. On the basis of this consideration, the case of the Palestinian Arab Bedouin is an example of how the state can control, suffocate and cleanse its own national minorities and ethnic groups.

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Our land abandoned us, we did not abandon her.
We'll pasture our livestock, and follow it.
— Bedouin proverb

Introduction

The Bedouin are part of the national imaginary in Jordan and play a significant part in surrounding states such as Syria, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The Palestinian Arab Bedouin are part of the infamous history of indigenous tribes fallen under the exploitative invasion of new settlers who, in order to establish their home, have expropriated those of the older inhabitants. In the course of this paper, Palestinian Arab Bedouin and Bedouins will be used interchangeably as synonyms.

There are many different groups of Bedouin in the Negev region of southern Israel where their presence goes back 7,000 years, some are still nomadic and they derive their livelihood from grazing and herding (Finkelstein and Perevolotsky 1990: 67-69). Prior to the birth of the State of Israel in 1948, many Bedouin in the region abandoned their nomadic way of life, becoming largely sedentary by establishing themselves in villages and developing a system of land ownership based on individual and communal rights (Human Rights Watch [HRW] 2008: 1). The 1948 War caused the expulsion of Bedouin in certain cases, and flight for others to the surrounding areas of the West Bank (Jordan), Gaza and Egypt. As a result, only 19 tribes remained in the Negev, which have since grown to 170,000 inhabitants (HRW 2008: 16). Due to discriminatory policies implemented by the Israeli government, the Bedouin have endured decades of segregation, faced forcible removal into restricted areas, experienced home demolitions, and ongoing internal displacement. Victims of what resemble a process of ethnic cleansing, the survival of the Palestinian Arab Bedouin is seriously hampered by a state whose "members are persecuted for who they are, not what they have done" (Fein 2007: 132).

The case of the Palestinian Arab Bedouin has been the point of departure for a reflection on the effects of a society whom the state wants to regulate. Given that the notion of nation is quite recent, societies that states want to govern are usually older and have developed over a considerable period amount of time. As such, they generally have a series of traditions, customs and relationships that are difficult to operate within a state system which imposes its ascendance from above. The idea of nation is intertwined with that of "equal citizenship" (Scott 1998: 32) and nationality where the aim of the state is to create unity among those who are going to become its citizens. But it is this process of state uniformity that is flawed: a nation's mechanisms of categorization result from a process of inclusion and exclusion, majority and minority, that cannot help but create marginalization. For this reason, gypsies, vagrants, nomads and pastoralists (Berbers and Bedouins) become national minorities to be controlled under the majoritarian power of the state. Because, "all majoritarianisms have in them the seeds of genocide" (Appadurai 2006: 57), states tend to pursue a policy of ethnic cleansing in order to eliminate the dirty spots from their national purity. Majoritarianism, as argued by Michael Mann, refers to majoritarian democracy frameworks that in extreme cases legitimize genocide and ethnic cleansing (Mann 2005). On the basis of this consideration, the case of the Palestinian

Arab Bedouin is an example of how the state can control, suffocate, and cleanse its own minorities.

Legibility and Manipulation: A State Policy of (Under)Development

Legibility and manipulation are the binomial and often the basis for the construction of the modern-state. In his eye-opening work, *Seeing like a State*, James C. Scott (1998: 2) defines legibility as the need of a state to schematize its units in order to render them visible, or from Scott's point of view, legible and thus easily manipulable. Land, people and languages are some of the units chosen by the state to impose its variety of centralizing mechanisms. The modern-state asks to see and to be seen in order to fulfil its basic purposes of "taxation, conscription and prevention of rebellion" (Scott 1998: 2). Due to the rationalizing effort enforced from above, a state does not take into consideration a range of invisible factors that are impossible to codify but that are still part of the society it wants to rule. A cadastral map focuses on the demarcation of its borders and not on what the borders contain, leaving out the knowledge of the locals whose presence is prior to that of the state. The authoritarian implementation of a legible uniformity usually denies diversity (Scott 1998: 18), which can lead to marginalization of certain minorities and threatens the well-being of others.

The Inequalities of 'an equal citizenship'

This bias, that some have rightly defined as ethnocentric (Preston 1996: 174), has universally exported Western "distinctions between those who belong and those who do not" (Weiner 1993: 1737), which are embedded in the nature itself of the modern nation-state (Appadurai 2006: 49-50). The motivation of the state to classify and homogenize its populace is contemporary to industrialization and "disembedding mechanisms" (Giddens 1991: 53) of a production line. Similarly, the idea of an "equal citizenship" (Scott 1998: 32) may generate legible citizens but fails to generate equal ones since a state's mechanisms of categorization result from a process of inclusion and exclusion – majority and minority – that cannot help but create marginalization. As pointed out by Arjun Appadurai (2006: 49), minorities and majorities are "recent historical inventions, essentially tied up with ideas about nations, populations, representation, and enumeration which are no more than a few centuries old". States are usually younger than the societies they want to govern (Scott 1998: 183) which have grown regardless of the state's administrative design. It is not surprising that the bulk of history, customs, and relations within certain societies are perceived as uncivilized elements that must be torn down by the centralizing force of the state. The Bedouin do not fit Western norms and are generally unmanageable, making control over them severe or not feasible at all. It goes without saying why the state, whose prerogative is immobility, has always tried to domesticate the gypsies, vagrants, nomads and pastoralists (Berbers and Bedouins) with sedentarization plans in order to make them legible and manipulable (Scott 1998: 184).

The Fear of Minorities

As we have seen so far, marginalization is often the consequence of the state's efforts to produce a homogenous national majority (Scott 1998: 76).

When a state imposes itself on an existing society, it proves the basis for Ole Waever's theory of securitization. To distinguish Waever's theory from a simple theory of politicization, any security threat directed at state sovereignty or society is taken as the principle that empowers the state to use exceptional means of authority to protect national security. This extraordinary measure would not be used solely for political interest, through security justifications, as more socially acceptable, stretched by the state's scope of activities. Although society and state are generally two sides of the same coin, Waever (1995: 13) hypothesizes their difference, so that state security is what protects a state against a threat to its sovereignty, while societal security is what protects a community against a threat to its identity. Waever argues that the fear of nation-states being challenged by transnational actors in the global era involves fear of the society's identity, including from migration (Castles and Miller 2009: 30-31). It is not a coincidence that the migrants of Waever's analysis and the nomadic groups discussed in the previous section, who both share the condition of being "uprooted" (Mallki 1992: 25), have been securitized by the state as a threat. Despite their "small numbers" (Appadurai 2006: 49), the image of a minority that is a threat to the majority is part of the modern political discourse and derives from the elemental 'we vs. they' sociological theory which stigmatizes the they in order "to set the boundaries … of the we" (Appadurai 2006: 50).

The Dark Side of Democracy: Ethnocracy

Ethnocracy is a form of ruling where one ethnic group holds a privileged position over the rest (Yiftachel 2006: 9). A state that develops a policy focused on nationalist and racial identities and implements a campaign that stirs fear among the majority of the minority group, could turn into a genocidal ethnocratic regime and pursue a plan of ethnic cleansing (Appadurai 2006: 59). An ethnocratic regime is often found on a geopolitical map but it is seldom studied. The main objective of such a regime is to maximize ethnic control over contested territory and expand its authority apparatus.

A developed control system is typical for ethnocracies and is used to maintain a dominant position of one ethnic group and is regarded as necessary to exercise control of the legal, institutional, and power instruments (Yiftachel 2006: 11). A dominant, charter ethnoclass may take possession of the state apparatus and it becomes the authority in the process of decision making for most public policies. Ethnocratic regimes may emerge in a variety of forms, including cases of ethnic dictatorships which often implement strategies of ethnic cleansing on indigenous persons.

Ethnos and *Thanatos*: What Lies Behind Ethnic Cleansing

As national uniformity has become the basis for the modern nation-state, the recurrence of ethnic cleansing has doubled so much that UN Special Rapporteurs, A.S. Al-Khasawneh and R. Hatano, in their 1993 Report, *The Human Rights Dimensions of Population Transfer*, has defined the 20th century "as the century of the displaced".[1]

The removal of "an 'undesirable' population from a given territory due to religious or ethnic discrimination, political, strategic or ideological considerations, or a combination of these" (Bell-Fialkoff 2004: 110) is a characteristic of modernity and of a "politicized" nationalism (Mann 2005: 3). Appadurai describes this as "the anxiety of incompleteness" as a result of the majority becoming predatory towards the small numbers (Appadurai 2006: 8). Institutions such as "citizenship, democracy, and welfare" (Mann 2005: 3) are in fact based on national and ethnic principles, frequently justified by a "rhetoric of state security" (Mulaj 2007: 336). As pointed out by Mann (2005: 3), ethnic cleansing is the dark side of democracy, since in our times the original meaning of the word democracy (rule by the people) has ended up to combine, or confuse, *demos* (masses, people) with *ethnos* (ethnic group). As a result, Mann (2005: 18) argues that the majority of contemporary states—today "70 % of the population consider itself to be of one ethnicity"—are "mono-ethnic" and thus stem from a process of ethnic cleansing.

States are able to pursue a literal elimination of national minorities "rendering an area ethnically homogenous" (Cohen 1999 cited in Fein 2007: 152). The method of ethnic cleansing becomes a tool which is utilized to achieve "nation-state creation" (Preece 1998: 818) as "genocide, after all, is an exercise in community-building" (Gourevich 1999 cited in Appadurai 2006: 7). The notion of ethnic cleansing is often confused with that of genocide, or "1) alternative to genocide, 2) a step toward genocide, 3) the means of genocide" (Fein 2007: 152), but there is not any link between the use of these two words and the enormity of a massacre (Blum, Stanton, Sagi, and Richter 2007: 206). Ethnic cleansing on a wider scale includes cultural suppression, tactics of control, such as detaining persons for movement, employment restrictions and limited access to education, housing, medicine and food to list a few. The attention dedicated to the use of the word 'ethnic cleansing' is not simply a linguistic exercise, but originates from an awareness that the reason ethnic cleansing has not been recognized and prevented over time comes from the failure of labelling it (Fein 2007: 154).

Since the use of the expression has become popular amongst journalist, politicians, NGOs and UN bodies, it has shed new light on the phenomenon of forcible removal that occurred prior to modern times and that only now can be framed as ethnic cleansing. From this historical perspective it appears that ethnic cleansing dates far back in time and has "only intensified in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (Bell-Fialkoff 2004: 110).

The expulsion of Jews from central Europe in the Middle Ages was a cleansing that targeted religious minorities. The first cleansing based on ethnic justifications was executed by England in the 1650s with the expulsion of the Irish Catholic population from Ulster (Bell-Fialkoff 2004: 112). The 18th century was witness to the gradual expulsion of the native American population by the white settlers while the 19th century saw the elimination of the Armenian minorities by Turkey which was presented for the first time as the final stage of a state policy of ethnic discrimination (Bell-Fialkoff 2004: 113). In the 20th century, the vicious plan of the Nazi policy of ethnic purity aimed at annihilating the Jews (*Junderein*): first in Germany, then emptying some of the European territories (see the case of Poland) to create *Lebensraum* for the German settlers, and finally to render the whole of Europe (and even the whole world) *Junderein* by submitting the ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe to Hitler's occupation (Mulaj 2007: 342). After the World War II, the Potsdam Protocol of 1945 authorized the Allies to

remove an estimated 14 million Germans from Eastern Europe to what is considered "the largest and most sweeping ethnic cleansing in history" (Bell-Fialkoff 2004: 115), whereas the cleansing based on economic class characterized Stalinist Russia and Maoist China.

   This history of cleansing paved the way to what occurred in Bosnia and Croatia in the early 1990s, where the term ethnic cleansing has its roots. It comes in fact from Croato-Serbian *etnicko ciscenje* and it was used for the first time by the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) to refer to the ethnic violence of the Kosovars towards the Serbs (Preece 1998: 820). The atrocious warfare operations were undertaken by JNA with support of Croatia's Serb nationalist party, to ethnically cleanse Krajina, a part of Croatia declared to be Serbian (Gagnon 2004: 4). This violent campaign aimed at the removal of non-Serbs did not end once all non-Serbs were expelled. The bloodshed at this time was directed at moderate Serbs in the region of Krajina who condemned the Belgrade-allied Krajina leadership. Most of the people in opposition to the leadership were prosecuted, oppressed, or sometimes killed (Gagnon 2004: 5). This reminiscence of fratricidal slaughter (and other events from the Balkan wars) is often omitted and divergent in scholarships on ethnic-based conflicts in the Balkan region. As Philip Gagnon claims, explaining the violence of the 1990s Yugoslav wars is a puzzle in a number of ways, not limited to the ethnically-based elucidation of violence (Gagnon 2004: 6).

   It appears that ethnic cleansing has come into shape and has accompanied the modernization and democratization of the world, given that "its past lay mainly among Europeans, who invented the democratic nation-state.… Now the epicentre of ethnic cleansing has moved into the South of the world" (Mann 2005: 5).

   "Discrimination and prejudice" (Bell-Fialkoff 2004: 120) have remained the triggering forces, while "sanitation and disease" (Blum et al. 2007: 205) are still the leitmotif that drive a "predatory identity" (Appadurai 2006: 51) to cleanse a minoritarian one. As Mann states, "Ethnicity is not objective" (Mann 2005: 10), every group can claim to have common culture and ancestors—i.e., the two premises an ethnic group usually relies on. Yet, at the same time every group can arbitrarily claim to be mandated to purify itself by destroying another, and in the case of ethnic cleansing, "the enemy to be annihilated is the whole people" (Mann 2005: 3).

Historical Background

The name Bedouin is derived from the Arabic term *badawi*, which translates to "a nomadic inhabitant of the desert who depends for his livelihood on herds of camel and sheep" (Marx 1967: 3). The Bedouin historically would move between the Negev desert, the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, and southern Jordan for grazing land and to pursue a nomadic way of life. The Bedouin are an indigenous group recognized for their ancestral ties to the land in the Negev region by rootedness that pre-dates the settlement of most of the population living there today. In 1900, the Ottoman government established the largest city, Beer Sheva, as the administrative centre in the Negev, which is often referred to as the capital city of the region. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire, in the beginning of the twentieth century, made way for the British authorities to maintain law and order in the region; however, the British intervened minimally in Bedouin affairs (Marx 1967: 11).

The Bedouin's situation was the result of the Zionist[2] ambition to create a homeland for the Jewish populace on the Palestinian Mandate territory. This movement led to the establishment of Israel in 1948, when British Mandate was withdrawn. Control over the territory was achieved through occupation of the Palestinian cities and villages by Jewish troops and expulsion of the indigenous population, this severely affected the Bedouin's culture and coexistence (Piotrowski 1983: 95). In 1948, before the outbreak of the war, the Bedouin-Arab population ranged between 60,000 and 90,000 people. At the end of the war, most of the tribes were expelled to Jordan (West Bank), the Gaza Strip and the Sinai (Egypt), and only about 11,000 Arab Bedouin remained within the new Israeli state boundaries (Noach 2009: 2). In 1951, military rule was imposed on the remaining nineteen Negev Bedouin tribes and concentrated in a closed area of about 1,000 square kilometres in the northern Negev region. The Bedouin remained under military rule until its withdrawal in 1966 (Abu-Rabia 2002: 203); thus, the Israeli government decided to sedenterize and urbanize the Bedouin in seven planned townships (Noach 2009: 3).

Dispossession of the Bedouin's land was based on the *Land Acquisition Law* of 1953, which gave the state the right to acquire land that had not been registered in The Land Registry Office up until April 1952 (Abu-Ras 2006: 3). Under the 1965 *Planning and Building Law* almost all of the land was categorized as agricultural, making the villages unrecognized and all the buildings were labeled 'illegal' (Noach 2009: 4). In the aftermath of the Six-Days War in 1967,[3] Israel had extended expropriation of land from the Bedouin not only within its state, but also in the Occupied Territory.

The Expropriation of Bedouin's Land

The highly centralized system of ownership and control of the land by the Israeli government is basically responsible for every activity that covers allocating, planning and developing the 93 per cent of the land under its possession (HRW 2008: 27). While some parts of land are directly owned by the state, others are owned by governmental agencies such as the Development Authority (DA) and the Jewish National Fund (JNF). The former (DA), founded in 1952, administers the lands of Palestinian refugees in order to make them available for the development of new settlements. On the other hand, the JNF was founded in 1901 and is in charge of obtaining land for Jewish settlers. A third governmental body, the Israel Land Administration (ILA) administers all of the land. Land is state-property; it cannot be sold but leased to individuals or institutions for 49 or 98 years through ILA (HRW 2008: 27). Although the sale of state land is prohibited by law, the law itself permits the state to transfer its own land to the JNF. If we consider that with the 1950 *Absentee's Property Law*, the JNF sequestered 78 per cent of the land of the Palestinian refugees who fled the 1948 war, and if we consider that 10 out of 22 members that compose the ILA's governing council represent the JNF (the other 11 are represented by government ministries), it is evident that the JNF owns the majority of land and exercise a certain influence on Israeli's policy of land access and allocation. As a consequence, and in reality, Palestinian Arab citizens who are legally entitled to lease land owned by the state and not transferred to the JNF encounter a lot of difficulties accessing the land since they are closed off from leasing 80 per cent of state owned land.[4] The obstructionist policy suffered by the Bedouin in terms of land expropriation, including the relocation of people and displacement, is part of a broader picture that

involves the Palestinian Arab community in general. Besides the *Absentee's Property Law*, the Israeli government has carried out several laws that have impounded the land traditionally owned by the Palestinian and the Arab Bedouin population (HRW 2008: 29).

The Displacement of the Bedouin

A state has numerous responsibilities and duties to fulfill for its citizens – foremost of which is to offer security and protection. Displacement may occur in times of urgency when a state needs to secure and protect its citizens from war, violence and natural disaster, yet the populace should be able to return once the emergency ceases to exist. The Palestinian Arab Bedouin have a lengthy history of mobility, which is not connected to these instances of non-voluntary movement but due to their tribal traditions and nomadic pastoralist lifestyle. Individuals who are forcibly displaced from their residence may become a recognized vulnerable person under the definition of a refugee or an internally displaced person.

  For centuries, the Bedouin in the Negev were freely able to live their nomadic lifestyle and endured a 'world without time' under the Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate (Goering 1979: 3).[5] The creation of international borders and the restriction on individual's movement by the modern state did alter the Bedouin's nomadic patterns of migration from moving villages and land seasonally to settling for longer periods within different regions until the land was no longer fertile. "Although under the Ottoman Empire and British Mandate some of the Bedouin could be classified as having reached a semi-nomadic stage, this process of sedentarization was forcefully accelerated to a considerable degree after the founding of the State of Israel" (Goering 1979: 3). The 1948 *al-Nakba*[6] catastrophe for the Palestinians marks the beginning of the internal displacement and movement to the eastern Negev. The state's control of the Bedouin from 1948 to 1967, was enforced by the Israeli military laws and rule which only applied to the Arab population and confined them to remain in the *Siyag* areas, restricting their access to citizenship and public services (Koeller 2006: 38). Movement of Bedouin under military rule was further restricted by military permits which were the only way to allow them to leave or enter the towns and villages.

> In order to acquire Israeli citizenship, each Bedouin had to affiliate with a recognised tribe regardless of their original genealogy. They have subsequently been forced to sedentarise and relocate to seven officially-sanctioned state-planned townships. The Bedouin are offered subsidised plots of land, access to water, electricity, roads, medical facilities and schools – under the condition that they agree to locate to the approved townships and abandon claims to land elsewhere in the Negev. (Koeller 2006: 38)

  For the Bedouin to settle into the state-planned townships would directly result in ethnic-cleansing that would ultimately alter their traditional culture as semi-nomadic and eliminate the possibility to ever regain their unique pastoralist livelihoods. As a result, the Bedouin that did not voluntarily move to the planned townships, instead they remained in illegal settlements which were not recognized by the Israeli government -

even if they existed prior to 1948. This violates their rights and access to land under international law and according to human rights standards (Koeller 2006: 38).

The Structural and Cultural Discrimination Toward the Bedouin

The Israeli state is arguably a state that does not uphold the values of a modern liberal state in the sense that it adversely affects ethnically-distinctive minority groups, it is characteristic of overrepresentation of the Jewish population, and it has an unequal democracy system for all state functions (Smooha 1995, as cited in Yonah, Abu-Saad, and Kaplan 2004: 392). Yiftachal (2006: 38) does not define the Israeli regime as a democracy but describes its political system as an ethnocracy, in which the adherence to certain ethno-group shapes the distribution of rights, wealth, power and resources.

The Jewish desire to have their own state for one ethno-cultural group has driven prejudice toward others, who are subsequently excluded by ethno-nationalist logic. In contrast to democratic regimes, Israel exercises land policy that secures control over all territories and provides special economic benefits only to charter group members, which does not protect the collective rights of minorities.

The control and oppression of Bedouin on occupied Palestinian territory has become feasible by development of tools/means designated to exercise an efficient domination. Central to the achievement of solid control over minority groups is a system of "segmentation, dependence, co-option" and denial of rights, which are designed to fully subordinate them to the state authority (Yonah et al. 2004: 392).

The urbanization plan of the Negev, which was conducted by Israel through the 1965 *Planning and Building Law*, planned to sedenterize Palestinian Arab Bedouin into seven towns and remove the rest from the Negev desert for Jewish settlements (HRW 2008: 14). Such a state policy embraces isolation and segregation between the Bedouin and Israeli Jewish citizens on a cultural, political and administrative level. The semi-nomadic Bedouin tribe's culture, identity and traditions were seriously jeopardized. It should also be mentioned that no agreements were initiated for the displacement of the population, including no provisions for basic education and economic organization. The act to deprive one group of their ancestral land and providing the same land for a privileged ethnic group is only one of the many signs of a discriminatory policy toward the Bedouin.

Given that the Palestinian Bedouin lost both the opportunity to graze their herds and live off the soil, they fell into a severe livelihood quandary. This led them to become the most impecunious and most disadvantaged ethnic group in Israel, where 66 per cent of Bedouin live below the poverty line and up to 80 per cent reside in unrecognized villages (Radwan 2011). This situation is the result of various economic, legal and political factors.

The Beer Sheva region is inhabited by 608,800 people, including 188,900 Arab nationals (170,000 are identified as Bedouin) according to Central Bureau of Statistics information published in 2010.[7] Equal representation of the Bedouin population within the Negev government offices is not only a democratic obligation, but also a significant means to enable economic development. The Israeli state is obliged to reach 10 per cent employment of minorities in state offices by the end of 2012.[8] The principle of adequate representation was introduced to secure the participation of minorities and avoid structural discrimination in public administration (Yonah et al. 2004: 382). The Arab

population is under-represented in the Israeli civil service in general, and the Bedouin in the Beer Sheva region are the most underrepresented group (Rotem and Noach 2011: 5).

The Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality prepared a report on Structural and Cultural Discrimination Against Arab Bedouin in the Negev with a focus on the number of Arab Bedouin employed in government offices and the accessibility to governmental services.[9] Their findings are alarming in the sense of ethnic inequality. It appears that only 197 Arab Bedouin are employed in government offices and agencies out of 5,217 overall employees. They account for 3.7 per cent of employees in the Negev region, as shown by data as of 17 March 2011 (Rotem and Noach 2011: 9-10). Lastly, the employment rate of Arab Bedouin in the ministerial offices is slightly higher with a 6.4 percent Arab Bedouin representation, but still far from a desired level (Rotem and Noach 2011: 9). The Bedouin compose around 31 per cent of the whole Negev population, whereas such a representation is not even close to an equal employment rate.[10]

The Ethnic-Cleansing of the Bedouin

What was analyzed in the preceding sections is perfectly summed up by Michael Mann's recognition of three distinct phases in the process of ethnic cleansing: economic discrimination, geographical segregation, and cultural suppression.

Mann (2005: 14) distinguishes an initial policy of discrimination, often economic and material, that constrains the rights of what he calls the 'out-group'. In this case, the 'out-group' is the Bedouin who are continuously discriminated against in terms of land ownership by the Israeli government (the so-called 'in-group'). The latter is also responsible of what Mann defines as geographical segregation, or in our term, displacement. This is shown first by 'ghettoization' where the Bedouin are put into the *Siyag* and next, by way of settling or being forced into the government planned townships. In his analysis of ethnic cleansing, Mann differentiates between policies of total cleansing and partial cleansing. Discrimination and segregation can be considered partial; whereas "'cultural suppression' involves total cleansing" – which is demonstrated by the institutional suffocation of the cultural identity of the Bedouin "whose identity is thus forcibly assimilated into the dominant group" (Mann 2005: 14).

All these together, with a policy of economic development designed to be implemented in areas inhabited by indigenous tribes, are "warning signs" of an ethnic cleansing in progress (Fein 2007: 154).

Land and Ethnic Cleansing

According to Mann, land is not "the main cause of ethnic cleansing…. Yet this is not true where markets are limited by outright monopolies, either in highly statist economies or in exclusionary land ownership" (Mann 2005: 31). The centralized system of ownership and control of the land which characterizes the Israeli government is typical of an ethnocratic regime that wants to dominate on a given territory in order to increase its economic growth at the expense of a minority. "Land ownership is also inherently monopolistic. Unlike capital or labour, land is finite" (Mann 2005: 31). The reason for this is the exclusionary policy of Israel that is based on ethnic category which automatically excludes the Bedouin from owning their land. If we consider that herding, grazing and

small agrarian activities of other kinds are the basis of the Bedouin economy, we can easily imagine how this could seriously hamper their lives. Therefore, the cleansing of an ethnic minority is the goal of an ethnocracy whose aim is to establish its mono-ethnic territory. The removal of the ethnic minority is thus the most effective way to achieve this, as demonstrated by what is occurring in the lands of the Negev (Preece 1998: 821).

Displacement and Ethnic Cleansing

Internal displacement is recognized globally as a violation of human rights, yet it continues to occur to the most vulnerable and weakest groups whom are ethnic minorities and indigenous populations. In fact, this is legitimate when examining the Palestinian Arab Bedouin. The Israeli state must adhere to international law by conducting the movement of persons non-violently, without causing trauma to the displaced, and only in extraordinary emergency circumstances. The geographical segregation described by Mann (2005: 14) as "the out-group is ghettoized in apartheid or enslaved conditions" offers reasons to believe that the state's removal of the inhabitants from the unrecognized villages is indirectly linked to ethnic-cleansing of the Bedouin.

The Palestinian Arab Bedouin have been recognized as having ancestral ties to the land that the government is evicting them from.[11] Instead of offering the Bedouin land settlement agreements, the state provides them with homes in planned villages which undermines their nomadic way of living. "These towns symbolize ... neglect in which the Arab residents of the Negev have lived from the moment they relinquished their land. Yet while they remain on the land, the state invests considerable resources in transferring them elsewhere, rather than addressing their problems and realizing their rights in their places of residence" (Almi 2005: 1). The remedies provided by the 'in-group' are consciously perpetuating the alteration and destruction of a minority within its territories by encouraging the segregation and marginalization of the Bedouin. The decision by the state to undermine durable solutions causes an irreversible effect on the youth who cannot predict if they will have a future ahead of them as Bedouin. Since the home demolition orders are carried out spontaneously once they are issued, the Bedouin never know if their home will be there when they return, thus creating a state of uncertainty and constant fear, especially amongst the new generation (Almi 2005: 3).

Consequently, the young Bedouin live with the effects of displacement by way of changing their traditions and livelihoods, which ultimately impacts human development. Furthermore, Article 27(3) of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* provides the right for all children at the national level to have access to the same social programmes and assistance, and in particular, to nutrition, clothing, and housing (*Convention on the Rights of the Child* 1989). The Israeli government has focused on controlling the Bedouin rather than working to resolve land disputes for the sake of the children, or abiding by the said Convention. It goes without saying that the Israeli policy puts the future of the Bedouin at stake.

Structural and Cultural Discrimination and Ethnic Cleansing

As indicated, the tragic condition of Bedouin unity, culture maintenance, and the preservation of traditions have been seriously jeopardized by the ethnic policies of the

Israeli government. "Cultural apartheid and liquidation of the most rudimentary attributes of human rights" toward the Bedouin minority has led to the absolute dominance of one ethnic group and has seriously endangered these pastoral tribes (Clarimont 1996: 2592). Ethnic cleansing is often symbolized by involuntary population transfer determined by "ethnicity [race, language, religion, culture, etc.]" to seize control over a certain area; "thereby cleansing that territory of a particular group has been an instrument of nation-state creation" (Preece 1998: 818). In the case of the Bedouin, not only have they been displaced as an unwanted ethnic group, they have also been perceived as a security threat to cultural and ethnic unity. The Israeli policy exhibits ethnic cleansing and shows how the creation of one ethno-state is accomplished, regardless of the repercussion on the indigenous population. "Cultural suppression" is one of the ethnic cleansing tools which involves forcible assimilation of identity and the abandonment of language and religion (Mann 2005: 14). All of these practices appear in the policy directed at the Bedouin; they are effectively denied the right to practice their religion and to attend the mosque (NCFCE 2006: 15).

  Arabic is one of the official languages in Israel; however, there are hardly any signs in Arabic seen in government offices within the Beer Sheva region, which is populated by a significant number of Bedouin (NCFCE 2006: 15). The state policy aims at impairing the identity and weakening Bedouin ties with the Palestinian population (Yonah et al. 2004: 393). Ethnic cleansing employs tactics to control minorities who "may simply be rounded up, detained, and deported; or their movement may be the result of other, more indirect measures" (Preece 1998: 822). Given that these tactics have been implemented upon the Bedouin, their traditional lifestyle has been utterly threatened. In addition, cultural ethnic cleansing can be composed of "work restrictions; restricted access to education, housing, medicine, food, or humanitarian aid, forced labor, confiscation of property" (Preece 1998: 822). According to a Human Rights Watch (2001) report, education measures including the enrolment level in secondary school, the number of graduates, and dropout rates of the Bedouin in the Negev are far worse in comparison with the Jewish population, but also with Palestinian Arab students. Furthermore, merely 6.4 per cent of Bedouin students qualified for university admission, whereas more than 40 per cent of the Jewish students were able to commence university education (HRW 2001: 23). Not only are educational possibilities constrained, but so is access to medical care facilities and the chance to enter the labour market. Apart from cultural and structural discrimination, the lack of economic opportunities and shortage of essential social services severely breach Palestinian Bedouin rights and lead to definitive ethnic cleansing.

ANALYSIS

At this point, we address the question: How are state policies of control used as a tool of ethnic cleansing of certain minority groups? Here the discussion shows how expropriation, displacement, structural, and cultural discrimination lead to the ethnic cleansing of certain minorities, particularly the Bedouin of the Negev.

Land: Expropriated and Re-shaped

One of the consequences of modernization has been generally referred to as commodification, which is (basically) a process that transforms every aspect of our daily life into goods. For the Bedouin, who directly take their livelihoods from the land and consider it their source of survival, the identification with the land becomes inseparable. The expropriation of land becomes life threatening, and therefore an efficient tool of ethnic cleansing. As long as land can be commodified, it can also be re-sized, which is the case in the Palestinian territories that risk being 're-customized' as well as having irreversible effects. The ancestral ties claimed by the Palestinian Bedouin are not enough to stop the persistence of Israel to have full control over the land, even though this could lead to the annihilation of the Bedouin minority population in general.

Since the term "natural environment" has been replaced by the term "natural resources", nature has started to be perceived as a useful tool for human exploitation: the natural "habitat" has disappeared, superseded by "economic resources to be managed efficiently and profitably" (Harrison 1993: 121). The commodification process has affected the uniqueness of the Bedouin tribes: given their pastoralist way of living, the Bedouin identify themselves with the land which is their source of livelihood (Harvey 2005: 165). As a result, the Bedouin are perceived as ineffectual and disadvantageous to development and their land is considered a product that can be easily expropriated. The Israeli government "relegated Palestinians to a separate (and backward) corner of the state" (Blecher 2005: 732) – this was generally directed towards Palestinians and specifically to the Bedouin. The same high-modern state ideology has regarded the pastoral Bedouin as "rural" and "underdeveloped", a burden for the "industrial" and "modern" utilitarian state (Preston 1996: 172).

By the same token, the Israeli government policy of commodification of land and discrimination against the Bedouin people has gradually and dramatically changed the size of their territories and re-shaped their boundaries. Ethnic cleansing is not always a massive expulsion that occurs in times of war, but often a progressive process that aims at the "revision of boundaries" for political reasons in times of non-war (Preece 1998: 822). In light of this consideration, it could be argued that the method used by the Israel government of managing and controlling the Bedouin is an attempt at changing the size of the Bedouin ancestral land which fits in a broader plan of irrevocably limiting the Palestinian territories.

As passionately expressed by the first foreign minister of Palestine, Nabil Shaath, during his trip to Copenhagen:

> Israel should stop building his settlements in West Bank, they can build them in Israel. Land is vanishing under our feet piece by piece. If Israel wants to pursue its negotiations, this should stop. The settlements are changing the demographic scheme of Palestine, so when negotiations will finally take place, the borders will have a different shape. That's probably why Netanyahu keeps saying that borders cannot be as those in 1967.[12]

The persistence and desire of the Israeli state to have full control over the land has been clearly demonstrated via land legislation and private property rights. The Bedouin are at a disadvantage under Israeli property laws due to the simple fact that they do not hold a

land title or registration in the Negev or other surrounding areas. It must be understood that ever since Israel became a state in 1948, there has been a large Bedouin population living on the land whose presence dates back to 7,000 years. Thus, the protection of land for indigenous populations must be taken into account. In many settler countries like Canada and Australia, aboriginal peoples inhabited the land before the existence of the state.

Uniforming Ethnicity

From living freely in the Negev region to becoming segregated under the state's crushing force, the Palestinian Arab Bedouin minority have suffered from a policy of segregation. This process of differentiation from the majority is based on ethnic ties since the Israeli nation-state has defined itself as a uniform mono-ethnicity. In practice, this has been translated into home demolitions and resettlement plans that do not take into consideration the Bedouin's lifestyle and not even their existence. In fact, the Bedouin have had their survival further hampered by development projects that have excluded them from participation or involvement.

Israeli officials have pursued a continuous policy of segregation by concentrating the Bedouin in a restricted geographical area. As for the Palestinians, the term "transfer", which is also applied to the Bedouin, has been "revived, transformed, extended, mainstreamed" and commonly used as a euphemism for ethnic cleansing with the direct intention to obscure its true meaning (Blecher 2005: 728).

The marginalization that a nation seeks to eliminate is paradoxically produced by the state itself since its policies of control often include exclusion. It could be argued then that the transformation of the Bedouin into a minority is the result of the notion of nation-state which seeks homogeneity and suffocates diversity. Since the nation-state is based on uniform ethnicity, the ethnic cleansing becomes the means to shape a unitary nation-state. From this perspective, the case of the Bedouin is illustrative: the creation of the state of Israel has made them into a minority although their presence in the Negev is prior to 1948. Furthermore, this gradual ethnic cleansing, reached through policies of dispossession and discrimination, is the consequence of the Israeli mono-ethnic design that is characterized by its reluctance to create a one-state solution which includes Palestinians and Israelis.[13]

It appears that the Bedouin are a classic case of 'they vs. we' which emphasizes the opposition of the majority to the minority in a given state (Appadurai 2006: 50). It is also a form of validation where a positive process of linking, and a negative process of differentiating can be seen from the home demolition orders of unrecognized Bedouin villages and structures issued by the Israeli state (Hansen 2006: 17). The Israeli government has not adequately addressed the issue of land ownership, instead it has worked against the Bedouin with resettlement solutions (state planned townships) that are not appropriate for pastoral groups. The negative process of differentiating is pointed out in an interview with an Israeli lobbyist for the Bedouin in the United States.[14] The lobbyist pointed out that as an Israeli citizen, she would never come home and find her house demolished like the Bedouin discover on a daily basis. Thus, returning to the negative process of differentiating, the Bedouins are visibly discriminated against within the laws on home demolition.

At the same time, as pointed out by Helen Fein (2007: 155), "isolation of indigenous people" and "economic development in indigenous areas" are considered as warning signs of ethnic cleansing. The isolation of the Bedouin in the *Siyag* first and in the government townships later, rendered the control of the Bedouin by the Israeli officials much easier and at the same time facilitated the construction of mega-projects surrounding the Bedouin settlements, as well as the implementation of Negev Plan 2015. However, it could be argued that a segregation of such entity has created the perfect condition for causing sickness of the Bedouin living there as shown in the increase of death deceases of cancer caused by the poisoned emissions of the toxic sites – thus, an ostensive example of how state policy of control can lead to ethnic cleansing.

Prejudice: A Distorted Image

The Israeli ideology has contributed to create an image of the Bedouin that does not correspond to reality. The Bedouin culture is not only seen as backward but also the Bedouin themselves are depicted as criminals that require the Israelis to be aware of. This biased perception has undermined the survival of the Bedouin who are not welcome in their own land. As a consequence, even the demographic upswing of the Bedouin population has been perceived as a problem that has to be controlled and suffocated at birth.

Prejudice toward the Palestinian Arab Bedouin and the Palestinian population in general is also reflected by the official education language, public rhetoric and political terminology. Chief Rabin from the city of Safad urged for the removal of all Palestinians, defining them as "resident aliens" (Blecher 2005: 733). In 2002, two years after the spring of the Second Intifada,[15] campaigns against Palestinians spread around the country: almost all walls, fences and signs were covered with posters declaring that "Transfer = Security and Peace", which called for the expulsion of that group perceived as a danger to state sovereignty and stability (Blecher 2005: 743). Adverse portrayals of Palestinians can also be found in school books that depict them with prejudice and describe them "as vile and deviant and criminal, people who don't pay taxes, people who live off the state, people who don't want to develop", as described by Peled-Elhanan, a professor of language at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Sherwood 2011). As a consequence, the perception of Palestinian Bedouin as similar to the Palestinian population is biased and rests on the profound belief that national security, stability and development is to be achieved via expulsion and ethnic cleansing of "undesirable minorities" (Mulaj 2007: 336).

The Bedouin are undesired and, as a result, so are their offspring. Thus, the demographic increase of the Bedouin is considered as a "population problem", in which the Palestinians are included in general, and this has always been a concern for Israel (Pappe 2006: 250). The growth rate of the Palestinians has been stable and has recently increased, causing concern of an imbalance or a "demographic danger" for the Israeli authorities (Pappe 2006: 249). Given that the same is occurring among the Bedouin, the absence of medical care and health infrastructure and the resultant high rate of infant mortality could be easily seen as an intended instrument to keep the growth rate down. The control of the state becomes, in this case, a demographic control whose final solution is a definitive ethnic cleansing of the undesired ethnic minority.

Conclusion

The privilege acquired by one ethno-group at the expense of a minority is the case of the Palestinian Arab Bedouin of the Negev. This demonstrates that the instrument of ethnic cleansing, disguised under the shape of state policies of control, could be murderous. The state, which is usually the guarantor of protection, may instead be the bearer of gradual oppression that can lead to the total elimination of the minority group.

We have examined various aspects of the Israeli policy of control towards the Negev Bedouin. From land regime to racist discourse, the land and culture of the Bedouin has been constantly targeted by the Israeli government under the pretext of development. This led us to the conclusion that expropriation, displacement, and structural and cultural discrimination are the steps that are slowly cleansing the Palestinian Arab Bedouin.

Without a doubt the Bedouin fell victim to the legal and political system. The Israeli state is ill-disposed toward the Bedouin and renders them as second-class citizens through systematic oppression. It is crucial to understand that the Bedouin can never be indemnified for their losses unless they are granted equality under citizenship.

The Bedouin's future does not seem to be bright. Despite their resistance, they are in fact slowly succumbing to the superiority of the Israeli state that is not only destroying their homes, but also their existence.

We believe that raising awareness about the tragic Bedouin situation could trigger the international community to put pressure on Israel and act on behalf of the Bedouin who should be the beneficiaries of international protection. This could pave the way to end the ethnic cleansing of the Bedouin.

Notes

1. "The Realization of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: The Human Rights Dimensions of Population Transfer, Including the Implantation of Settlers," U.N. ESCOR, Sub-Committee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, 45th Sess., Provisional Agenda Item 8, at 85, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1993/17 (1993).
2. The prime mover of Zionism was Theodor Herzl who, in 1897, conducted the First Zionism Congress which resulted in the establishment of the Zionism Organization. Their ideology is based on the Bible's promise that 'Holy Land' is predestinated to Jewish people. The Zionism Organization in 1908 in Jafa set up *Eretz Yisrael Office*, which facilitated Jewish immigration and land purchases in Mandatory Palestine (Laqueur 2003: 15).
3. The Six-Day War took place in 1967, when Israeli Forces began aggression on neighbouring countries Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The war finished after six days of fighting during 5-10 June 1967, with military success by Israeli forces. The ceasefire was signed a day after. In the aftermath, Israel began military occupation of The Gaza Strip, The Sinai Peninsula, The West Bank and the Golan Heights (Bukowska 1978: 433).
4. Source - http://www.adalah.org/eng/intl06/un-i6-jnf.pdf, retrieved on 3 December 2011.
5. The Ottoman Empire was a multinational empire which was then sustained by Islam until 1923 and ruled over Palestine up until 1918. The British Mandate is a document passed by the League of Nations which granted Britain power over Palestine in 1923 (Krämer 2008).
6. *Al-Nakba* is translated into Arabic as disaster or catastrophe. The 1948 *al-Nakba* occurred when approximately 711,000 - 725,000 Palestinian Arabs left, fled, or were expelled from their homes during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War (McDowall and Palley 1987).
7. Retrieved from the Central Bureau of Statistics, at http://www.cbs.gov.il/shnaton61/st02_10x.pdf.

8. Resolution No. 2759 was passed on 11 November 2007; it obliged the Israeli government to have "Adequate representation of the Arab, Druze and Circassian population in government services" (Rotem and Noach 2011: 4).
9. The information was obtained under the Freedom of Data law in the Civil Service Commission. The Commission provided data as to the number of Arabs employed in the southern district as well as the total number of employees distributed by Ministry and Civil Service rank and role.
10. Retrieved from the Central Bureau of Statistics, at http://www.cbs.gov.il/shnaton61/st02_10x.pdf.
11. Protection is granted under the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Persons*, particularly in Article 10 where the Bedouin are recognized by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.
12. Extract of the conference "Palestine: the search for a state" held at the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) in Copenhagen on 24 November 2011.
13. As stated by Nabil Shaath during the aforementioned conference, the one-state solution in Israel and West Bank is one of the suggested attempts, ideally the best, to resolve the Israeli Palestinian conflict.
14. Source - http://www.wbez.org/episode-segments/2011-10-26/israel-plans-displace-30000-bedouin-israeli-citizens-93501, retrieved on 6 November 2011.
15. Palestinian grassroots resistant movement from 2000 to 2005 against Israeli policy of occupation and discrimination.

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