

Perceived Security Threat From Within Crime and Political Control: A Case Study of Palestinians in Israel

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Abstract

This article seeks to identify ways in which Israeli laws, police and politicians make Palestinians in Israel to be a security threat. The broader context in which the construction took place (inequality, separation and control) is discussed in this article. The article shows that the major method of the political control is the influential use of laws to criminalize hostility and antagonism, while the police act in order to strengthen its control. Every main law enforcing decision related to this community was made with political considerations in mind. The article also finds that a political crime is whatever the system reacts to as a political crime and the context in which the act takes on a political character. Consequently, the statistical classifications of arrest tell as much about the social construction of events as about what is happening. The figures offer an indication of the changes that have taken place in the population of arrests due to security worries. Visions of Israeli politicians, police and Palestinian leaders, about crime as a security threat, are presented. The article concludes that as long as the Israel-Palestine conflict continues, the cycle of criminalisation of politics and politicisation of criminals will also continue.

Keywords: Crime, politics, Palestinians, control, security, threat.

Introduction

The article uses the term "Palestinians in Israel" as a concept in many cases. This means there is a demographic group that is less dominantly owned politically, as a result of the demographic and political transformation in 1948. About Palestinians in Israel, statics (CBS 2017) show that out of a total of 8,628,600 Israeli population in 2016, some 1,797,300 (that is 20.8%) were counted as "Arabs". This figure is made up of 1,422,400 citizens (17.6% of all Israeli citizens), and 344,700 non-citizens (about 323,700 in East Jerusalem and about 21,000 in the Golan Heights), who have been subject to the Israeli law since 1967.

The interest of this article is to explain how and why the Palestinians in Israel have become subject to an increased state control and public discourse, which links them to an imaginary

security threat. Particularly, the focus is to describe and analyze the criminalization of Palestinian lives, within the framework of security, threat and control. The article tries to give the most general essentials to the subject of social control by emphasising the control practices, which are implemented through the police.

The article uses the concept of "social control" (Berger et al., 2005; Gabbidon, 2010), the specific "minority threat hypotheses" (Blalock, 1967; Dollar, 2014; Liska, 1992), and the "suspect community thesis" (Cherney & Murphy, 2016). As I argue, the Israeli authorities (such as police and politicians) consider the Palestinians as an endangered and doubtful population, and in turn, they practice control actions, which intent is to reduce the perceived threat.

Aims and Scope

The central aim of this article is to explore the relationships among crimes, politics and Palestinians. The secondary aims are: (1) to explore how the Israeli authorities construct laws in order to criminalize Palestinians; (2) to provide main trends and patterns of criminality and providing some explanation about the link between criminal statistics and policing; (3) to describe and analyze police and politicians reactions toward the issue of crime and its control; (4) highlight the public domain of crime as a political issue. In general, data on crime and its control are drawn from a wide range of sources and methods. In the current case, the political sensitivity made access problematic to certain sources. Consequently, the present study is based primarily on documents, such as police statistics on arrests, governmental publications and newspapers reports from the period of 2011-2016. However, it must be noted that the documents directly quoted throughout the analysis are only representative of the statements and practices of the different parties (i.e. police, Israeli politicians, Palestinian leaders).

Background

The article uses several theoretical approaches, which can explore the linkage between crime, politics, control, threat and security. The shaping concept that runs through the article is that of "social control". Cohen (1985: 1) has put forward a definition by saying that social control is "the organized ways in which societies responds to behaviour and people it regards as deviant, problematic, worrying, threatening, troublesome or undesirable in some way or another". This definition explores how an activity comes to be constructed as a "crime, and it

comprises of the considerations of how the agents of control perceive specific individuals or their behaviour, how they choose modes of control, and how they produce crimes classifications. Thus, the term has a political meaning, in which the organized apparatus of the state operates to preserve its power and definitions of criminality among specific groups.

Following the definition of Cohen, many studies have highlighted the role of power groups in the control of other social groups (Chambliss, 2001; Gabbidon, 2010). These studies underline the role of foreign considerations in explaining the nature of control practices. By using this approach, it is relevant to point-out the concept of “threat hypothesis”. The approach of Blalock (1967) claims that as the relative size of a minority group increases, members of the majority group perceive growing economic and political threats. In particular, the political threat occurs as the minority members improve their political power, which causes the majority to feel their domination is threatened.

Scholars (e.g. Brad et al., 2014; Eitle et al., 2002; King & Wheelock, 2007; Stoltenberg, 2002) provided a comprehensive review of the threat hypothesis literature, and underline that the state’s control measures suppose to decrease the minority imaginary dangers. In this context, there are two important terms, 'enemy' and 'threat, that represent the border relationship between exclusion and rule, inside and outside (Lajous, 2016). In addition, the control systems impose a model of policing that emphasizes the pursuit of “enemies within” and approves mechanisms (such as constructing of laws and practicing of mass surveillance) as responses to the threat perception among the majority (Earl, 2004). In this context, control policy is not naturally given, but is carefully designed by politicians and police officers, to deal with particular groups, which are considered as dangerous, threatening, enemies and so on.

By emphasizing terms such as “threat”, “enemy” and “control”, it is relevant to mention the concept of security. Here, the interest is to define the meaning of security threat, in order to understand how Israeli parties subsequently make the Palestinians a security threat. Buzan et al. (1998: 29) stated that security is “a self-referential practice, because, it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue not necessarily because it is a real existential threat, but because the issue is presented as such”. Researchers (Balzacq, 2011; Breen-Smyth, 2014) argue that viewing an issue as a securitized one marks a failure to deal with it in space of the normal politics. In addition, it should also be possible to understand concepts like crime,

security threat, enemy and control through the term “suspect community”. Breen-Smyth (2014: 231) claims that a suspect community is not just one that is addressed through control policing and regulations, but is also one that is “imagined” (i.e., socially constructed by members of non-suspect groups). Accordingly, a suspect community can be understood as a built through mechanisms, organized by the state, to certify national or state security.

The above approaches have not received much attention in Israel (Cohen, 1989a; Cohen, 1989b; Korn, 2000; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015). As Cohen (1989a: 7) states: “the direction of Israeli criminology remains pragmatic, correctionalist, and atheoretical. Under the guise of scientific objectivity, there is an unquestioning acceptance of dominant state ideology. Criminologists have successfully reproduced positivism's most elegant sleight-of hand: being neutral and serving the state. The Israeli Arab population was almost totally ignored. There is little interest in understanding how general criminological ideas were affected by the national context”. This article is meant to go beyond the current brief conceptual framework and consider the contemporary uses of “criminality”. The article proposes a different interpretation of criminality and politics.

The Socio-political Context: Separation, Inequality and Control

It is necessary to study the socio-political context of the Palestinians in Israel. Thus, this is because issues of separation, inequality, and control affect the subject of crime and criminality. When the state of Israel was created in 1948, about 150,000 of the Palestinian inhabitants managed to remain within the borders of the new state and were given Israeli citizenship, while 750,000 of them were expelled (ALDE, 2013). This transformation reflects rapid social, cultural, legal and political changes. By the end of 1948, the Palestinians, as a minority, were considered as a security concern and were viewed as part of the enemy. Consequently, the Military Government, with its restrictions and regulations, was the most visible manifestation of control during the years 1948- 1966 (Bäumel, 2011; Degani, 2015; Rudnitzky, 2014).

The literature (e.g. Adalah, 2011; Cohen, 1989a; Hassanein, 2016; Jabareen, 2011; Milligan, 2011) accepts three features, which mostly characterize the Palestinians in Israel:

(1) Separation: The first is the degree to which the Palestinians are separated – geographically, culturally and politically from the Jewish community. They live distinctly in

towns and villages, attend isolated schools, speak a different language and belong to religious and cultural mores diverse from those of the nearby Jewish population. They do not go to military; they are not accepted freely if they want to live in Jewish areas and they are omitted from jobs in many “sensitive related” works (Molavi, 2009). For instance, several researchers (Fenster, 2003; Yiftachel, 2009) state that from 1965, Israel still dominate space through ethnic segregation, which permits the implementation of different policies in general and different enforcement of laws in particular.

(2) Inequality: The second is the degree to which Palestinians are unequal from the Jews in terms of resources, influence and position. Some researchers (Balzacq, 2011; Darweish, 2010) conclude that this population is clearly isolated and unequal, are deprived of access to influence positions, are worse off in all measures of socio-economic position, and they are distinguished in the preceding of social state services. Several scholars (Cohen, 1989a; Fenster, 2003; Mossawa, 2016; Zureik, 1988) argue that these comprehensive forms of inequality are compound and intensely deep-rooted in the ideological character of Israel state.

(3) Control: The third feature is the degree to which the Palestinians are exposed to a more wide and rigorous degree of control than the Jews (Cohen, 2010; Molavi, 2009; Kretzmer, 1990). Other researchers (Cook, 2010; Panchenko, 2009; Stevens, 2011; Zureik, 2001) resolve that from the foundation of Israel, its policy contains methods of control such as legal restrictions on political organisations, self-expression, mass surveillance and arrests. Cohen (1989a) underlines that the motives of this policy is extremely rooted in the history of the state and the identification of Palestinians as part of a perceived antagonistic group.

The element of control is the most relevant to patterns of crime. In this context, there are a number of varied means, which demonstrate the linkage between control and crime: (1) A major technique of political control is the active use of the law to criminalize protest and opposition; (2) The specific question of policing is applicable to explore how the control techniques touch the construction of political and non-political forms of crimes; and (3) The question of the causal link is significant here in order to study how the political position of Palestinians affect their likelihood to be recognized as criminals. Now, this study attempts to look more specifically at the role of Israeli laws in shaping the linkage between criminality and Palestinians.

The Politics of Regulations

It is important to note that control policy also covers the area of crime, where the official authorities aim to configure and enforce laws. As earlier mentioned, Palestinians in Israel are viewed as a security threat since 1948, and over 50 Israeli civilian laws and rules which give extensive powers to authorities already exist (IMEU, 2001; McBurney, 2014; Shehadeh & Iragi, 2013; Zureik et al., 2011).

The Israeli formal character, as a Western form of social democracy, has meant a definite blindness to accurate those features of the society that condense legal equality. There are, at least, three challenging situations, which may limit this equality: (1) the narrowed concept of the state as Jewish and henceforward the specific legal status of minority groups; (2) The methods of the continuous illegal occupation of the West Bank; and (3) the continuing existence of the Emergency Regulation which apparently putdown most doctrines of justice. The current article focuses on the question of how laws in Israel still enable such processes as separation, inequality and political control. Such interpretations differentiate between three aspects (Cohen, 1989a; Kretzmer, 1990): (1) the rare visibly discrimination laws (such as the law of return); (2) legislation, which enables hidden forms of discrimination (for instance, rights affected by military services); and (3) legislation that permits certain forms of recognized discrimination through the legal standing of institutions.

In order to answer the question of how laws affect the Palestinians in Israel, we have to differentiate between two roles: (1) Laws as facilitators of discrimination: Cohen [1989b] argues that if persons in the society see the law as illegitimate, they would be free to violate it (and rationalize the violation in ideological expressions). This practice might happen through an entire society or else be limited to particular groups, which view the practice of the law in a fair-minded and unjust manner against them. (2) Laws as instruments of political control. The article attempts to understand the context in which police and politicians use regulations and laws for political ends. Here, there are two strains of particular theoretical significance to the query of crime. The first is the way of assertion of full civil rights to Palestinians, as individuals is not extended to the protection of group rights. The second related tension is between granting formal civil rights, and not supposing that Palestinians could be trusted as fully faithful citizens of the state (Cook, 2014; Bassam, 2015; Bathia, 2012). Adalah (2017)

makes a Discriminatory Laws Database (DLD) in order to illustrate some examples that reflect the instrumental control through the law, such as the Emergency Regulations.

The examples of the way in which the spirit of the Emergency Regulations influences the control of Palestinians are the “Emergency Powers (Detention, 1979)”, and “The Criminal Procedure (Powers of Enforcement, Detentions, 1996)” that has been used to target protests, suppresses political activities, and makes use of mass arrests. In addition, the “Nakba Bill, 2011” has been used against persons marking Nakba Day as a day of mourning for the formation of the State of Israel (Fargeon & Rotem, 2016; IMEU, 2011).

In 2014, following mass protests, the Israeli authorities imposed the so-called law “Fines on parents of stone-throwers” law (Amendment No. 20 to the Youth Care and Supervision Law), which allows direct fines to be imposed on the parents of minors convicted of committing an offense listed in the Israeli Penal Code. It offers the offense of stone throwing as an example, and this fact, gives rise to doubts that it is arranged in a discriminatory way against the parents of Palestinian children (Adalah, 2015a). The meaning of this law is that the family is perceived as a security threat. Another example is the “Stop-and-Frisk” (Amendment No. 5 to the Power for Maintaining Public Security Law) which expands the powers of the police to stop and frisk individuals. The law also allows police to frisk any person present in an area declared temporarily as a stop-and-frisk zone by police, for reasons including potential security threats’ (Adalah, 2016a).

The most recent example is the 2016 “The Counter-Terrorism bill”, which contains broad and vague definitions of “terrorism” and “terrorist organizations”, which may be exploited by the law enforcement authorities to criminalize political actions of Palestinian citizens in Israel. The bill also establishes new criminal offenses such as public expressions of support or empathy for “terror organizations” (Adalah, 2016b). These examples clarify the role of the laws as means of criminalization. Israel produced legislation framed in universal terms, but intended exclusively to control Palestinians (Balzacq, 2011; Jabareen, 2011; Zulaikha, 2009).

Criminality of Palestinians as an Official Agenda

The current analytical framework is based on the understanding that the police work is seen in political terms rather than as a neutral matter of law and its enforcement (White, 2010).

This matter means that every major policing decision that affects Palestinians in Israel (i.e. opening police stations, deployment and recruitment) has been made with political considerations in mind. The tendency to see the police as an agency of suppression is tempted by the much higher profile of the security services in the internal security realm (Kubovich, 2016).

From the viewpoint of the Israeli authorities (Government of Israel, 2016), the apparent sensitive position of Palestinians in Israel demands considerations at every level of planning (such as resources and employment) and enlarges the scope of policing. In particular, police sub-districts and local stations, in towns and villages, cover most of the Palestinian's community. Mostly, Arab/ Jewish separation is visible at the sub-districts (The Israel Police, 2012). This means that geographic separation of the Palestinian's areas allows official decisions to be realised. In addition, the criminality of Palestinians is one of the core issues of policy during the years. Police committees were established and called for new strategies (i.e., the establishment of new stations) and a greater investment in resources (The Israel Police, 1988). Researchers (e.g. Abu-Baker, 2016; Rouhana, 2001) explain that the background of these committees (during the years 1980 and 1985) didn't reflect a particular rise in crimes figures, but a general perception that the Palestinian community is "getting out of state control", as a result of the perceived growth of Palestinization on the one hand and Islamization on the other hand.

Another important development is the establishing of the "Orr Commission" (in 2003) which aimed to identify the causes behind the violent clashes between the police and Palestinians in Israel during the October 2000 events (Adalah, 2015b; Haaretz, 2003). Consequently, the Israeli government decided to intensify policing "by building new units and providing opportunities for Arab involvement in police manpower" and approving activities, units and methods (such as the unit known as "mista'aravim"- Secret agents disguised as Arabs and undercover agents) (Cook, 2009). Furthermore, the Public Security Ministry and politicians created an official discussion, particularly from 2012, which was mainly a consequence of the police perception that Palestinians in Israel lead statistics in violent crimes and murder (Efraim, 2012; Sanders, 2012). Subsequently, the police have justified new surveillance practices, such as "secret police" and following of Palestinians' Facebook posts (Halabi, 2011; Panchenko, 2009; Kane, 2016).

In 2013, the “State Comptroller’s Report” stated, “Only a portion of the ‘Orr Commission’ recommendations were carried out” (Gerlitz & Asaqla, 2013). Accordingly, the police said, “in 2012 they have expanded the number of police across the Arab sector” (Hartman, 2013). By mid-2014, the war on Gaza broke out and the Eastern Jerusalem protests began because of kidnapping a Palestinian’s teenager by a group of Jews. The protests spread to the Palestinians areas in Israel (Booth & Eglash, 2014). Also, in October 2015, the “Al-Aqsa uprising” broke out. Demonstrations and protests spread all over the country and they have intensified in the Palestinian cities in Israel. Therefore, the Israeli government choice was taken in response to these actions “the Israeli government will no longer tolerate an Arab-Israeli population which does not answer to the country’s laws” (Forman, 2016). Beside these events, the Israeli elections of 2013 and 2015 results created a political trend on the rise of groups (which are members of the governing coalition and the ruling parties) who create political campaigns against Palestinians in Israel (Eldar, 2015).

It may be said that the events, which were developed during the years, have determined the nature of the relationship between the state and its Palestinian citizens. This leads to the final and forms the basis for police involvement, which shows any hint of Palestinian nationalist organization or “security” crimes. This is because these actions are perceived as an existential threat to Israel. The well-organized system of special methods of policing and surveillance insures that the slightest evidence of political threat will induce a quick police reaction.

Waves of Arrests

The mass arrests, in general, mirror the security context in Israel. They tell us more about concerns and variations in the control funnel. This has been particularly apparent during period of political protests. It is possible to determine waves of arrests during the years 2011-2015, especially in March 2012, in July 2014 (the wars on Gaza), Al-Quds (Jerusalem) Intifada in July 2014, and Al-Aqsa Mosque protests in October 2015. Here, the article gives some examples, which show, in brief, the events of mass arrests.

The most visible type of political activity is connected with large public demonstrations in 2013. These events are important in resulting to mass arrests. The following example shows the police reaction to political acts: “some 1,500 protesters were arrested between July 2 and August 6. The demonstrations that took place in Israeli towns and cities within the Green Line were organized and mostly non-violent, and were attended by members of parliament

and dignitaries. Nevertheless, the police didn't view them this way” (Hasson & Kubovich, 2014). Another best-known example was in 24 June 2013, where the Israeli Knesset accepted the Praver-Begin Bill, for the mass expulsion of the Arab Bedouin community in the Naqab desert in the south of Israel. Accordingly, thousands of demonstrators took to the streets in Haifa, Hura and Jerusalem to protest against the Praver-Begin Bill” (Adalah, 2013).

In July 5, 2014, clashes between Israeli police and Palestinian protestors erupted in Jerusalem and northern Israel after the death of an Arab teenager who was burned to death by Jews. From the Associated Press reports, protesters threw rocks at passing cars, burned tires and lobbed rocks and firebombs at police, while police struck back with tear gas and stun grenades (Frizell, 2014). A Journalist summarized the trend: “Since the beginning of the events and during the past two weeks, 175 suspects have been arrested in the Northern district (121 adults, 54 minors) on suspicion of various offenses, such as: illegal gathering, stone-throwing, causing damage to property, jeopardizing human life on a transportation route, assaulting police officers and more” (Sheizaf, 2017).

Other notable events include the protests and demonstrations that happened on July 2015. According to Adala (The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel), the High number of arrests marks the largest wave of imprisonment of Palestinian demonstrators in Israel. Since October 2000 events, approximately 128 Palestinian citizens of Israel, including 30 children, remained in detention one week after the beginning of popular demonstrations in many Arab towns and villages across the country” (Adalah, 2015c). Most offences associated with these public events were classified as “offence against the public order”, but will also enter categories of violence if there are “attacks on police” or stone throwing.

The month of October 2015 has witnessed a large spike in arrests of Palestinians. According to the available data, the police tend to disperse demonstrations and/or threaten to disperse them without any reason....For example, in a protest in Akka (a mixed northern city) on 14 October 2015, some 50 participants carried signs and protested government policies in East Jerusalem. Though this demonstration did not require a permit in order for it to take place, the police nevertheless dispersed the protest and arrested 22 of the 50 participants (Bassam, 2016).

Offences connected with membership of banned organizations have been important since the creation of Israel. The best example, during the years 2011-2015, was in November 2015.

The Israeli security cabinet outlawed the northern branch of the Islamic Movement (the largest Arab movement in Israel), based on claims made by the Israel police and the Shin Bet saying that the movement had close relations with Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. The movement was legally outlawed and, accordingly, the Israeli police filed indictments against a group of Palestinian citizens in Israel related to their affiliation with the banned Islamic Movement. According to Israeli media outlets, the indictments include claims accusing them of planning to carry out attacks against Israelis in the Negev, supporting the enemy during wartime, and being involved in activities related to the Islamic Movement (Palinfo.com, 2017). In statement like this, the police makes Palestinians, as a hostile community to the state. Subsequently, the police led several considered steps that turned the movement into a security threat, which included searching the movement's offices and arresting its workers.

The Construction of the “Non-Jews” Crime Statistics

The crime figures are constructed completely and recorded by the police. Police, politicians and journalists use these records as truthful measures of “criminality”. Indeed, there are several threats of working with these official criminal statistics. Usually, the Israeli police do not provide detailed data about crime in the published annual reports. The Police prepared the current data (in Table 1 and Table 2) in response to the request of the Movement for Freedom of Information (Rotem, 2016). This data contains three forms of acts: “purer” cases of political crime, various degrees of “disputed” political crime, and “conventional” crime. The figures, in Table 1, show that the police made 263,985 arrests for whom were classified as “non-Jews” (about 60.0% of the total arrests). In general, the most common offences among the “non-Jews” arrests were “against state security” and “against public order”. The type of crimes they were arrested for, however, demonstrates an even greater discrete difference: 91.7% of the arrests for the total “purer” political crimes classified as security offenses were for “non-Jews”. In addition, about 57.6% of the total arrests for disputed political crime (against public order, against person's life and badly harm offences) were for “non-Jews”.

Table 1. Arrests by offences and group of population, 2011-2015

	Jews		Non-Jews*	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total	179,575	100.00	263,985	100.00
Against Security	3,055	1.70	33,770	12.79
Against public order	67,857	37.79	100,390	38.03
Against person's life	1,612	0.90	3,920	1.48
Badly harm	36,294	20.21	39,599	15.01
Sexual offences	5,146	2.87	3,126	1.18
Moral offences	15,968	8.89	10,804	4.09
Against Property	40,959	22.80	53,639	20.32
Fraud offences	3,190	1.78	6,909	2.62
Others**	5,494	3.06	11,828	4.48

Source: Source: Israel police, the national public complaints, 2016. * Non Jews: Palestinians inside Israel, residents from the West Bank and foreign residents. ** Economic and licensing offences.

As it stands, Table 2 shows a clear trend. From 2012, there is an increase in the absolute number of political arrests. In particular, there has been an indisputable increase in related security offences (such as rock throwing, against Emergency Regulation and unlawful association membership) and in offences “against the public order” (such as violation of law of entry to Israel, participation in demonstration and attack of police officers).

Table 2. Arrests of Non-Jews, by ‘specific offences’ 2011-2015

Offences	Total	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Against Security, Thereof:	33,770	-	-	-	-	-
Stone throwing	6329	857	1,239	1,120	1,377	1,736
Petrol bomb throwing	2,251	130	384	497	651	589
Against Emergency Regulation	4,972	296	1,006	918	1,373	1,379
Possession of illegal weapons	697	2	28	132	257	278
Unlawful association	5,223	293	1,114	870	1,379	1,567
membership	287	36	57	45	55	94
Spying and treason	426	34	78	27	123	164
Incitements						
Against public order, Thereof:	100,390	-	-	-	-	-
Participation in demonstration	3,940	463	441	545	1,466	1,025
Violation of law of entry to Israel	35,699	6,224	7,806	6,919	7,297	7,453
Assault of police officers	22,360	4,063	4,071	4,265	5,172	4,789
Against person’s life, Thereof:	3,920	-	-	-	-	-
Rock-throwing for nationalistic purposes	709	8	24	22	244	411
Badly harm, Thereof:	39,599	-	-	-	-	-
Serious injury	11,670	1,817	2,048	2,145	2,752	2,908

Source: Israel police, the national public complaints, 2016.

The data trend underlines the massive use of political laws to criminalize the Palestinian population during periods of protest. In general terms, thousands of Palestinians from Israel and from the west Bank, between the years 2011-2015, were processed as serious offenders for offences that in effect did not apply to Jews.

Within this context, documenting the criminal statistics is problematic and ambiguous. We must know what to count as a political crime. There is undercounting for example, attacks on police or acts, which occur in a political context but are recorded as common crime. No technical solution can be found in the legal records themselves- each classification is politically constructed and hence open to dispute. There is no way of knowing from these official data whether an act (such as burning a car or serious injury) has a political meaning or not. Basically, there are four measures, which help us to determine whether a specific act can be defined as a political offence:

(1) Criminal Law: In Israel, the term which the police use is “offences against the state” or “security offences”, which covers apparently activities such as treason, incitement to rebellion and contact with enemy agents etc. These offences are measured as such by the criminal law. The pure problem of the Israeli criminal laws that there is a set of offences (such as murder, kidnapping, attack) might be carried out for political reasons, but not be classified as such by the criminal code, or recorded as such by the police. The legal index and the police statistics do not provide a clear classification of the offences that are shaped by political ends.

(2) Intentions: The failing of the legal aspect, to cover all types of offences, have led to the subjective definition. This criteria stresses that political offenders are offenders who asserts to have political ends rather than personal ends. In this case, the offender’s requests are to claim an ideological principle to confirm the offence. This claim could be reinforced by such measure as the offender’s known membership of a structured political group, the obvious use of a political belief system, and the willingness to take full responsibility. However, in some cases, the offender’s claims cannot be proven to be right. In some cases, the police or the judicial system refuses to accept the political account.

(3) Political Reaction: There are clear cases in which offenders or offences are responded to “politically”. For example, the arrest would be seen as a “political arrest” because a different legal procedure is used or a special investigation is implemented. In this case, a political offence can be described whether or not the system is considered to be political.

(4) Setting: There are definite socio-political situations in which law breaking by specific groups regularly takes on a political character. The setting demands a political interpretation. To apply this criteria to the Palestinian population (in the context that includes three aspects: control, discrimination and separation), then its offences can be seen as political. The current

assertion permits little room for the shared perception that most offences have no such political meaning.

All the four measures offer diverse ways of understanding the same reality. In the “pure” case of political offence, all the four measures apply: (1) there is a clear set of laws barring, for example, membership in a hostile” organization (measure 1); (2) The Arab offender who breaks the laws is known to be committed to the ideology of the particular organization (measure 2); (3) The arrested man is detected by a special police (measure 3); and (4) this man has a national status in the Israel-Palestine conflict (measure 4).

In the “disputed” case of political offence, there are not full similarities between the four measures. An offender, for instance, commits what is known in formal legal terms as a conventional offence (such as attack on police), but asserts that the reason was political. This assertion may be excluded by the police and seen as unrelated. Otherwise, the offender asserts nothing, but the police or politicians insist that his act is “security related offence. Another example is the symbolic political offences, which cover activities even more difficult to connect to clear legal categories. These actions include participation in demonstrations and protests considered illegal. There are a vast range of such behaviour which comes under the range of political crime in this case, such as the introduction by the police in 1988 (during the first Intifada) of two entirely “new” types of crime: under crimes against human life, the offence of “rock-throwing for nationalistic purposes” and under causing bodily harm, the offence of throwing incendiary bottle”. Activities which go beyond such as shooting, attack and stealing weapons are more difficult to document as they might be dealt with the common criminal law. Only if there is a pure proof of collective organization is the political meaning certain.

In the “conventional” case of offence such as rape or murder, the main attributions to acts are made by parties (such as police, politicians or journalists) and those condemning the actions. This attribution is made on the setting criteria. If the offender is Arab and the victim is Jewish, then these parties will accept the political interpretation. To sum up, the political reality behind these data is difficult to clasp. These statistical classifications tell as much about the social construction of events as about what is happening. There can be no doubt that the Israeli organised control system that reacts in a more political way to Palestinians.

Claims in the Public Sphere

The crime figures have been an observable concern. The following quotations reflect the depth of disagreement between the parties (Rotem, 2016): a journalist announced that Non-Jews comprise a mere 25% of Israel's population, but yet 60% of all the people arrested by Israeli police between the years of 2011 and 2015 were non-Jewish". The Chair of the "Arab Joint List responded by saying that the data "reveals a reality of racism and discrimination we all know too well, which unfortunately, is deeply ingrained in the ranks of the police". "Adala" (The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel) responded thus: "The numbers prove that Israel Police is a racist body. The policy of profiling Arab citizens results in officers singling out Arab passersby as suspects, which ultimately leads to violence and arrests". However, the spokesperson for Israel Police responded with the following statement: "the grounds for arrest, as prescribed by law, are in no way related to the identity of a person or his ethnicity". According to a report of Adalah (2015c), these arrests reflect "the suppression of non-violent anti-war demonstrations, mass arrests and detentions of protesters, wide-ranging police brutality and violence, and unlawful pre-emptive arrests".

The last examples tell us more about the dominant perception of "crimes of Palestinians", which comes from a political dialogue. Therefore, in the highly politicized rhetoric of the Israeli society, all issues virtually connected with Palestinians are perceived in terms of the overall national conflict. From 2011, Jewish politicians and police officers described the issue by using terms such as "the growing crime"; "wild west"; "an intolerable reality"; "the situation is unacceptable"; "terror of crime"; "Arab society is overrepresented in all types of violent crimes compared to its percentage in society" (Hartman, 2016). In this context, the press directed the public discussion. A few scattered journalistic reports (e.g. Eldar, 2016; Grosman, 2016; Jad, 2016) have exposed serious crime problems, particularly dramatic cases with widespread reports about weapons possession, murders and violent crimes, in certain Palestinian's towns and villages in Israel. These reports approved that the police, as a security force, still handle Palestinians in Israel, according to a security-oriented approach by viewing every Palestinian as a potential threat. A Journalist, as an example, demonstrates the "Palestinians' reality" by stating that Shin Bet routinely monitors and harasses Palestinian activists for attending demonstrations or writing social media posts against Israeli policies. Now, police officers have permission to open fire on Palestinians who throw stones in Israel just as they do against Palestinians in the occupied territories. These continuing trends reveal

how the idea of the internal enemy remains a powerful force for Israeli policy”(Iraqi, 2015). Nevertheless, as earlier mentioned, a few dispersed journalists’ reports describe the real situation of the Palestinians. In general, majority of the Jewish journalists simply copied the official police version. Studies found that the representation of Palestinians as others” in the Israeli media is influenced by political relationships between this community and the state. Moreover, this community is perceived by this media, as a threat to the Jewish majority. This perception is frequently showed by means of simplifications, which presented an undesirable image that could also be found in other systems in the Jewish society (First, 2002; Wolfsfeld et al., 2000). In particular, First (2009) showed that this community is typically annihilated, but when presented in the Hebrew media, it is identified mainly as enemies and very rarely as equivalent residents.

Nonetheless, the police view the crime situation and its control through the national conflict, according to the following statement of its commissioner: “We send large forces into Arab villages, where there is fierce opposition that has nationalistic overtones” (Lieber, 2016). This statement proves that the Palestinians are perceived as potentially or inherently threatening to the police security. The following statement of the Israeli Prime Minister concludes the extent to which the perception of existential threats is related to Palestinians: “To all those who demonstrate against Israel and in favour of a Palestinian state, I say something simple: I invite you to move there; we won’t give you any problem (Lis, 2014).

The police explain that the high percentage of arrested Palestinians is a consequence of two situations: the community itself and the insufficient policing (Benovadia, 2017). Consequently, the police affirmed that the solutions depend on getting the full cooperation of the Palestinians and bringing effective policing through the provision of more stations and more Arabic-speaking officers (Halavi, 2016). However, the following example concludes the actual police perception toward Palestinians. The journalist writes: Public defender Haim Yitzhaki, who represented a youth who allegedly threw a firebomb at a protest, was surprised to learn that his client's charges were classified as a security case and that it is being handled by the Shin Bet. “When a Haredi throws rocks at a protest in Jaffa or Jerusalem, it is considered a criminal case, but when a guy from Taibeh throws a rock, it is a security issue,” Yitzkhai says (Hasson & Kubovich, 2014).

The police in particular, are the subject of continued criticism due to the mayhem caused by crimes and violence in the Palestinians towns and villages. The consensus about the relation with the policing systems, among Palestinians is clear. Palestinians in general, do not have a certain readiness to call the police, in order to deal with crime that the police do not respond suitably. Palestinians leaders (Knesset members and chiefs of local municipalities) perceive the crime situation as a political matter, in terms of discrimination and neglect (Safieh, 2012). The foremost-demonstrated vision is that the Palestinians deserve equal rights to policing services, while the police intention is to control Arab society, since they see it as a threat, not a population that deserves rights” (Solomon, 2015).

Palestinian leaders present statements, which reflect the deep tensions with the police perspective. The following examples reveal the disagreements: “Because the Jewish street has become more racist toward us, the police have too” (Browning, 2015); “Arabs are killing Arabs, and this isn’t a story that sets off alarm bells or worries law-enforcement authorities like a murder in the Jewish sector (Eldar, 2016a); “The police do not provide security and they persecute by making political arrests... from the police perspective, Arab crime is tolerable as long as it doesn’t threaten the Jewish public, while the police hide behind terms such as honour killing, family feud and culture (Solomon, 2016); “If police believed that these weapons are being used against Jews for nationalistic reasons, they would have collected them all” (Miller, 2014).

To somewhat simplify, the shared experiences of the Palestinians is over policing in actions, which are supposed as threat to the security of Israel and under policing everywhere else. These experiences leave them with the impression of a widespread sense of injustice and discrimination especially in the concrete areas of laws, enforcement, courts, land and housing.

Conclusion

The article shows how Palestinians in Israel are being characterised as a suspicious and a security threat community. Particularly, it shows how calling them a threat to national security shifts them from a subject of low priority of political concern to a high priority issue that requires action. The main claim of the Palestinians is that the central authorities in general and the police in particular, handle them according to a security-oriented approach by the way of seeing every Palestinian as a latent threat.

Therefore, security is a central concern which is taken into consideration. Since 1948, Palestinians have been viewed as a security threat, which is as a result of the Jewish ethos of conflict in Israel (Levanon, 2015). The special status of societal beliefs, regarding security, plays an essential role in the functional features of the ethos by justifying several decisions, laws and actions. These beliefs are created from a perception of lack of security, which has become part of the Jewish identity and a distinguishing matter of Jewish culture in Israel (Bar-Tal et al., 2009). Moving Palestinians or their behaviors to the realm of security, reflects the failure of the Israeli authorities to deal with political collective activities in the realm of normal politics. When the Israeli politicians and police perceive Palestinian protesters as security-related offenders that weaken the state's existence, it moves them from the civil sphere into the security sphere. The definition of political movements as a "security threat" poses a delay in politicians and the police need from dealing with their national and civil demands. In the context of the Israeli domination policy, Palestinians are viewed as a suspicious, a security threat, and as an antagonistic group. The article emphasizes that the Palestinians are framed as a security threat while the Israeli laws are constructed as a defense. The Israeli state is edging Palestinians in a specific way through applying legal practices that distinguish between Jews and Palestinians (Hassanain, 2016). Accordingly, the police is permitted to apply special and frequently extra-legal measures in order to handle what they themselves have considered as menacing.

The overall model of the Israeli social policy is one of bifurcation. Criminality is allocated between the soft residents (who are connected to the fields of welfare, treatment and liberal legalism) and the hard residents (who present a political menace to the state). This division takes on a special shape in Israel. The Palestinian population is perceived as the hard residents and the enemy within. Such processes of criminalisation of politics and politicisation of criminals, and their related forms of over control in some areas, and under control in others are consistently apparent.

This policy remains the same. It remains a policy-based security. The socio-political and legal status of the Palestinian community within a context of segregation, inequality and control in a state, which is defined as a "Jewish state", remains without noticeable change. The continuous existence of the control policy marks a failure of the Israeli authorities to face the socio-political issues of this community in the realm of normal politics.

The article concluded that as long as the military occupation continues in the West Bank, the cycle of criminalisation of politics and politicisation of criminals in Israel will continue. Also, the occupation will continue to corrupt the Israeli law enforcement authorities. The rule of law cannot be divided by the 'in Israel' or out Israel,'but the system is one integrated system at every level (police, border guard, courts, etc.). Thus, Palestinians in Israel are victims of laws, enforcers and politicians, because they are occupied by the Israel-Palestine conflict. Therefore, the cost of more arrests and more political crime is obvious.

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