

The Politics of Palestinian Multilingualism: Speaking for citizenship

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Abstract

In the governing institutions of Israel, Arabic is suppressed. This practice crystallised in the early years of the state. Also, Arabic-speakers who additionally speak Hebrew make linguistic choices that result in the avoidance of Arabic in situations where Jewish Israelis are present. These two elements – the institutional suppression of Arabic and the avoidance of Arabic in ‘mixed’ social situations – form the linguistic habitus of the Palestinians and other Arabs in the area controlled by Israel. When speaking Arabic, to give their propositions discursive authority, they mobilise multilingual repertoires, including codeswitching and borrowing, for rhetoric effect and style. These multilinguals are performing the aspirations of an emergent middle class elite. On the political stage, this elite challenges the ethnorepublican structures of Israel, and also opposes ethnonationalist campaigns, with different inhabitations of citizenship. Citizenship is understood as engagement with ideas of the common good, which these Palestinian and other Arab multilinguals envisage as liberal equality, dignity and autonomy. By 2015, when the bulk of the fieldwork for this book was completed, the third generation of Palestinians socialised in the Israeli educational system, including on the expanded tertiary level, had come of age in the structural settings of late-capitalist consumerism and globalised neoliberalism. Under these conditions, multilingual language skills have been re-packaged as marketable resources: this creates value, but in a contested way, with ambivalent opportunities. This book is about how speakers of an institutionally marginalised language engage with their political and economic systems multilingually.

Dedication

To Alaa, who understands what people seem to want to say.

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Introduction: A discourse-analytical exploration of the citizenship of Palestinians

Abstract of the Introduction

The introduction presents the political context for the book's evidence, as recorded in interactions between politicians and engaged citizens during the 2015 election campaigns in Israel. The analysis leans on political distinctions of systemic elements that are ethnorepublican, which manage and marginalise linguistic diversity, ethnonationalistic, which exclude identities constructed as 'other' including through linguistic difference, and liberal, which provide for equality and political access of different groups. The cross-disciplinary approach using methods from critical ethnography and discourse analysis reframes the existing scholarship on Arabic in Israel, which has mostly searched for potential language shift away from Arabic of speakers who have also been exposed to Modern Israeli Hebrew.

In early 2015, two billboards beamed at drivers from the verge of Ayalon Highway nearing Tel Aviv, bearing messages intended to scare them into voting in the parliamentary elections on 17 March 2015. One said, sarcastically, 'Thank you, Salim', and displayed the picture of Russian Israeli politician Avigdor Liberman in sinister hues. The other, identical in tone and design, stated 'Thank you, Bat-El', and showed Palestinian politician Hanin Zoabi. Underneath each face was the explanation: 'When you don't participate in elections, your vote goes to someone else.'¹

The prospect of Avigdor Liberman continuing to find a place in the government of Israel would be alarming for someone with an Arab name like Salim. Liberman's Yisrael Beytenu party's proposed solution for the territorial conflict between the Palestinians and Israel involves stripping some Palestinians and other Arabs of their Israeli citizenship, and demanding that those who would want to retain the legal status of citizen under these conditions should express allegiance to Israel 'as the homeland for the Jewish people'.² Liberman, his party, and the Likud-led government, in which Liberman had served as foreign minister, advocated for years the Basic Law 'Israel – The Nation-State of the Jewish People' which was passed by the Knesset on 19 July 2018, which among other Jewish Israeli nationalistic provisions demoted Arabic from official language to 'language with a

¹ Because I was driving on the motorway when I saw the billboards, I did not take a photo. I thank Helal Alesh for sending me the photos reproduced here. The resolution is not high enough to decipher who sponsored their display.

² Yisrael Beytenu, undated, 'The Vision of Yisrael Beytenu – Israel Our Home. Retrieved on June 12, 2018, from yisra'el bayteynu ['Israel is our home'; political party] : <http://www.beytenu.org/the-vision-of-yisrael-beytenu-israel-our-home-2/>.

special status'.³ As both scholarly and popular perceptions see language policies as litmus tests for ideologies of social inclusion and exclusion (Piller, 2016), mainstream media commentators of the Middle East politics have analysed this new Basic Law in terms of opening the door to the potential political exclusion of Palestinian and other Arab citizens of Israel, though it actually enshrines in law practices and 'facts on the ground' that have been entrenched for decades.⁴ On 26 February 2015 in a televised election debate, when presented with the fact that some 20 per cent of the legal citizens of Israel are Palestinians or other Arabs, Liberman muttered, *bentayim bentayim* 'for now, for now.'⁵

³ Basic Law: Israel – The Nation-State of the Jewish People – : - , at <http://m.knesset.gov.il/Activity/Legislation/Laws/Pages/LawBill.aspx?t=lawsuggestionssearch&lawitemid=565913>, accessed on 6 August 2018.

⁴ Prusher, Ilene, 24 July 2018, 'A New Law Shifts Israel Away From Democracy' at <http://time.com/5345963/israel-nation-state-law-democracy/>, accessed 25 July 2018; Kremnitzer, Mordechai, 20 July 2018, 'Jewish Nation-state Law Makes Discrimination in Israel Constitutional', at <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-nation-state-law-makes-discrimination-in-israel-constitutional-1.6291906>, accessed 25 July 2018; The Economist, 26 July 2018, 'Israel's Jewish nationalist identity is outweighing its democratic one', at <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2018/07/26/israels-jewish-nationalist-identity-is-outweighing-its-democratic-one>, accessed 26 July 2018; etc. *ad nauseam*.

⁵ As broadcast on commercial (not public-funded) Channel 2 and recorded for Youtube, see video Channel 2: Electoral debate for the 20th Knesset 26.02.2015 :2 , uploaded by user 'Old News' on 26 February 2015, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0nz_RlviGJ, accessed 18 March 2015. All video sources that are used as primary material are listed in Appendix 4. An opinion poll conducted in 2015 found that 48% of Jewish Israelis agreed that 'Arabs should be expelled or transferred from Israel' (see Pew Research Center, 8 March 2016, 'Israel's Religiously Divided Society', at <http://www.pewforum.org/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/>, accessed 20 September 2018). Yisrael Beytenu, Liberman's party, gained over 5% of the valid ballots cast in the 2015 elections, thus taking 6 out of the 120 Knesset seats: Central Elections Committee, 17 March 2015, 'Final Results of the Elections for the Twentieth Knesset', at http://www.bechiro20.gov.il/election/English/knesset20/Pages/Results20_eng.aspx, accessed on 20 August 2018.



Figure 1 'Thank you Salim' election billboard, February 2015 ©Private

Hanin Zoabi did not expect any position of governmental power that could materially affect the hypothetical Jewish Israeli voter, the Bat-El of the billboard: opposition parties such as her National Democratic Assembly, which support Palestinian collective national and minority rights, and individual human rights, have never been included in a governing coalition. Her position has always been one of dissent: she sailed with the Gaza blockade protest ship, the Mavi Marmara, in May 2010, on which nine Turkish citizens were killed by the Israeli navy (another one died later); her participation defied expectations that citizens and their representatives pay allegiance to the armed forces even when these violate international law (Human Rights Council, 2010; Amnesty International, 2011). As a result, in June 2010 the Knesset voted to remove three of her parliamentary privileges, and 'the Israeli Minister of Interior accused Ms. Zouabi [sic] of treason and requested authorization from the Attorney General to revoke her citizenship' (Human Rights Council, 2010, p. 52). Animosity against her persisted for years: Knesset colleagues on the Central Elections Committee banned her from running as a parliamentary candidate on 12 February 2015. She had already spent six months since the end of July 2014 suspended from her parliamentary post, barred from addressing any Knesset debate, while she faced an investigation. Among the reasons: at a demonstration in Nazareth in summer 2014 she had called Palestinians and other Arabs serving in the Israeli police 'traitors', after she had witnessed, as she reported, scenes of police violence

against young demonstrators. The billboard designers could expect Bat-El to be outraged by Hanin Zoabi's pronouncements: outrage directed at this target was a shortcut to displaying loyalty to Israeli institutions.



Figure 2 'Thank you Bat-El' election billboard, February 2015 ©Private

The Ayalon Highway billboards exhorted citizens to vote on the basis of fear of the electoral choices of members of the other ethnic or national group. The contradiction this posed – between the invitation to elections structured for the participation of voters with equal weight at the ballot on the one hand, and the political culture of erasure of some of their opinions and positions on the other – to the experience of citizenship in Israel remained prominently unresolved. However, it did so in Hebrew only, although the 'thank you, Salim' was a transcription of the Arabic *šukran Salīm*, in orientalisising arabesque Hebrew lettering. This language and script choice indicates that the billboard was not really addressed to the hypothetical voter Salim who reads Arabic, but to the Jewish Israeli majority, again, who is *not* expected to read Arabic. The message to them could be read as: 'beware, silent mainstream Jewish Israeli citizen, Palestinians and other Arabs will vote for the outrageous Zoabi, but you have the option to vote for those who act to restrict their rights.' Crass electioneering based on fear-mongering and outrage, misrepresenting and ignoring opposing candidates' views, is of course not restricted to Israel, and the spread of this type of communication has been analysed by some political philosophers as a challenge to the requirements of (idealised) democracy (Habermas,

2006); in these elections, the racialised and securitised portrayals of Palestinian and other Arab voters and their representatives were seen as a potential obstacle to voter participation (Arab Association for Human Rights, 2015). The rest of this book's introduction will present the political context for the evidence recorded in interactions between politicians and engaged citizens from all walks of life during the 2015 election campaigns in Israel. The analysis leans on political distinctions of systemic elements that are ethnorepublican, which manage and marginalise linguistic diversity, ethnonationalistic, which exclude identities constructed as 'other' including through linguistic difference, and liberal, which provide for equality and political access of different groups. The cross-disciplinary approach fuses sociolinguistics of language contact and politics. The methods borrow from critical ethnography and discourse analysis, and the argument reframes the existing scholarship on Arabic in Israel, which has mostly examined the potential or nonexistent language shift away from Arabic of speakers who have also been exposed to Modern Israeli Hebrew. Concerns with language shift are seen to map onto not linguistic, but rather political, anxieties.

Reports of the death of Palestinian and other Arab politics in Israel are grossly exaggerated.⁶ In a dusty sports hall in the deprived Bedouin township of Šgīb as-Salām⁷ in the Naqab⁸ region of southern Israel, a teenager stood up to tell an assembled panel of Palestinian national politicians⁹ on the campaign trail for the 2015 Knesset elections: **intum hēna tǧamm'itu ka 'uḏu wāḥad u hāḏa ḡāliban mā bišīr, hāḏa l-'iši** : 'You came together here as one unit and this does not usually happen, this thing'. She went on to ask: **šū muḥaṭaṭkum la ḡalā' as'ār il-buyūt fi ta'a ngūl fi n-nagab. ā, u kīf hāḏa rāḥ yi'atṭer 'ala taqalluṣ nisbet il-fukr bēn il-muḡtama' il-'arabi**¹⁰ : 'What are your plans in relation to the rise in house prices, in, let's say in the Naqab. Yes, and how is this going to affect the reduction of the poverty rate in Arab society'.¹¹ She sat down; behind her, some of her friends tittered, and their teacher gently scolded them; the politicians fumbled around, stuttering vague

⁶ With apologies to the ghost of Mark Twain, who never said anything like this.

⁷ *Segev Šalom* in Hebrew; fieldwork site, 3 March 2015.

⁸ *ha-Negev* in Hebrew, *an-Nagab* in Bedouin Arabic.

⁹ The politicians at this meeting were from the Joint List political party and from the Higher Committee for Follow-up of Arab Affairs in Israel (لجنة المتابعة العليا للجماهير العربية في إسرائيل [laḡnat al-mutāba'a al-'uliyā li-l-ḡamāhīr al-'arabīya fī 'isrā'īl]), and would all describe themselves as 'Palestinian'.

¹⁰ In the body of the text, Arabic will be demarcated in bold, Hebrew will be in italics, and English translations in single quotation marks. In texts transcribed in tables, Hebrew will be in italics, Arabic in regular font. There were no words or utterances recorded where the language is bivalent (Woolard, 1998), that is, where the attribution to Hebrew or Arabic would have been ambiguous to the interlocutors, though this linguistic possibility has been played with in Palestinian authored texts (for instance in *The Pessoptimist*, written in Arabic by Emile Habibi, and in *Arabesques*, written in Hebrew by Anton Shammas); one bivalent pun devised by parliamentarian Ahmad Tibi is described below in section 1.3. Transcription conventions are justified below in 0.3.1 and listed in Appendix 1.

¹¹ 3 March 2015, Šgīb as-Salām, fieldwork recording.

answers. More young people rose amidst the rows of plastic chairs to challenge the politicians on unemployment, human rights and inequality – all discussed in Arabic. Within the margins of the ‘liberal settler state’ (Robinson, 2013), or ‘ethnocracy’ (Yiftachel, 2006), spaces were carved, one question at a time, in which citizenship could be performed.

The citizenship at issue here is the political engagement, through shared debate, with questions of the common good beyond narrow self-interest. This is an Aristotelean definition of (one aspect) of citizenship (Aristotle, 1992, pp. 149-155);¹² it is not citizenship as legal categorisation, with which political citizenship interrelates through regimes of exclusion and inclusion (Nussbaum, 1990; Heater, 2004). In this book, I explore Palestinian and other Arab experiences of citizenship in Israel discursively; that is, the object of enquiry is how political discourse creates the political engagement that is citizenship. In turn, the structures of citizenship give rise to linguistic expressions in circulation. The particular discursive patterns that are of interest for the Palestinians and other Arabs engaging in a broad sense with Israeli politics, are the patterns of Arabic and Hebrew use and the tensions between monolingual and multilingual possibilities.

The main question that this book answers is, How do Palestinians and other Arabs in Israel discursively inhabit their experience of citizenship? To answer this, I have recorded interactions between politicians and engaged citizens, and amongst politicians, at public events on a range of scales, during the 2015 election campaigns in Israel. I also looked at debates in the parliament, both historical and recent, and on other political stages including in the broadcast media. The texts collected from these sources are analysed with methods from ethnography and discourse analysis, with an emphasis on contextualisation within relations of power both in the immediacy of the situation and within inherited socioeconomic and political structures. Intellectual stimulus for work in this vein has come from the poststructuralist perspective on ‘negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts’, according to which ‘[...] languages may not only be “markers of identity” but also sites of resistance, empowerment, solidarity or discrimination’ (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p.

¹² Though the citizenship scholarship mostly refers to Aristotle (Nussbaum, 1990), it has been argued that philosophers have written on different conceptions of the ‘common good’ in Asian and North African political settings too, countering claims of the Euro-centrism of citizenship and of its ‘universalism’ (Linklater, 2007, p. 40). For instance, Mozi wrote in the 5th century BCE at a time of warring states and amidst the multiplication of schools of philosophy before the entrenchment of the Chinese empire: ‘The purpose of those who are virtuous lies in procuring benefits for the world and eliminating its calamities. Now among all the current calamities, which are the most important? I say that the attack on the small states by the large ones, disturbances of the small houses by the large ones, oppression of the weak by the strong, misuse of the few by the many, deception of the simple by the cunning, disdain toward the humble by the honoured: these are the misfortunes of the world’ (Fung, 1952, p. 91).

4). The identity under multilingual negotiation is one that I term the emergent Palestinian and other Arab middle class, at a juncture relative both to other dynamic class positions in the political economy and to contested ethnic and national boundaries.

The analyses are organised into four substantive chapters. The first outlines the evolution of norms and practices that suppress Arabic on platforms of Zionist institutions, including some political stages, despite the formal, managed and limited inclusion of the 'diversity' of Palestinians and other Arabs. The second observes the practices of Palestinian and other Arab speakers who prefer to avoid speaking in Arabic when there are any Jewish Israelis among the interlocutors. The third lists some stylistic strategies for gaining discursive authority in debates among Palestinians and other Arabs whose political views are various and materially grounded in discrete life experiences. The fourth chapter contemplates some ambivalent trends of language attitudes in late capitalism which on the one hand confidently mobilise multilingualism as a resource, the better to claim a would-be consumerist liberal utopia and to create marketable cultural products by, for, and about Palestinians and other Arabs. On the other hand, explicit language attitudes express anxieties about multilingualism's unsettling of the ideologically clear-cut one-nation-one-language equation (transferred from anxieties about the 'endangerment' of the nation and the language per se).

Between ideologies of monolingualism, practices of bilingualism, and aspirations to multilingualism

'The foundations of linguistic authority are also foundations of identity, community, nation, polity, and citizenship' (Woolard, 2016, p. 1). Taking this proposition as starting point, this book paints the following picture: Ideologies of separate Hebrew and Arabic monolingualisms are constitutive elements of prevalent, sometimes articulated but often taken-for-granted, nationalist sentiments. In Israel, this Hebrew monolingualism animates state symbols, institutions and public commemorations which are constitutive of the 'ethnorepublican project' (Peled, 1992) or of the '1948 paradigm' (Rekhes, 2014), in which the frame of the state is designed to be Jewish Israeli, but within this frame, what are called 'minorities' can operate within somewhat fluid limitations, which is called 'legal citizenship'. Exclusion from that category hangs as a threat over the Palestinians and other Arabs in Israel, who within living memory have seen dispossession and expulsion in the form of the Nakba (Khalidi W. , 2005; Robinson, 2013). Their national sentiment identifies them with those more excluded by degrees: the Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Iraq, other Palestinians of the occupied territories, and the emigrant 'diaspora'. The

Palestinians do not have a state that would have the material power to exclude ethnic groups construed as 'other', least of all settlers, but they do have symbols, institutions and public commemorations, which are animated by the ideology of Arabic monolingualism (Suleiman Y. , 2004). However, they do have political factions that have politically and physically excluded followers of competing factions, and that have divided Palestinian symbols and institutions (Baconi, 2018) but not the allegiance to monolingual ideology.

The changes in political and socio-economic dynamics brought on by the establishment of the Israeli state, experienced as a settler-colonial takeover, led the Palestinians and other Arabs to gradually acquire Hebrew in addition to their Arabic: they became bilingual; this came to be one of the most popularly commented-upon adaptation of all those that they had to undergo. Their practices include all the phenomena that are commonly associated with bilingualism: borrowing, codeswitching, and code alternation, and for a few in the elite of society, a degree of proficiency that is conceived of as two parallel monolingualisms: a flexible command of a range of registers and styles in speech and writing in both Hebrew and Arabic (Heller M. , 2006, p. 218). The debate that these sociolinguistically unexceptional practices trigger is a product of the monolingual ideologies, amplified by the armed conflict and struggle over land (Hawker, 2018a). In particular, the bilingual practices are eagerly examined for 'deficiencies' that would signal a contraction of Arabic in the everyday discourse of Palestinians and other Arabs: instances of Arabic in Hebrew script in digital messages, loanwords that do not have 'pure' Arabic equivalents, phrases that use calquing, new pronunciations, all are taken to mean a shift away from Arabic that threatens the unrealised claim to national self-determination centred on the monolingual ideology (Derrida, 1998 [1996]; for an academic expression of this type of examination, see Amara, 2010). The idea that linguistic innovation, including through language contact, is a sign of linguistic expansion into new domains, rather than contraction, is not compatible with the ideology of monolingualism.

By 2018, the second generation of Palestinians and other Arabs socialised in the Israeli educational and professional systems had come into their prime, and the third generation had come of age under conditions of late-capitalist consumerism and other globalised forms of economic neoliberalism (Ram, 2013). Those who aspire to socioeconomic and political equality with Jewish Israelis – a radical challenge to the ethnorepublican structure – have repackaged their bilingual practices as 'skills' which could be put to use for displaying critical, humorous or appreciative stances towards political and everyday problems. What this new socioeconomic, political and cultural elite knows how to project is multilingualism. The struggle over land is not over, but instead of

challenging dispossession with (monolingual) national self-determination, Palestinians and other Arabs are using international law, human rights and civil rights discourse (Gordon & Berkovitch, 2007; Payes, 2005) and successful literary and cinematic productions (Suleiman C. , 2018, pp. 210-222). To follow that course, their multilingualism is a cultivated asset.

One example from my research will clarify the difference between bilingualism and multilingualism. One of the Palestinian candidates for the 2015 parliamentary elections, Zuheir Bahloul of the Labour Party (renamed for these elections 'The Zionist Camp'), was a retired radio sports presenter reputed for his excellent style in both languages. He delivered his maiden speech to the Knesset – in Hebrew, of course – on 5 May 2015, and ended it with a salutation in Arabic: **bārakkum Allah** : 'God bless you'.¹³ The quality of his delivery and his final words prompted two metalinguistic comments: one from the Knesset session chair, Yitzhak Vaknin, who said: 'Ahmad Tibi, you have a competitor. I am paying you a compliment.'¹⁴ Ahmad Tibi had been a member of the Knesset since 1999 and was considered a skilled orator, and also a Palestinian, albeit from a different, anti-Zionist, political stream: comparing like with like, according to 'national' language, is a function of the construction of monolingual borders, notwithstanding what the speakers actually stood for. The other comment came from Zuheir Bahloul's party leader, Yitzhak Herzog, who said: *eyzo ivrit yefeyfiyya. mamaš ka šēmen al ha-atsamot. lo šom'im davar ka ze be-harbe maḥozot ḥafets be-artzeinu, zoher* : 'What splendid Hebrew. Really as rich as bone fat in a stew [lit. like oil on the bones]. We don't hear speech like this in many places that our hearts long for in our country, Zuheir.'¹⁵ Zuheir Bahloul smiled, accepted the congratulations of his new colleagues, and seemed to me to play down the compliments by ignoring the Speaker's dais.¹⁶

A Jewish Israeli's praise for a Palestinian's command of Hebrew, and especially the use of *yefeyfiyya* 'splendid', the augmentative feminine form of *yafá* 'beautiful', raises questions of discursive authority. If one considers Frantz Fanon's sarcastic proposition that 'the Negro of the Antilles will come closer to being a real human being in direct ratio to his mastery of the French language'

¹³ Knesset records, The Fourth Meeting of the Twentieth Knesset, Tuesday 5 May 2015
" " , 2015 5, p.42

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ *ibid.* All translations are the present author's. 'Like fat in the bones' *ka-šēmen ba-'atsamot* is an idiomatic simile meaning 'something deeply pleasant' – it is not as common as the English 'music to one's ears' – and is an approximate quote from Psalm 109, verse 18 . I thank Noa Vichanski for looking up the biblical reference.

¹⁶ See video 'Maiden Speech of Knesset Member Zuheir Bahloul in the Knesset Plenum, 5 May 2015 5.5.15 - " , uploaded to Youtube by user 'زهير بهلول' - 'Zuheir Bahloul' on 5 May 2015, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBp7CA-Y5Uw>, accessed 12 April 2018.

(Fanon, 1986, p. 18), and Fanon's comments on the patronising connotations of complimenting a 'native's' language, then the parallels of that critically perceived colonial discourse with the metalinguistic comments after Bahloul's speech are striking. Fanon reported that a woman fainted during an electoral speech by Aimé Césaire in Martinique in 1945, because Césaire's French was so good – 'the power of language!' (Fanon, 1986, p. 39) – and that André Breton praised professional wordsmith Césaire in his introduction to *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* in these terms: 'Here is a black man who handles the French language as no white man today can' (Fanon, 1986, p. 39). These compliments, then, serve to reinforce the boundary between white and black and allocates the prestigious language to the white side: an object of aspiration for the black. It was as if Herzog were saying, Well done, you can speak like us Jewish Israelis because you obviously want to be almost like us (taking into account the Arabic salutation), because we have all the good discourse, which is Hebrew. It might then appear as if the Palestinians and the Israelis were doomed to stay locked in colonial behaviour, however much space might have been created for accommodating diversity, for instance by including a Palestinian on 'Zionist Camp's' electoral list. These questions all fall within the range of *bilingualism*, and indeed could not be understood without sociolinguistic approaches to the production of 'legitimate speakers'. It is not good enough to speak well: speech is allocated discursive authority depending on how language ideologies discriminate between gendered, racialised and classed speakers (Heller & McElhinny, 2017, p. 251).

And yet, from the interactions I could record in my fieldwork, I infer that Zuheir Bahloul did not view his language skills in those terms, and neither did any of the other elite 'double monolinguals'. In an interview with me, prior to meeting Labour party activists in Akka,¹⁷ northern Israel, Bahloul called his ability to switch from one language to another, and to find the right term at the right moment in whichever language, 'a talent', in Arabic *mawhibe*, in that he did not strive to prove anything personal by his efforts.¹⁸ He said 'people seemed to like how I spoke, when I was on radio: maybe I can now put that gift to good use, for my community.'¹⁹ He was performing modesty, and he thus boasted of his multilingualism even more successfully. He claimed that his well-appreciated speech drew on conscious linguistic skills to be deployed for what he was sincerely convinced of as his conception of the common good: the material improvement of public infrastructure in Palestinian and other Arab districts in Israel, which could be achieved with the accession of a Labour government. His modest smile after his maiden speech meant, to my mind: 'I know I'm good at rhetoric, not only good at Hebrew *per se*: I'm good at being a multilingual Palestinian.' He had

¹⁷ Akko in Hebrew, Acre in English.

¹⁸ Akka, fieldwork site, 12 February 2015.

¹⁹ Ibid.

moved on from Fanon's black-and-white realities. The discursive strategies of *multilingualism* are what this class of speakers is concerned with. Their language skills are a resource.

Zuheir Bahoul tendered his resignation from the Knesset after the passing of the so-called Nation-State Law in July 2018.²⁰ The Nation-State Law altered the constitution of Israel by overriding provisions in the Declaration of Independence for formal equality of all citizens; it has the potential (pending decisions on Supreme Court petitions and subsequent amendments) to alter the ethnorepublican structure of the state, and turn it into an ethnonational state similar to South Africa's *Herrenvolk* (Peled, 1992, p. 435), by excluding all non-Jews and most prominently among them the Palestinians and other Arabs. Opposition to the Nation-State Law (which only narrowly passed the parliamentary plenum vote) has brought together those who want to preserve the ethnorepublican system as well as those who aspire to the actual, rather than formal, realisation of the liberal conception of a state for all its citizens (with its preferable flaws), of which the multilingual Palestinians and other Arabs are the most *vocal* advocates.²¹ It is for this reason that studying the actual linguistic practices of middle class Palestinian and other Arab multilinguals at this delicate historical juncture has bearing upon the study of politics, too. These speakers' ability to cross back and forth across boundaries of languages, which are taken to rigidly index ethnic national groups (Heller M. , 2006, p. 15), could have a crucial impact on the political course of Israel, with all the world-wide repercussions this has.

The discursive elements of citizenship

How is citizenship inhabited under these conditions? The answers presented in this book will deliberately evade generalisations. The linguistic expressions of citizenship are varied and undetermined. The multifarious forms of citizenship will be presented as a reaction to the generalisations that proliferate in commentaries with regards to Palestinians and other Arabs' supposed quiescence or insubordination, alienation or loyalty, double life and 'fifth column' threat, etc. (Hawker, 2018a; Ghanem, 2001). The reason for this evasion is that with discursive-analytical tools, I am only in a position to judge political behaviour by standards of nationalism, securitism, or democratic idealism that are emically meaningful to the subjects, in their contexts, as observed; and my prioritisation of the analysis of *their* meanings is why I chose those tools. This is not to presume

²⁰ BBC News, 29 July 2018, 'Israeli Arab MP resigns over controversial "nation state" law', at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-44995501>, accessed 6 August 2018.

²¹ See Adalah, 'Israel's Jewish Nation-State Law', 2 August 2018, at <https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/9569>, accessed on 14 August 2018.

that subjects are simply as 'democratic' and 'patriotic' as they say they are – by that measure, no one would ever be a racist tyrant – but that by analysing discursive patterns in real, immediate, situated instances of speech, we can find forms of political engagement with the common good that are beyond categorical judgements. Speech is an element of inhabitations of citizenship: it expresses discursive fragmentation or coherence, shows of authority or deference, humour, politeness and respect or anger, cynicism and challenge. What the bias of the question – limiting the search for citizenship to political engagement – necessarily cannot account for, is silence, anomie and alienation, those political corollaries of late capitalism and consumerism (Isin & Wood, 1999, p. 31), which will be explored in the fourth chapter. This bias has the advantage of producing a less-dystopic-than-usual account of Palestinian and other Arab politics – without for all that heralding peace and joy – which might at least provide some optimism to the reader.

To temper that optimism, however, it has to be understood that defining citizenship as engagement, through political debate, with questions of the common good beyond narrow self-interest, means that citizenship is broadly incompatible with capitalism (Dean, 2003; Mouffe, 1991). Citizenship, in the vignettes presented in this book, grows in the cracks of several articulated hegemonies, of which Zionism and capitalism are two. And yet, the invigoration of Palestinian and other Arab political self-confidence is in part an aspect of the limited emergence of an aspirational middle class. This class has met its own (narrow) needs for socioeconomic status, and in so doing discovered its non-material needs for citizenship. Claiming this citizenship has been confronted by structural limitations including those created by the conditions for their own material advancement: and so a dialectic of needs has the potential to drive the dialectics of history (Heller A. , 1993). The Israeli state has aligned with global capital, promoting neoliberal policies and consumerist culture at least since the 1980s (Hanieh, 2003), which is the context in which the new Palestinian and other Arab middle class could develop. This does not mean that capitalism replaced Zionism – the intertwining between the two has been complex since the beginnings of state policy (Kimmerling, 1999, p. 353) – but that the articulation between class and ethnicity/nationality was reconfigured to accommodate neoliberalism, as it was between class and race in the Caribbean and South Africa during different phases of colonialism and apartheid (Hall, 1996). Some aspects of that reconfigured articulation could become more fluid: hence the emergence of the multilingual Palestinian and other Arab middle class.

Within that overarching view, it then seems literally academic to discuss whether Israel constitutes an 'ethnic democracy' or 'ethnocracy', a 'liberal settler state' or 'settler colonial state'.²² The organising of periodic elections for a parliament which is relatively governmentally active (Kimmerling, 1999) is a structure with far-reaching, multifarious consequences for the anthropologically observable experiences of citizenship: in the Bedouin township of Rahat, this structure was behind the logic for an announcer's monotone reading out of names of tribal leaders who had committed their followers to voting for the Joint List;²³ in the town of Baqa al-Gharbiya it created the opportunity for a farmer to explain to the Meretz candidate how political parties could attract material dividends from the treasury;²⁴ and in Kufr Bara it caused a feminist socialist and a conservative islamist to sit side by side politely praising each other's efforts in championing the welfare of the most deprived.²⁵ This structure also gave rise to the option of boycotting elections, as expressed by two participants at a townhall debate in another Bedouin township, Hura.²⁶ There is no point in describing these consequences as ironies, paradoxes, or aberrations for democracy: such descriptions would only be valid if we held these performances up to an externally determined standard of what the electoral system (ideally) intended. These performances are all forms of engagement with ideas of the common good under these structural conditions; engagements that happen in the cracks, in fact creating and shaping the cracks, which are spaces of negativity within hegemonic systems. Negativity, in a polyvalent Hegelian sense, is an apt term for the frustration and constriction that Palestinians and other Arabs frequently express in their political speaking, as well as for the motivation it fuels to demand change for the common good (Adorno, 2003). It is because Palestinians and other Arabs' citizenship, however variously inhabited, comes from a crack of negativity, that it is worth studying for its counter-hegemonic possibilities. The 'neutrality' of calling a functional parliament 'merely' a structure could be seen as judgmental by those who put effort into logistically staging elections in such a way as to preclude vote-rigging, for instance, or who maintain the legal constitutional framework, however demarcated, of parliamentary activity. These are (here, unexplored) prerequisites for the structure to allow the performances of citizenship described in this book. However, the equal weight of votes in the ballot box is not translated into equal weight in the political debate over what is a 'legitimate idea' of the common good in Israel: Palestinian and Arab views, being counter-hegemonic, are 'illegitimate' (Kimmerling, 1999, p. 360) – and this is why I examine them as cracks of negativity.

²² Smooha, *Ethnic democracy*, 1997; Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*, 2006; Robinson, *Citizen strangers*, 2013; Ram, *Postnationalist pasts*, 1998.

²³ Fieldwork site, 7 March 2015.

²⁴ Fieldwork site, 13 March 2015; see Text 3.2 below.

²⁵ Fieldwork site, 14 March 2015.

²⁶ Fieldwork site, 17 February 2015; see Text 3.4 below.

One aspect of the discursive constitution of citizenship is the hyphenated and contested identity labels (Dinero, 2010, pp. 127-133; Rouhana, 1997, pp. 111-113). My term of choice in this book, ‘Palestinian and other Arab’, captures both the idea that ‘Palestinian’ is a kind of ‘Arab’ (just as ‘British’ is a kind of ‘European’), and that there are some indigenous Arabic-speakers (whose ‘native tongue’ is indexically strongly linked to Arab identity) who do not primarily identify with Palestinian nationality, however labelled. Some Arabic-speakers who have lived, and/or have familial roots, in the chronotope of the geographical space of historical Palestine (which forms a ‘connection to land’ that is strongly linked to Palestinian identity) prefer to describe themselves as ‘Arab’, sometimes in combination with other descriptors (such as ‘Bedouin’ or ‘Druze’). ‘Palestinian and other Arab’ is therefore used in this book as a generalisation, with more specific political and social descriptions introduced in ways that make emic sense to the subjects in concrete contexts. This solution is a deliberate, perhaps futile, attempt to evade the shibboleths that associate particular labels with particular discourses (e.g. ‘Israeli Arab’ with Israeli state authorities’ discourse, ‘Palestinians of ‘48’ and ‘Palestinians of the Interior’ with discourses that emphasise Palestinians’ diasporic existences, and ‘Palestinian Arab’ with Palestinian collective and human rights discourse). None of these are self-evident geographical or historical terms, but rather are negotiated constructs inherited in the forms of words in current use. I do not suggest that my terminology is superior in its ideological references (Derrida, 1998 (1996), p. 39), but ‘Palestinian and other Arab’ is relatively descriptively precise and succinct, and therefore practical.

The place of the fieldwork for this project: vocal leftist multilinguals, silent rightists

The fieldwork which forms most of the new evidence presented in this book took place on 25 sites between 10 February and 14 March 2015 at political events – townhall debates, activist mobilisation meetings, speeches at rallies, house visits, street leafleting – across the geographical space of Israel within pre-1967 borders, from villages in the northern Galilee to townships in the Naqab, and most places in between where there were public meetings. A list and map of the fieldwork sites is in Appendix 2.²⁷

I recorded eighteen Palestinian and other Arab parliamentary candidates, most on several occasions (alphabetically by first names as commonly spelt in the English-language press): Abbas Mansour,

²⁷ The fieldwork and research on this project were funded by the Leverhulme Trust’s Early Career Fellowship ECF-2013-624.

Abdel Hakim Hajj Yahya, Ahmad Tibi, Aida Touma-Suleiman, Ayman Odeh, Basel Ghattas, Hanin Zoabi, Hussein al-Rifa'i, Ibrahim Hijazi, Issawi Freij, Jamal Zahalka, Jum'á Azbarga, Mahmoud Nujeidat,²⁸ Mas'oud Ghanayem, Said Khroumi, Talab Abu 'Arar, Yusif Jabarin, and Zuheir Bahloul. Four Hebrew-speaking candidates in Arabic-speaking environments were also recorded: Dov Khenin, Merav Michaeli, Noa Levi, and Ilan Gil'on, as well as numerous aides, party supporters, activists, and members of the public who are central to the interactions and remain anonymous in the study. I attended most of the events as would a member of the public – I followed Arabic announcements on public Facebook pages of all the political parties, and signed up to notifications of election-related events organised by I'lam (Arab Centre for Media Freedom, Development and Research),²⁹ by the Abraham Fund³⁰ and the Van Leer Institute,³¹ in order to identify events and speakers that I could record for this project – except for three closed meetings to which I was invited by the candidates themselves. All candidates had been notified by email of the purpose and nature of my research, and after I had answered a few questions seeking clarifications on the linguistic, rather than political, focus, none objected to my presence. In smaller meetings of up to 30 participants, where members of the public were invited to pose questions of the politicians, I was asked to stand up and introduce myself and my research, which was mostly understood as part of the public's 'democratic' right to keep tabs on the transparency and accountability of the politicians' discourse; once the anonymity of the 'engaged citizen' participants was assured, this understanding of my research was approved of vehemently. In fact, my status as a foreign non-voter, and as a visitor from a 'Western liberal democracy', whatever I might have thought of it, made the project more likely to be seen as part of the process of checks and balances. Given that this was how the research was perceived, including by my friend Helal Alish who accompanied me to many of the events as a 'true' member of the local citizenry, and whose insights I have benefitted from, I was struck by how readily most of the politicians agreed to my recording them. They were performing their commitment to the voters' interest in 'democratic accountability'; or as Meretz candidate Issawi Freij put it when introducing me at a home visit: 'This researcher, I'm happy for her to check, on your behalf, that I make the same political statements in Shenkin Street [in the reportedly hippest neighbourhood of Tel Aviv] as I do in Umm al-Fahem [a reputedly conservative Palestinian town in

²⁸ Mahmoud Nujeidat represented the للتغيير - 'Hope for Change' party (see Central Elections Committee candidates list, undated, <http://www.bechirot20.gov.il/election/Candidates/Pages/default.aspx>, accessed 17 September 2018), which did not, in the event, garner enough votes to enter parliament.

²⁹ I'lam (Arab Centre for Media Freedom, Development and Research), <http://www.ilam-center.org/en/default.aspx>, last accessed 19 August 2018.

³⁰ The Abraham Fund, <https://www.abrahamfund.org/en>, accessed 19 August 2018.

³¹ The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, <https://www.vanleer.org.il/en>, accessed 19 August 2018.

The Triangle].³² The most guarded, in these terms, was Hanin Zoabi, who quizzed me as to my research aims before agreeing to my recording part of one of her public meetings;³³ Ahmad Tibi was also somewhat cautious in indicating that part of his meeting with activists should not be recorded,³⁴ this reserve was understandable in light of the incitement and threats made against both of them (Shamir & Rahat, 2017). The least guarded were those who let me record them with a lapel microphone attached to a voice recorder in their pocket as they moved among their constituents: I thank Aida Touma-Suleiman for allowing me to record her in this way in a marketplace in Tira, central Israel, while I trailed behind her and activists who were distributing leaflets.³⁵ The only other politician who agreed to being recorded 'free-range' was Zuheir Bahloul on a visit to Bedouin elders in an officially 'unrecognised' neighbourhood of Hura in the Naqab³⁶ – I thank him, too. Both were on the electoral trail for the first time. The other politicians were too busy attending to their campaigns to wonder what my research was about or what kind of material I would collect. I only interviewed those candidates or other participants who came forward themselves to introduce themselves and their propositions; the purpose of my presence was to observe how already-established communities of practice constituted, took, and held the discursive floor of citizenly debate. My establishing another discursive floor – that of the interview – would have, in my view, interfered with the set-up.

By listing the names of the politicians recorded for this research I feel that I have done what could be expected of me in terms of contributing to the 'democratic transparency' of attributing responsibility for their discourse. Yet a foreigner coming to verify the 'democratic credentials' of Palestinian and other Arab politicians, with all the Orientalist baggage such a verification would carry, is not the story of political accountability that I would like students of politics to take from this book. Those who have read treatises on the supposed cultural unsuitability of Arabs for democratic participation (Kedourie, 2013) should learn, as I did, from the impressive determination of those voters from all walks of life who insisted on being taken seriously by the politicians who claimed to represent them, as I reported above in the questions raised in *Šgīb as-Salām*, and as will be described in many instances in the pages of this book. What I thought of it was that it was, in fact, me who was learning valuable lessons of citizenship to take home to my own engagements with the 'common good', of which writing this book is one example. I learnt particularly from meetings where the politicians sat in a circle, sometimes on the ground, with their hoped-for constituencies and asked questions in

³² Baqa al-Gharbiya, fieldwork site, 13 March 2015.

³³ Haifa, fieldwork site, 10 February 2015.

³⁴ Umm al-Fahem, fieldwork site, 18 February 2015.

³⁵ Fieldwork site, 14 March 2015; see text 2.1 below.

³⁶ Fieldwork site, 7 March 2015.

which they intersubjectively positioned the voters as experts on their own political problems, and themselves as the ‘mediators’ of that political voice, as Yusif Jabarin did in the Naqab,³⁷ and Zuheir Bahloul did both in the Naqab³⁸ and in Akka.³⁹ And though the academic framework of this book provides an analytical distancing mechanism, I am not distant from the responsibilities of mediating political voices: as will be seen in the next sections and in the conclusion, it is where academics fail to conceptualise sociolinguistic findings in their socioeconomic and political relations that I propose to intervene.

Other sources of primary material

Recordings of political events available online – mainly rallies and press conferences related to the 2015 elections – were also collected and analysed, in addition to speeches in institutions of the state, such as the video of the hearing on Hanin Zoabi’s disqualification from standing in the elections. Though I cannot categorically vouch for the trustworthiness of videos taken from Youtube, they were analysed for obvious tampering, such as blank segments and voiceovers, and for mistakes in identification of speaker, date, and location, and only those videos which passed those credibility tests were used as source material. Videos of Knesset and other institutional speeches were compared against the official records, which were taken from official websites. In the task of locating records of Knesset speeches from the 1940s and 50s, and of their translators, the help of Knesset archivist Dr Gilad Natan has been invaluable: the archival services are also part of the story of public accountability that this book can attest to. In total, including both video and audio sources, just under 57 hours of speech have been analysed and coded for transitions between Hebrew and Arabics, and correlated with topic, pragmatic function, or (intersubjectively constructed) addressee. The pieces of evidence selected from the bulk of the recordings for their instantiations of transitions will be presented in the chapters of this book in the form of vignettes, with contextual detail and with the Hebrew elements highlighted. The political voices captured in the fieldwork are represented in the book in transcriptions and their idiomatic translations into English. The transcriptions are based on the conventions of academic Semitic orthography, a key to which is in Appendix 1, as adhered to by the Journal of Semitic Studies, the Library of Congress, and by most Arabic sociolinguistic studies, and other sources. In this book, the romanising transcription conventions have the advantage of being legible to those who know either Arabic or Hebrew script but not both, and who, when reading the transcripts, might recognise words in the other language

³⁷ Fieldwork site, 17 February 2015.

³⁸ Fieldwork site, 7 March 2015.

³⁹ Fieldwork site, 12 February 2015.

which would have been inaccessible if not for the romanisation: the transcripts could thus become multilingual texts for some of the (hoped-for) readers, as well as the speakers. The transcriptions also convey some of the phonemes with more precise attention to pronunciation in varieties of Arabic than captured by the Arabic and Hebrew consonantal script: though dialect documentation is not the purpose of this book, in some of the cases the variations bear on the constructions of identity – for instance, Bedouin, or rural Palestinian – that have political significance. The variations in pronunciation are not an issue when the source quoted is a written one: in those cases I have noted the original in its script.

Fieldwork limitation: no ‘rightwing’ Arabs

The Israeli Left-Right spectrum is not unidimensionally shaped by positions on socioeconomic questions, but rather, also by attitudes to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Shamir & Arian, 1999). This means that the Islamists are positioned as ‘Left’, Shas (in English, ‘Guardians of the Sephardim’) as ‘Centre’, and the United Torah Judaism party as ‘Centre Right’, even though they hold similar views on the role of religion in public life, on gendered social relations and on welfare provisions (Arian, 2005, p. 415). Nevertheless, Left/Right tends to be used in the literature as a fairly useful analytical shortcut, also approximated by dovish/hawkish (see Hazan, 2007, p. 270). The limitation of the method of collecting instances of political discourse (with a lower case ‘d’) rather than accounting for abstract, Foucauldian Discourse (with an upper case ‘D’), and of analysing the former in contexts, relations and patterns, as is applied here, is that the method cannot account for the linguistic practices of those Palestinian and other Arab politicians who are ‘silent’. Either their public speaking was not accessible to me, because they did not respond to my request for their consent to my attendance at their events, or their speeches were not recorded on online fora that I had been monitoring, or they simply did not speak in public very much at all. This is not to say that their, and their supporters’, citizenly engagement with conceptions of the common good is not a valuable object of study.⁴⁰ For this book, their existence is worthy of note precisely because of their relative inaccessibility and inaudibility. These ‘silent’ Arab politicians in Israel belong to parties that are ‘hawkish’ on the issue of resolving the conflict over land between Israel and the Palestinians. As individuals, they speak as many languages as the Palestinian and other Arab politicians who are on the ‘dovish’ end of the spectrum. Yet as participants in institutions (parties, parliament, or government), they are relatively inaudible: this silence allows for the relative (multilingual) vocality

⁴⁰ In public opinion polls, many more citizens of Israel identify as ‘rightwing’ than as ‘leftwing’, and therefore it could be argued that studying rightwing citizenly discourse is of urgent importance. See Pew Research Center, 8 March 2016, ‘Israel’s Religiously Divided Society’, at <http://www.pewforum.org/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/>, accessed 20 September 2018.

of the Palestinians and other Arabs on the 'left' to be institutionally heard as a 'different' political voice; they, but not the institutionally silent ones, can therefore be construed as the 'other' of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with consequences for their delegitimisation in the eyes of those who see that conflict as a zero-sum ethnic/national contest. This is similar to the construal, for instance, of women politicians as voicing the 'difference' of their gender (Cameron & Shaw, 2016, p. 15). Those who 'speak out' as Palestinians and Arabs with their multilingualism⁴¹ are therefore, within those discursive references, seemingly expressing their 'essential' difference. If the institutional multilingualism had been distributed throughout the political spectrum, this construal would not have been possible to uphold in such simplistic terms; conversely, it is the power of the simplistic essentialist terms that place the multilingualism of Arabic and Hebrew on the Left, and of the monolingual Hebrew on the Right, that also 'silences' the Arabs in the pro-Zionist parties. Part of the aim, here, of documenting various ways of speaking multilingually, and of inhabiting citizenship, is to demystify that essentialism. This book is about the institutional (rather than the individual cognitive) multilingualism of Palestinians and other Arabs in the Israeli political system, without deducing political generalisations on the back of it.

Nevertheless, the absence of the rightwing parties' Arabs' discourse, in this book, is also the result of the limitations of my own position within social networks. The March 2015 elections were called early as a result of the dissolution of the governing coalition in December 2014 – elections for the 20th Knesset had been expected to take place in 2017 – and consequently, I quickly mobilised my contacts, which are mostly in leftwing and human rights circles, to reach candidates (whose names were only settled on 29 January 2015) and their aides who could facilitate my access to meetings. I did spend a few hours on the telephone to office-holders in Yisrael Beytenu, trying to reach their Arabic-speaking candidate Hamad Amar. Each time I was passed back to the switchboard, and I asked for the office of Hamad Amar there, I was met with a baffled counter question: 'who?'. I once tried to ask for his business contact in Russian (of which I have limited command), because Yisrael Beytenu mostly represents Russian immigrants to Israel: this did not help either. He was re-elected to the Knesset on 17 March 2015, where he had served since 2009, but the Knesset records do not show that he has expressed himself verbally with regards to his ideas of citizenship in any language, though he has spoken (in Hebrew) regularly in his role of deputy speaker to keep time and call parliamentarians to order. There were no answers from the offices of other Arabic-speakers Akram Hasson (Kulanu party) and Ayoob Kara (Likud – subsequently chosen for Minister for

⁴¹ And by focusing on the multilingual expressions of the 'leftwing' Palestinians and other Arabs, this book in some way contributes to such 'speaking out'.

Communications). The Kulanu party made it not only into parliament, but was also included in the coalition with Likud in government; Akram Hasson has been a champion of the Hebrew language, even receiving a literary prize for its promotion. Upon receiving the Golden Inkwell Word Prize (which usually goes to fiction and poetry writers), Hasson said to the press: 'This [Hebrew] is our national language. [...] You hear kids today who are putting English words all the time into their speech. The language is losing its prestige.'⁴² Annette Haskiya (an Arab candidate for the ultranationalist Jewish Home party), who was placed 25th on the electoral list⁴³ and therefore did not, in the event, make it into parliament, did not respond to my interview request.⁴⁴

The fact that Hamad Amar only expressed himself in Hebrew in the Knesset, as far as could be observed, did not prevent others from addressing him in Arabic. On 29 June 2016, in the course of a heated plenary session on Israel's relations with Turkey, Hanin Zoabi had the floor and Amar (who was chairing the session) had to defend her right to speak for three minutes from repeated interruptions from Likud parliamentarian Oren Khazan, who wanted to evict Zoabi from the Knesset. Each time Khazan interrupted Zoabi, Amar asked Khazan to be quiet until it was his turn to speak, returned the floor to Zoabi and gave her additional time. Exasperated, Khazan said to Amar: **ħalaş** 'enough' (in Arabic). Hamad, *lo mat'im leħa* 'Hamad, this does not suit you' (in Hebrew).⁴⁵ Presumably, the choice of **ħalaş** over the Hebrew equivalent *dayy* was a strategy to relate to Amar 'as an Arab', who could be addressed with familiarity (not with the title required for his position) in order to build common grounds based on shared political objections to Zoabi. Even though **ħalaş** is used in Hebrew slang contexts, according to some sources it is commonly known to be an Arabic word (Kizel, 2017, p. 747). The Nation-State Law might be the undoing of the 'rightwing' Arabic silence: in an unprecedented breaking of party ranks, Hamad Amar and Akram Hasson voted against the law in the early hours of 19 July 2018 (only Ayoob Kara voted in favour).⁴⁶ Indeed, leaders of the

⁴² Deborah Danan (Jerusalem Post journalist), 28 December 2012, 'Druze MK wins prize for helping preserve Hebrew', at <https://www.jpost.com/National-News/Druze-MK-wins-prize-for-helping-preserve-Hebrew>, accessed on 27 January 2015.

⁴³ Central Elections Committee - Elections for the 20th Knesset, List of candidates, undated, <http://www.bechirot20.gov.il/election/Candidates/Pages/default.aspx>, accessed 18 June 2018.

⁴⁴ The subsequent elections have been constitutionally scheduled to happen by 5 November 2019: then a researcher with luck and different connections could obtain a picture of a different spectrum of political discourse.

⁴⁵ Knesset records, Meeting number 140 of the 20th Knesset, June 2016, p.168

⁴⁶ Arik Bender (Maariv journalist), 19 July 2018, 'By a majority of 62 supporters against 55 opponents: The Nation-State law passes in the Knesset', at <http://www.maariv.co.il/news/politics/Article-652012>, accessed on 19 August 2018; Gil Hoffman (Jerusalem Post journalist), 23 July 2018, 'Druze minister threatened over Nation-State Law vote', at <https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Druze-minister-threatened-over-Nation-State-Law-vote-563223>, accessed on 19 August 2018.

Druze community instigated demonstrations against the Nation-State Law and submitted a petition to the Supreme Court. While they might have supported the ethnorepublican constitution of Israel, they could not stomach its ethnonational restructuring.

Elections as the structure of the fieldwork, but not its object of interest

Many Palestinians and other Arabs have stakes in questions of the common good: not only politicians, other public spokespeople, and their audiences. Focusing the evidential base on interactions with parliamentary candidates might appear to skew the research towards searching for discourse that could prove or disprove that an abstract 'democratic culture' exists in Israel or amongst Palestinians and other Arabs in Israel (Kalberg, 2000); rather more modestly and concretely, those speakers that I could record engaged discursively with ideas of the common good, but the material effect of their discourse came up against structural limitations, of which they were perfectly aware, and which were in fact the object of their engagement. Yet for the practical purposes of the fieldwork, I have treated the staging of elections, whether labelled democratic or not, as a structure that gives rise to certain types of political conversations, namely those exchanges between political 'elites' and curious, skeptical, enthusiastic or critical citizens (but not the indifferent ones), with more urgency and salience than when elections are not taking place.

Election campaigns are not the only possible settings for engagements with citizenship: as defined here, these happen in all political structures (albeit with varying mediatic or public exposure depending on the structural disposition towards freedom of expression). Where relevant, I shall reference conceptions of the common good to be claimed from Israeli institutions expressed by Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, even though they cannot vote for the Israeli parliament, due to differential legal statuses of the population under Israel's control. This citizenship, albeit under different legal regimes, is mediated by layers of geography, gendered life experience and community (Yuval-Davis, 1999); and one of the life experiences that Palestinians and other Arabs in the whole region of Israel/Palestine have in common, is negotiating with, around and against Israeli authorities. This negotiation, among other factors, is the experiential basis for their forms of citizenship. Those who came to the rallies and meetings where I conducted my fieldwork in Israel were those who took seriously the responsibility of casting a vote, or of deliberately not doing so,⁴⁷ and for them, the

⁴⁷ For a debate between advocates of voting and advocates of election boycott, see the video 'Complete video of the debate in Arara between supporters and boycotters of elections' فيديو كامل للمناظرة في عرعر بين مؤيد للانتخابات ومقاطعتها, in an article by Panet and Panorama, on 14 February 2015, at

voting was therefore a transformative experience. For those in the West Bank that I had interviewed in previous years, the transformative experience had been that of organising a trade union for Palestinian workers employed by Israelis, of protesting against arbitrary Israeli military restrictions on freedom of movement, and of withstanding the methods of prison guards and interrogators (Hawker, 2013). It was Israeli lawyers representing detainees from the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) who achieved a legal ban in principle on torture, and Palestinian lawyers from the OPT in the military courts who argued time and again that the ban on torture was being violated (PCATI, 2018). There is no objective standard by which the former, but not the latter, contributed to or inhibited 'democratic culture'. Many regard the imposition of military occupation on millions of people with no voting rights since 1967 in itself to be the undoing of Israel's claim to democracy, regardless of whether regular elections to a functional parliament are held, or whether the occupying military abides by international law (Lloyd, 2012). Some scholars see both legal regimes as elements of Israeli security control (Peled, 1992): two methods for successfully 'keeping the peace', as well as keeping the land and its resources in Israel's hands. And yet, the scholarship on Israeli democracy – and on language in Israel – tends to separate the two groups along the lines of legal statuses 'citizen' and 'civilian under occupation', and to consider that those with citizen status are protected by a legal 'wall' from the most egregious forms of exclusion (what some call 'politicide' (Kimmerling, 2010)) while at the same time this wall limits their room for manoeuvre in the ethnorepublican system. The 'protective wall' is exemplified by the fact that Palestinians and other Arabs in Israel can vote for political parties that extend the demand for equality, but these parties have no prospect of contributing to a government (Ghanem, 2001). Yet by using 'engagement with the common good' as the defining pillar of citizenship, rather than voting in parliamentary elections, this book can find its interest in debates and their discourse analysis rather than in participation rates and their sociological analysis.

Some of the experts on the politics of Israel note the consistently high public approval rating of the military echelons and the strong desire for 'decisive political leadership' (Kimmerling, 2001; Arian, 2005, p. 446). The conclusions drawn are that public opinion is malleable to the political will of elites and that the Israeli form of government is statist, albeit with regular multi-party elections for a legislative branch that has relative power (to impeach government officials, to oversee budgets, and to propose and pass legislation independently of the government). However, the Palestinian and other Arabs' 'containment' within the 'protective wall' of their citizenship means that they cannot

<http://panet.co.il/article/938464>, accessed 19 April 2015; see also Ella Heller, 16 March 2015, 'Who Doesn't Vote in the Israeli Knesset Elections?', at <https://en.idi.org.il/articles/5204>, accessed 12 March 2016.

fundamentally change the ethnorepublican limits of the debate on the common good (Peled, 1992). What this book brings to the political analysis is, first, documentation of a vibrant debate amongst Palestinians and other Arabs regarding the common good: their expressions of civic engagement are not limited by Israel's constitution. In particular, political scientists will be interested in the explicit material grounding of 'liberal' equality in concrete and local experiences of employment and housing (into which are subsumed other social relations such as generational and gendered redistribution of autonomous space and wealth (Kanaaneh & Nusair, 2010)). Second, many of the encounters that I present in this book had brought politicians, who inhabit a political – and to some degree, educational and social – elite, into contact with voters for whom politics is mediated by multiple layers of social experience (Yuval-Davis, 1999). I justify this book's focus on professional parliamentary politicians on the grounds that their special position in relations of power allows them relatively more agency to iterate, accommodate, avoid or challenge the forms of the 'common good', and to express these forms in discourse, including with regard to the institutional suppression and the communicative avoidance of Arabic, in ways that might have an effect on everyday linguistic practices. Because of the platforms they are on, the politicians are special foci of interest for their role in reflecting and co-creating the sociolinguistic habitus that I am describing in this book.

Building on and reframing the existing scholarship on Arabic in Israel

This book submits that within the Israeli ethnorepublican system, Arabic has not been equal, but rather was allocated to a group constituted as an ethnic minority, framed by the one-nation-one-language ideology, and in this structure, Arabic has been institutionally suppressed. Part of the scholarship on Arabic on Israel attends to this, especially in the guise of critiquing the realisation of the legal status of Arabic (Deutch, 2005; Hajjar, 2005; Morris, 2008), of language-educational policies (Amara & Mar'i, 2002; Abu Saad, 2006; Amara, 2007; Al-Haj, 1995; Mendel, 2014), and of examining linguistic landscapes where Hebrew is dominant (Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara, & Trumper-Hecht, 2006; Isleem, 2013; Suleiman Y. , 2004; Suleiman C. , 2018). This scholarship rarely records how people *speak* in practice, but rather privilege *writing* practices as the determined results of policies.

The ethnorepublican structure is challenged by two political forces, which are also in opposition to each other: on the one hand, what political scientists call the 'liberal' vision of constitutional equality, identified in the ideologies of the Palestinian political parties at least since the 1980s (Peled, 1992). The idea that this vision has in some ways already been accomplished, as evidenced in the sustained Arabic socialisation of, and cultural production by, Palestinians and other Arabs, has been reflected in the scholarship on language policy in the portrayal of Arabic as one of the 'minority

languages' of Israel (Ben-Rafael, 1994; Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999). This, the canonical scholarship, displays the liberal 'multicultural' picture that a macroanalysis in the field of sociology of language can paint. One study in this stream ventured into the field to note languages overheard during walks in the Old City of Jerusalem (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991): it was criticised for taking paths through the city that avoided Arabic-majority areas, and for portraying the different languages as a multiplicity of voices with equal claims to audibility, rather than a location of conflict (Suleiman Y. , 2004, p. 167). For those in the critical camp, who see the containment of Arabic to a 'minority' as the suppression of the indigenous language of Palestine, the liberal 'multicultural' picture is a political goal yet to be achieved – by enlarging the legal provisions in the ethnorepublican system that provide for formal equality – both as a means for, and a result of, de-colonisation. Decolonisation is a political idea of the 'common good' in itself, the linguistic corollary of which is the ousting of 'colonising' loanwords (Amara, 2010; Suleiman Y. , 2011; and see the popular Mare'i, 2013). Only in post-colonialism, according to this conception, can the bounties of multilingualism be potentially enjoyed. The new multilinguals with whom I am concerned in this book are, therefore, skipping a historical stage by enacting postcolonialism when it is not yet structurally there. By performing it, they are hoping to bring it about, like praying for rain by dancing under the sprinkler. The ground gets watered under the sprinkler, and if enough people prayed in this way, it would be as if it had rained, which would be better than scorched earth.

On the other hand, the political force of ethnonationalism pushes the political structure towards the exclusion of Palestinians and other Arabs from every avenue of citizenship, including the legal status bestowed in the form of Israeli passports, taxation duties, voting rights and access to some forms of social welfare: the Nation-State Law which is an ethnonationalist campaign has already closed the ethnorepublican legal window for Arabic as a (suppressed) official language. Anxieties about that push towards exclusion have been reflected in the sociolinguistic scholarship on contact-induced changes in Palestinian Arabic, especially when these changes (mostly in the form of loanwords) are compared to those Palestinians who have already been excluded from the Israeli system, and are therefore relatively less exposed to contact, following the methods of social dialectology (Amara M. , 1999; Cotter & Horesh, 2015; Amara M. , 2010; Rosenhouse & Brand, 2016). In the area of interactional sociolinguistics, there is not enough evidence of practices from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights on Palestinian and other Arab interactions with Jewish Israelis. From the traces of these interactions carried into sociolinguistic interviews in three refugee camps in the West Bank, it appears that both in Israeli workplaces and in Israeli prisons it is expected that Palestinian workers and detainees accept Hebrew as the communicative norm with the few Hebrew-

speakers in the roles of employers and guards that they interact with (Hawker, 2013).⁴⁸ One of these traces is the ubiquitous use of the Hebrew word *maḥsōm* or *maḥsūm* in the Arabic pronunciations, with the Arabised plural *maḥasīm*, for ‘checkpoint’, of which many Palestinian and other Arabs do not know that it is originally a Hebrew word (Hawker, 2013, pp. 58-64). Another trace is the Palestinians and other Arabs’ humorous use of the Hebrew word for ‘manager’, *menahēl*, in ironic situations, whereby the semantics of power are destabilized (Hawker, 2018b).

On the institutional side, Israeli military courts in the OPT conduct proceedings in Hebrew, and these are often poorly translated into Arabic, and sometimes not at all: translations that do happen, into Hebrew, are for the benefit of the institution (Hajjar, 2005, pp. 144-153).⁴⁹ Inadequate court translations also affect the Israeli criminal justice system, as it does most countries’ (Morris, 2008). These are continuations of the institutional suppression of Arabic, but involving Arabic speakers in much more precarious positions than the multilingual parliamentarians I focus on in this book, who have some degree of discursive agency to set new institutional parameters. One of the propositions of this book is that it is not politically adequate to position the Palestinians and other Arabs who are in the OPT as a kind of ‘untouched’ control group of sociolinguist experimentation, who express some sort of ‘purer’ Arabic, and represent a supposedly less confused alignment of national, cultural, and civic identities compared to those Palestinians and other Arabs who abide, linguistically contaminated and politically bifurcated, in Israel (Amara M. , 1999; Cotter & Horesh, 2015). Engagements with the common good as well as multilingual solutions to specific communicative problems are varied on both sides of the wall, to be analysed under the same, Israeli-controlled, sprawling and incoherent, political structure while reflecting the different degrees of exclusion and precarity. The most excluded and precarious population, at this historical juncture, are the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip, living since 2007 under Israel’s military blockade (Shane & Reynolds, 2010) and within Hamas’s sclerotic and violent jurisdiction (Baconi, 2018). And yet, enterprising former detainees have re-packaged the Hebrew knowledge they acquired in Israeli prisons as a skill to sell as a language-learning commodity:⁵⁰ they, too, are the new multilinguals.

⁴⁸ See Taghrid Shbeta, 16 May 2014, ‘You don’t speak Hebrew?’ , at <http://www.kavlaoved.org.il/> - - - /, accessed on 22 June 2018.

⁴⁹ Failing to ensure that a defendant understand the legal proceedings is a violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights art. 9 (1) and (2), and of clauses of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the case of persons under occupation (UNICEF, 2013).

⁵⁰ Abeer Ayyoub, 11 December 2015, ‘The Palestinian Ex-prisoner Who Teaches Hebrew in Gaza’, at <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-studying-hebrew-in-gaza-1.5436945>, accessed on 20 August 2018.

The triangle of politics that I rely on for analysis – ethnorepublican, ethnonationalist, and liberal – applies throughout the geographical area where Israeli control, and thus Hebrew presence, is instituted, but because politics has not always been explicitly incorporated in the sociolinguistic literature, sociolinguistic issues that are not directly causally related are conflated. The following paragraph, taken from a ‘descriptive’ chapter on the status of Standard Arabic in Israel, published in 2000 by a renowned Arabic dialectologist, exemplifies the conflation:

One may recall the intensively quoted words of the Arab Knesset member Zu‘bi, who expressed his concern back in 1966 about the disappearance of Arabic from use in the state of Israel. The facts referred to above [a list of Arabic cultural productions in Israel] hardly justify this pessimistic view, although Zu‘bi’s impressionistic evaluation may be judged somewhat differently after consideration of the role of Hebrew interference in the Arabic used by the Arab citizens of Israel (Talmon, 2000, p. 211).

These issues need sorting out. First, the sorting will be aided by a return to the evidence from the field that aligns pragmatic functions with Hebrew borrowing, codeswitching, and other contact phenomena that will presumably continue for as long as those functions are discursively useful to Arabic speakers (Henkin, 2015; Henkin-Roitfarb, 2011; Hawker, 2013). The practices pay only tangential regard for monolingual ideologies which are formulated at an elite level as an orthodoxy (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 848). Second, the sorting will benefit from a deconstruction of the appeal, in both scholarly and popular debates, of the paradigm of ‘language shift’ or ‘endangerment’, which seems to be either upheld or rejected depending on the political views of the scholar or other analyst (Hawker, 2018a). The way this book is organised will serve to demonstrate that Arabic can be both publicly suppressed as a matter of policy and in certain practices – and the Knesset of the mid-1960s, as alluded to in the quote above, will be shown to be an important time for the institutionalisation of this suppression – *and* safe from the ‘dangers’ of shift to Hebrew in other practices. In this context, the sensitivity of documenting the practices of contact phenomena (or, as typically described, Hebrew ‘interference’ or ‘penetration’ in Arabic (Amara, 2010; Mare'i, 2013) lies in its challenge to understandings of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict that rely on opposing monolingual national self-determinations. If the nation does not have its language, its basis for claim to self-determination is supposedly compromised. On the other hand, ethically committed liberal intellectuals have found another solution to the analysis of Arabic-Hebrew language contact: since it does not meet the criterion of parity expected by from a liberal political system, the language use could not be termed ‘bilingualism’ at all; see:

Yet these trends [of Hebrew proficiency alongside the maintenance of Arabic] do not indicate an emergent bilingualism in Israel. There is little bilingualism in this officially bilingual country. Arabic and Hebrew coexist as dual languages, as paired languages, as opposed languages. Although many Palestinians speak Hebrew fluently, none do so at home. Nowhere do Arab children speak to their parents in Hebrew. Nowhere do Arab children struggle to retain fluency in the ancestral language. And in very few places do Palestinians switch back and forth between Arabic and Hebrew within the same conversation. (Lefkowitz, 2004, p. 149)

Though I agree with the summarising observations listed in this quote, the analysis 'there is little bilingualism' seems again to presuppose a causality between bilingualism in Israel and Arabic contraction. A reframed analysis needs to align politics, economics and historiography with the rich linguistic ethnographic findings that the scholarship does provide, and incorporate this into sociolinguistic work on language ideologies and negotiations of identity. What the analysis in this book introduces, is the integration of each text into the contextual power dynamics explicitly related to inherited socio-political systems, and in so doing, the analysis not only accepts flexible notions of bilingualism, but also moves on from that frame to a multilingual one, under conditions of late capitalism. None of the language policies, ideologies, or the linguistic practices described in this book are particularly new to the discipline of sociolinguistics; what is different, is putting them together in the political logic presented here, in a context where ongoing conflict, projected onto monolingualism, has plagued the analysis, including for those scholars who seek a liberal or postcolonial political solution.

The first chapter looks at the language choices between Hebrew and Arabic on the political stages that the Knesset provides. For the section on the first (formative) years of the Knesset, I studied the records of public addresses of Arabic-speaking politicians, and of the early arrangements for translation and interpretation in the Knesset. This historical section points to the swift institutional suppression of Arabic which took hold in the late 1950s and early 1960s, in circumstances of heavy-handed mobilisation of immigrant Jewish populations, the securitisation of the Palestinian and other Arab populations, and the colonisation of the lands that they had depended on (Zureik, 1979; Lustick, 1980). Continuing with the theme of Arabic speakers on political stages, the first chapter will also look at recent years' challenges to the institutional suppression of Arabic. These rhetorical strategies of increased audibility are sometimes defiant, and sometimes subtle, expressions of ethnic

or national difference. Jewish Israeli politicians' deployment of securitised 'Israeli Arabic' serve as discursive strikes against Palestinian and other Arab political arguments.

The second chapter looks at how the bilingual habitus manages, and struggles with, situations in which the insider-Arabic and outsider-Hebrew language choices are not clearcut. The evidence is taken from the fieldwork situations in which both Jewish Israeli and Palestinian and other Arab speakers were present, as bearers of their relations to institutions of power and as individuals with linguistic capabilities and comprehension needs. From the patterns of language choices made in every one of these 'mixed' situations, I infer that a tacit principle operates, as an expression of implicit sociolinguistic knowledge that organises practices in accordance with the habitus (Bourdieu, 1972, p. 202) that had formed among Palestinians and other Arabs in the first years of Israeli rule. According to this principle, Arabic is preferably not used at all to address non-Arabs (constructed interactionally), not even in cases of uncertain identification of an interlocutor, and then secondarily Arabic is used with explanations and interpretations, and thirdly it is signposted and justified. I call this 'the principle of Arabic avoidance in "mixed" company'.

The third chapter looks at in-group situations, in which there are only Palestinians and other Arabs amongst the interlocutors, and a range of multilingual repertoires is mobilised for rhetorical effect and discursive authority. Styles for claiming discursive authority include but are not limited to: the repertoires involving 'double-monolingual' code alternation, and bilingual codeswitching and borrowing. Other repertoires draw on religious discourse and Educated Spoken Arabic (Mitchell, 1978). This chapter also touches upon another facet of the scholarship on Arabic-Hebrew contact, in relation to communicative strategies for what has been called 'inter-cultural dialogue': a phenomenon associated with the 1990s diplomatic negotiations between the PLO and the Israeli government, whereby meetings between Jewish Israelis and Palestinians and other Arabs were orchestrated and then analysed for communicative successes and failures in the interest of 'peace'.

The fourth chapter starts by summarising what we know: that the expressed ideologies betray monolingual anxieties about bilingual language contact, but the varied practices are confidently displayed in alignment with multilingual aspirations. There is a conceptual lapse between practices which have evolved without ideological formulation, and ideologies to which practices cannot conform (Bourdieu, 1972, pp. 201-202). What I consider, in this chapter, is what socio-economic articulation works with this new political voice. The role of consumerism will be examined, as *the* hegemonic ideology which co-opts multilingualism and undermines civic engagement. In conclusion,

the socially and historically specific experiences of citizenship, captured in the vignettes for the book, will be mapped onto the sociolinguistics/politics analytical triangle: bilingual/ethnorepublican – monolingual/ethnonational – multilingual/liberal. The sociolinguistic approaches to ‘class’ will be considered, moving away from the categorisation of socioeconomic status but accepting that constructed distributions of precarity can become part of a new analytically useful definition. The idea that in late capitalism, the service and knowledge economies predispose speakers to repackaging language skills as economic and political resources will be expressed in the proposition that language itself becomes a ‘means of production’. The institutional suppression of Arabic and reactions to that suppression, the principle of Arabic avoidance in ‘mixed’ company, and the sociolinguistic practices of recourse to multilingual repertoires when agentic discursive space is created, are analytical threads that will run through the book.