

The Palestinian Arab In/Outsiders - Media and Conflict in Israel

Review of Book by Mustafa Kabha and Dan Caspi

By [Jim Miles](#)

Global Research, January 17, 2012

Palestine Chronicle 17 January 2012

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

A Review of *The Palestinian Arab In/Outsiders - Media and Conflict in Israel*. by Mustafa Kabha and Dan Caspi. Vallentine Mitchell, London/Portland, 2011.

“The Palestinian Arab In/Outsiders” is an apparently comprehensive text book on the newspapers and journals published in Palestine, and more specifically after the nakba, within the Israeli green line. It provides extensive references to the many papers and journals, daily, weeklies, successful and not so successful, that have played a role in Palestine/Israel.

It recognizes difficulties of publishing efforts within a country that accepts the ideal of democracy, but that at the same time, controls to varying degrees the contents of the news. It also recognizes the important difference between works published ‘for’ the Arab population used to ‘normalize’ their actions and thoughts, and works published ‘by’ the Arab population which contained more emphasis on problems with the Palestinian people. The latter also contained an element of ‘normalization’, as the Arab papers increased their circulation by publishing more than political news but also sections on sports, fashion, and other entertainment items.

Part of the story is management of the minority Arabs. For the early state, the “establishment...recognized the significance of the media in Arab society,” serving as a mediator “between the political elite and the population and could help enlist the masses in support of vital national goals, as typical of any young state.” Recognized at the same time was “the fact that Israeli national goals were irrelevant as far as the Arab minority was concerned.”

Initially the Arab minority was seen as a “security concern,” and it “still is the essential attitude of the Jewish majority in Israel toward the Arab minority. It has not seen any radical transformation...since it was first formed.” While claiming democracy as its ethos, “the suspicious and hostile relationship between the two communities made it difficult for the majority to respect the rights of the minority from the very beginning.”

While outlining the various publications and the people associated with them, the authors identify problems with Arab publications. Along with Israeli censorship came ‘self censorship,’ assuming a guarded approach to ideas and language in order not to be directly censored. As the population had been largely disrupted during the nakba, many of the educational skills needed for strong journalism were not available. A related problem was the Arab preference at times for the Hebrew publications which were considered more

reliable and professional. Money was another obvious factor limiting the success of the work, and as mentioned above, by normalizing their content with entertainment news, the papers were able to attract more advertising money. The distribution of the papers presented problems as transportation and ability for widespread readership was limited by access to smaller outside communities.

Changes in the context of the publications occurred as Palestinian nationalism increased, with noticeable differences between Israeli Arabic publications and those of the occupied territories. A very few advocated for peaceful coexistence, but the majority discussed problems with integration/non-integration, land sales, land confiscations, ideology, and the ever present racism.

In their conclusions the authors say, that for the Israeli controlled Arab press, "A careful assessment indicates that if the official policy was, and remains, to neutralize the Arab minority in Israel from the Arab world and to shape public opinion through the two dailies [al-Anba and al-Yawm] - these attempts proved unsuccessful." At the same time the Arab press acts in a manner similar to the Arab residents of Israel, as it "exists modestly and conducts itself cautiously, overshadowed by the continuous regional conflict."

One of the intentions of the "The Palestinian Arab In/Outsiders" is that "by following the development of Arabic media it is possible to assess the situation of the Palestinian minority in Israel and their tension-laden relationship with the Jewish majority." Certainly they have achieved that goal but for a general reader there is little analysis and comparison of the papers contents and arguments - that is, while the papers are enumerated and categorized with brief descriptions of their political leanings, only rarely do the authors compare the language and lexicon of what one paper argues as compared to another within a specific historical incident.

What I have in mind here is the work of Chomsky and Herman and their work "Manufacturing Consent," which looks at the language used and its context within specific historical events and how that has been used to change readers perceptions and support elitist beliefs. Similarly Marda Dunsky's work "Pens and Swords" discusses the shaping of ideology within specific historical contexts and their reporting. "Israel-Palestine on Record" by Friel and Falk examines how the New York Times "Misreports" on Middle East issues.

Hopefully the authors, now that they have enumerated and discussed in general the Arab press in Israel, would be able to compare and analyse the reporting in that area as compared to what is said by the Israeli Hebrew press (in particular Ha'aretz and Yedioth Ahronoth), which at times is much more outspoken towards its own elites than outside press. Similarly, a comparison to the outside press, western/orientalist interpretations and other Arabic reporting and interpretations, how the language is modified or changed, how the perceptions are changed through that reporting, would be - hopefully - of more interest to the general reader, and certainly for anyone interested in seeing the different perspectives of the Arab/Palestinian situation in the Middle East. Other issues that could be examined more deeply is the intimidation by various means of the journalists working within the state.

While one does get an overview of the problems and abilities of the Arab press in Israel, its lengthy listing and enumerating of the many papers and journals that came and went is not the kind of reading to encourage much general discussion. Its list price, in the range I

associate with a university text, also makes the work prohibitive for the general reader.

Jim Miles is a Canadian educator and a regular contributor/columnist of opinion pieces and book reviews for The Palestine Chronicle. Miles' work is also presented globally through other alternative websites and news

publications.

The original source of this article is Palestine Chronicle

Copyright © [Jim Miles](#), Palestine Chronicle, 2012

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Jim Miles](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca