BEDOUIN ARABS IN ISRAEL BETWEEN THE HAMMER AND THE ANVIL:

Education as a Foundation for Survival and Development

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We should transform the Bedouins into an urban proletariat—in industry, services, construction, and agriculture. 88% of the Israeli population are not farmers, let the Bedouins be like them. Indeed, this will be a radical move which means that the Bedouin would not live on his land with his herds, but would become an urban person who comes home in the afternoon and puts his slippers on. His children would be accustomed to a father who wears trousers, does not carry a Shabaria [the traditional Bedouin knife] and does not search for vermin in public. The children would go to school with their hair properly combed. This would be a revolution, but it may be fixed within two generations. Without coercion but with governmental direction . . . this phenomenon of the Bedouins will disappear.

—Moshe Dayan, *Ha'Aretz* interview, 13 July 1963

Two material practices are at the forefront of Israeli policies concerning the Negev: mass transfer of the Negev's indigenous Bedouin population to planned townships and a corresponding registration of the Negev lands as state property. . . . The Negev is conceived as vacuum domicilum—an empty space that is yet to be redeemed, and the Bedouin, in turn, are conceived of as representing a defeated culture in its last stage of total disappearance from Israel's historical scenery.

—Shamir, R. 1996. *Law and Society Review* 30(2): 232

The Negev Bedouin are among the indigenous Palestinian Arabs who remained in Israel after 1948 and are today a minority group of Israeli citizens. They have inhabited the Negev desert since the fifth century CE (Maddrell 1990), and were traditionally organized into nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes which lived by raising sheep and engaging in seasonal agriculture.

Prior to 1948, estimates of the Bedouin Arab population in the Negev ranged from 65,000 to 90,000 (Falah 1989; Maddrell 1990). During the course and aftermath of the 1948 war, the vast majority of the Negev Bedouin fled or were expelled, and became refugees in the surrounding Arab countries and territories (the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, et cetera); thus, by 1952 only about 11,000 remained in the Negev (Falah 1989; Marx 1967; Masalha 1997). The Israeli authorities took control of most of the land in the Negev, so the Bedouin who remained in the Negev lost the freedom to move around with their herds and cultivate their lands (Lustick 1980). Twelve of the nineteen tribes were removed from their lands, and the whole population was confined to a specially designated restricted area (*seig*) in the northeastern Negev, representing only 10 percent of the territory they controlled before 1948 (Falah 1989; Lustick 1980; Marx 1967). Furthermore, they were placed under a military administration until 1966, as were all other Arabs in Israel, which meant that they could not return to and cultivate their lands, they were isolated from the Arab population in other parts of Israel, and they needed special permits to leave their designated sections of the Restricted area to look for jobs, education, and markets (Marx 1967). The restrictions imposed by the Israeli government represented a form of forced sedentarization, which virtually ended their nomadic and seminomadic way of life.

The military administration over Arabs in Israel was lifted in 1966, and the Negev Bedouin were then brought into greater contact with broader Israeli society. The vast majority of the Bedouin became dependent upon working in the Jewish sector, primarily as unskilled laborers, since they had lost their lands and traditional livelihoods (Abu-Saad 1991).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the government developed plans for the resettlement of the entire Negev Bedouin population into seven urban-style towns (Tel-Sheva, Rahat, Arara, Kseifa, Segev Shalom, Hura, and Laqiya). The government rationale for establishing these towns was to "modernize the Bedouin" and provide them with services more efficiently, using the provision of services (such as running water, electricity, health clinics, and modern schools) as an incentive to attract Bedouin to the towns. However, the transfer of the Bedouin to urban settlements also coincided with other government aims for the "development" of the Negev. As one Jewish Israeli commentator stated: "The transfer has a triple purpose: 1. to redress the ratio between Jews and Arabs in underpopulated areas; 2. to provide land for [Jewish] settlement and development programmes; 3. to release more beduin manpower for labour in the Jewish economy" (quoted in Maddrell 1990, 8).

The towns were designed as dormitory towns, filled with neighborhoods divided up into one-quarter-acre lots. Aside from the provided basic services (water, electricity, telephone hook-up, schools, and clinics), the towns lacked the essential characteristics of urbanization. Unlike the neighboring urban settlements in the Jewish sector, the Bedouin towns had no internal sources of employment, nor did they have internal or external public transportation networks to facilitate access to work in other towns. The Bedouin towns also lacked banks, post offices, sewage systems, public libraries, and recreational and cultural centers (with the exception of the largest town, Rahat, of over 30,000 inhabitants, which has one bank and one post office) (Abu-Saad 1995; Ben-David 1993; McDowall 1994).

This urban settlement program represents an even more radical departure for the Bedouin from their traditional way of life than the earlier forced sedentarism, as it completely stripped them of their land base and of the ability to maintain their traditional economic pursuits to any meaningful extent. The move to the towns has been resisted by all those in a position to do so. However, some Bedouin, who were removed from the lands they owned early after Israel's establishment and saw them turned from "closed military zones" to part of the large landholdings of Jewish kibbutzim and moshavim, gave up hope of ever being allowed to return to their own lands. In the face of pressures applied by the government to remove them from their "illegal squatting on government land," many of these Bedouin moved to the government-planned towns. In other cases, such as that of Tel Al-Mileh, where more recent land confiscations took place, Bedouin were removed directly from their lands to the government-planned urban townships (Maddrell 1990).

Despite all of the factors converging to transfer the Bedouin to the townships, as of 1999 only 50 percent of the Negev Bedouin population of 120,000 lived in the planned towns, while 50 percent continued to live in unrecognized villages (*Statistical Yearbook* 1999). Most of the Bedouin living in unrecognized villages are still living on their own lands, since they traditionally lived in the area in which the Israeli government set up the restricted area for the Bedouin in the 1950s.

The government continues to place numerous pressures on the inhabitants of unrecognized villages in an effort to coerce them to move to the government-planned towns (Maddrell 1990; *Statistical Yearbook* 1999). The unrecognized (that is, not government planned and ergo illegal) settlements are denied services such as paved roads, public transportation, electricity, rubbish disposal, telephone service, community health facilities, and in many cases running water. Bedouin in the unrecognized villages are also denied

licenses for building any sort of permanent housing. All forms of housing other than tents are considered illegal and are subject to heavy fines and demolition proceedings (Maddrell 1990). From 1992 to 1998, a total of 1,298 buildings were demolished and 869,850 NIS (approximately $220,000) in fines were paid, due to the "illegal" status of these buildings (*Statistical Yearbook* 1999).

Despite these pressures, Bedouin remain on their lands—which the government, however, considers state lands—to prevent their de facto, as well as their de jure, confiscation. Most of these Bedouin depend, at least in part, on the traditional occupations of herding, agriculture, and the processing of animal products to supplement or provide their incomes, but this is also restricted by the government. Herd sizes and grazing areas are very tightly controlled and a special police unit patrols and confiscates flocks found in violation of regulations. Thus, very few Bedouin can subsist entirely on the traditional sources of livelihood and must seek paid employment in the larger Israeli economy.

In spite of the government's stated aim of "improving and modernizing" the lives of the Negev Bedouin through its resettlement program, the Negev Bedouin community has the lowest socioeconomic status of any group of Israeli citizens. Compared to the Israeli average, they have twice as many children and only approximately half the monthly income. The average Bedouin family size is eight to ten persons, and 54 percent of the community is under the age of fourteen (*Statistical Yearbook* 1999). Their annual birth rate is 5 percent (*Statistical Abstract of Israel* 1996), which is one of the highest in the world. The unemployment rate among Negev Bedouin is estimated to be 55 percent of the total workforce, of whom 30 percent are men and 80 percent are women (Shapira and Hellerman 1998). Those who are employed are concentrated in low-status, low-paying occupations such as construction, driving, and unskilled labor (Maddrell 1990; Shapira and Hellerman 1998).

Development of the Educational System

Education has become a basic prerequisite for the Bedouins' successful adaptation to the changes they have undergone, given their need for partial or complete integration into the Israeli economy for their subsistence. The Israeli educational system, however, represents a new organization in Bedouin Arab society. Traditionally, most Bedouin education was not formalized, but was rather acquired through observation and participation in the process of day-to-day life. There was no defined curriculum to be artificially acquired, nor were there any unnecessary drills (Jamali 1934). Instead, the informal system of education they developed was highly efficient in preparing Bedouin youth for the life they were to lead as adults. History was passed on orally, as were moral and religious values, through poets, respected elders, and storytellers.

In addition to this broad-based informal education, some limited opportunities were available to boys for obtaining formal education. The most common of these were the traditional Muslim schools called Kuttab that usually functioned in a tent around the sheikh's residence. These schools charged modest fees, and the services were not utilized by all, but rather by the boys whose labor could be spared and whose fathers saw a value in formal education. Classes usually included about twenty boys, roughly between the ages of five and twelve, who were taught to memorize the whole Quran by sheer repetition. In addition, they learned reading, writing, and the precepts of Islam. The curriculum primarily consisted of religious and moral content, though later some arithmetic was added. The Kuttab teachers (called Khatib) were elderly, literate males known for their orthodox piety who lived as permanent guests of the tribe to which they were attached and would migrate along with the tribe. They usually lived in the guest section of the sheikh's tent where they were provided with food, shelter, and coffee (Tibawi 1956).

In addition to these traditional forms of education, a few Western-style schools were established in the Negev Desert during the period of colonial British rule from 1918 to 1948, mainly boarding schools that taught a standard Western curriculum including math, science, reading, writing (in Arabic), and English. The vast majority of the Bedouin had no exposure to these schools since usually only the sons of the tribal sheikhs had access to such educational opportunities (Berman 1967; Tibawi 1956).

Thus, prior to the establishment of the state of Israel, several forms of education were available to Bedouin children. All children received an informal education that was well suited to preparing them for the roles they were to take as adults, and for most Bedouin, this was the only form of education considered essential for their future. Some boys also received a traditional Muslim (Kuttab) education that helped to reinforce the religious mores of the society in addition to providing them with basic literacy and math skills. With the advent of colonial rule, western-style schools were also introduced for the sons of the tribal elite who represented the future leadership of the society.

The establishment of the state of Israel—which led to a radical reduction of the Bedouin population, loss of lands, transfer to the restricted area, and a military administration—severely disrupted the Bedouins' traditional forms of education. The formal schools were closed or rendered inaccessible when the Bedouin population was moved to the restricted area (Maddrell 1990). In addition, the loss of land and restricted mobility greatly reduced the viability of the informal education that had prepared Bedouin children to take on their adult roles in the work of herding and agriculture. Nor was the education provided in the Kuttab schools sufficient to prepare Bedouin youth for integration into the modern, industrialized Israeli labor market.

Under the new Israeli government, a law was passed in 1949 making education compulsory and mandating that every child receive free elementary schooling (from the ages of six to thirteen). The state was obliged to provide trained teachers, salaries, and facilities. It was also responsible for curricula (Abu-Saad 1991; Al-Haj 1995). However, the new Israeli institutions were busy absorbing Jewish immigrants, and, inevitably, schools for Arabs were not a priority (Maddrell 1990). This was especially true for the Negev Bedouin population which was relatively widely dispersed. In most of the Negev Bedouin tribes, a whole generation had no access to formal education (Maddrell 1990). In addition, all Arab schools in Israel, which had to be supplied with books in Arabic, suffered from a constant lack of teaching materials and textbooks for the first two decades of Israeli rule. So even for the minority who did have access to schools, the quality of education received was poor (Swirski 1990, 1999).

At the same time, the Negev Bedouin tribes showed little interest in the new Israeli schools as many had received promises that they would be allowed to return to their lands and former way of life (Maddrell 1990). In 1956, only 350 Bedouin students out of a population of 2,000 school-age children were enrolled in schools. By the end of the school year, only 220 students were still attending school (representing a 37 percent dropout rate within one year), and all of them were boys (Swirski 1990; Visitz 1957). During the period of the military administration, students who wanted to obtain a high school education had to attend schools in the northern Arab villages because there were no high schools for Arabs in the Negev. It was only feasible for a few students to pursue this option because of the high cost and the difficulties in obtaining a permit to leave their area.

During this period, Negev Bedouin education basically suffered a regression. Traditional education was either disrupted or lost its efficacy in preparing Bedouin children for adult life in their new context. The Israeli government was slow to establish public schools for the Bedouin, and the Bedouin themselves initially showed little interest in this new form of education since its relevance was not immediately apparent.

After the military administration over Arabs was lifted in 1966, several developments led the Bedouin community to increase its demands for formal education. First, as the Bedouin became more exposed to modern Jewish society and more involved in its economy, they recognized the importance of formal education. Second, they had more contact with Arab villages and towns in other parts of Israel, where the educational system was better established. Furthermore, following the War of 1967, when the Negev Bedouin were able to visit their West Bank and Gaza Strip relatives for the first time since 1948, they found that many of their counterparts had become educated teachers, doctors, lawyers, and other professionals, while the vast majority of

them remained illiterate (Abu-Saad 1991). Since many women had also attended school in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, intermarriage between these two previously separated segments of the Bedouin community resulted in educated women coming to live in the Negev (Abu-Saad 1997, 1998; Ben-David 1990). These contacts had a tremendous impact on the dynamics of the Negev Bedouin community and led them to send their children, girls and boys, to school in greater numbers (Abu-Saad 1997, 1998).

As the demand for education grew, the Israeli government opened more schools and free education became more available to the Bedouin community. However, the value and viability of this education were gravely affected by a number of policy considerations that took precedence over the goal of providing Bedouin students with the knowledge and skills they needed to function successfully in the broader socioeconomic context of Israeli society and an increasingly globalized economy.

Politics, Segregation, and the State Educational System in Israel

The Israeli state educational system is subdivided into a Jewish system (which is itself divided into a number of subsystems, for instance, secular schools and religious schools) and an Arab system. These subdivisions give the system an appearance of educational pluralism while in fact the division of the schools into subsystems serves quite a different purpose. Each system contains different students, different teachers, and different educational contents (Swirski 1999). In the Israeli educational hierarchy, secular Jewish schools which primarily serve students of European or American origin (Ashkenazis) form the highest tier. The Arab system forms the bottom tier, with the Negev Bedouin schools ranking the lowest in that system. The schools in the higher tiers of the educational hierarchy (kibbutzim schools, secular schools serving affluent Ashkenazi communities) provide their students with "high status knowledge" and "cultural capital" that translate into better future socioeconomic opportunities. Schools in the lower tiers of the educational hierarchy (i.e., schools for the Arab community) provide their students only with partial, restricted, and elementary knowledge, which effectively places a ceiling on their future socioeconomic opportunities and maintains the society's current socioeconomic inequalities (Swirski 1990, 1999). An examination of the structure of the educational system, from the level of goals and curriculum to buildings, facilities, and staff, reveals its considerable impact on keeping Arabs in general and the Bedouin in particular in their "proper" place in the social, economic, and political hierarchy.

Aims, Goals, and Curriculum

The Bedouin schools are a part of the Arab educational system, which differs from the Jewish educational system on the level of aims, goals, and curricula.

Despite the fact that Israeli society is heterogeneous, due not only to the existence of the Jewish and Arabic cultures but also to a variety of Jewish groups who immigrated from different countries, its educational system has remained monocultural rather than multicultural (Mar'i 1978; Al-Haj 1995). The aim of multicultural education is to equip people of one culture with the knowledge and skills needed to function in their own culture, as well as in other cultural settings within the same sociopolitical framework (Aikman 1996; Mar'i 1978). However, the educational hierarchy, teaching staff, and curriculum in the Jewish educational system demonstrates a definite bias toward Western, European (Ashkenazi) culture over that of non-Western, North African and Middle Eastern (Mizrachi) Jewish culture. The curriculum in Jewish schools tends to overlook the culture, history, and contributions of Mizrachi and other non-Western Jewish groups and to largely ignore, or provide only minimal exposure to, Arabic language and culture.

The same is true of Arab education in Israel. Despite the fact that Arabic is the medium of instruction in Arab schools, the Arab educational system does not represent, in Freeland's words, an example of "indigenous control over education and true interculturality" (1996, 182). The Arab educational system has been, and continues to be, directed by members of the Jewish majority and governed by a set of political criteria which Arabs have no say in formulating (Al-Haj 1995; Mar'i 1978; Said 1987; Swirski 1999). The 1953 Law of State Education specified the following aims for education in Israel:

> to base education on the values of Jewish culture and the achievements of science, on love of the homeland and loyalty to the state and the Jewish people, on practice in agricultural work and handicraft, on pioneer training and on striving for a society built on freedom, equality, tolerance, mutual assistance, and love of mankind. (Mar'i 1978, 50)

No parallel aims have ever been set forth for educating Arabs in Israel, though some attempts were made by committees directed by Jewish educators in the 1970s and 1980s (Al-Haj 1995). Instead, the general and specific curricular goals developed for Arab education tend to blur rather than enhance the formation of Arab identity. The overall aims of the educational system, as well as specific curricular goals, require Arabs to learn about Jewish values and culture, the results of which are clearly seen in the government-sponsored curriculum for primary and secondary schools (Al-Haj 1995; Mar'i 1978, 1985; Peres et al. 1970). Arab students are required to spend many class hours studying Jewish culture and history and the Hebrew language (and more in total than they spend on Arabic literature and history). However, the basic goal of Jewish studies in Arab education is not to develop cultural competence in Jewish Israeli society as much as it is to make Arabs understand and sympathize with Jewish/Zionist causes and to blur their own national identity in Israel (Al-Haj 1995; Mar'i 1978, 1985; Swirski 1999). In reaction to this unbalanced curriculum, Rashid Hussein, an Israeli Arab intellectual issued the following warning in 1957:

> It is a known fact that he who has no self-respect will not respect others. He who has no national feeling cannot respect other nationalities. If the Arab student is hindered from learning about his people, his nationality and his homeland in school, he will compensate for the lack in his home and on the street. He will eagerly accept anything he hears from other people or reads in the newspaper, and this may lead him into a wrong and distorted view of nationalism. The school, which has deprived him of something in which everyone takes pride, will be regarded by him as an enemy. Instead of learning in school the meaning of nationalism imbued with humanism, he will absorb only a distorted version. What will the school have achieved? What kind of generation of Arab youth will it have educated? Instead of educating its students to believe in fraternity and peace and to believe in the sincerity of its teachers, the school will bring forth a bewildered and confused generation, which looks at the facts in a distorted manner, and considers other nations to be their enemies; a generation filled with inferiority complexes, feelings of abasement, unable to take pride in its youth, in its homeland and its nationality. (1957, 46)

Hussein's warning went unheeded, however. In the 1970s, a group of Jewish Israeli researchers, Peres, Ehrlich, and Yuval-Davis, addressed the same issues. They criticized the curriculum imposed upon Arab schools by the Ministry of Education for attempting to instill patriotic sentiments in Arab students through the study of Jewish history and pointed out the absurdity of the expectation that the "Arab pupil . . . serve the state not because the latter is important to him and fulfills his needs, but because it is important to the Jewish people" (Peres, Ehrlich, and Yuval-Davis 1970, 151).

Nevertheless, this lack of attention to Arab culture, and to its contemporary political concerns in particular, has been maintained in the curriculum for Arab schools. Nor does the curriculum deal with the particular social, cultural, and educational needs of Negev Bedouin as they are being transformed into an urbanized population within a modern, Westernized, high-tech economy. This lack of emphasis on the contemporary social and political concerns of Arabs lowers the relevance of the educational experience for Arab students to the point of seriously estranging them from school (Brown 1986; Mar'i 1978).

In 1978, the late Arab educator and researcher Sami Mar'i described the status of Arab education within the Israeli state school system in the following terms which, unfortunately, still provides an accurate description some twenty years later:

> Arab education is a victim of Israeli pluralism not only in that it is directed and managed by the majority, but it is also a tool by which the whole minority is manipulated. . . . [It] is not only an example of the Israeli pluralism by which Arabs are denied power, it is also a means through which the lack of power can be maintained and perpetuated. Arab citizens are marginal, if not outsiders. . . . The Arab Education Department is directed by members of the Jewish majority, and curricula are decided upon by the authorities with little, if any, participation of Arabs. Arab participation does not exceed writing or translating books and materials according to carefully specified guidelines, nor does it extend beyond implementing the majority's policies. (Mar'i 1978, 180)

Reform efforts have repeatedly failed to bring about change, since none of the recommendations of the various committees appointed by the government to study or improve the Arab educational system have ever had any binding power (Al-Haj 1995, 1996). To give some recent examples, during the Rabin government (1992–1996), the education minister was from a "left-of-center" political party. In 1994, he appointed a committee of leading Arab educators to develop a plan for restructuring and improving Arab education. The plan was submitted to the minister in early 1996 and was never heard of again, either to be implemented or to be used as a basis for further discussion, revision, and work. In 1997, the subsequent minister of education (from a "right-of-center" political party) appointed an investigatory committee to study Bedouin Arab schools in the Negev and produce recommendations for improving their education. The report, which was submitted to the Ministry of Education in 1998, contained a detailed five-year plan for improving the material and human resources of the schools, as well as the relevance of the curriculum and its educational content. Again, the recommendations were neither accepted nor implemented by the Ministry of Education. In the administration elected in 1999, the minister of education was again from a left-of-center party. He appointed a loyal Bedouin party member to serve as his adviser for Bedouin education, whose only apparent function was to sign the letters saying, "there are no funds for implementing these reforms in the current school year."

Infrastructure and Staffing as Political Tools

In addition to problems with the aims, goals, and curriculum of the educational system, the Bedouin schools have inadequate physical and human resources, both of which have been used as tools for furthering governmental policy objectives other than education. With regard to physical resources in the Negev Bedouin school system, facilities and equipment are insufficient, and in some cases altogether lacking, especially in the unrecognized villages' schools. The schools located in the planned towns, which include elementary, middle, and all of the high schools, are classified as permanent. Most, though not all, of these schools are housed in modern buildings and have basic amenities such as electricity and indoor plumbing. But they do not have sufficient laboratories, libraries, sports facilities, or teaching materials. In addition, the schools are overcrowded since the developers have not kept up with the population growth and increasing enrollment. According to the Katz report (1998) which was submitted to the minister in 1998, 730 new classrooms were needed during the next five years in schools in the government-planned towns just to keep up with the growth in the number of students. (The needs for the population in unrecognized villages were left unspecified due to uncertainty over whether government policy would necessitate increased transportation services or more school buildings in unrecognized villages.) As mentioned above, the Ministry of Education has not allocated funds for implementing this plan.

Twelve elementary schools were located in unrecognized villages, the vast majority of which were established before the government built the seven planned towns. Since government policy now calls for concentrating the whole Negev Bedouin population into these towns, the Ministry of Education classifies the schools dispersed throughout the areas of unauthorized settlement as "temporary" (*Statistical Yearbook* 1999). As such, these schools are not expanded, have substandard services and equipment, and are poorly maintained (Abu-Saad 1997). They lack indoor plumbing, and were supplied with generator-powered electricity only in 1998 (despite the fact that many of the schools are near power lines) after a long struggle by the Bedouin community which culminated in an Israeli high court decision ordering the Ministry of Education to supply these schools with electricity (*Ha-Aretz* 1998).

This situation is part of an official policy to encourage the Bedouin Arabs to move into the government-planned settlements (personal interview with officials of the Ministry of Interior, March 1980; Maddrell 1990; Meir 1986). An education official stated that:

> the government is reluctant to develop schools for temporary settlements because they want the beduin to move to permanent areas. The beduin tend to move when the schools are relocated. If they don't then the children simply don't go to school. (quoted in Maddrell 1990, 16)

According to the law, the government is responsible for providing Bedouin children with education; however, it has subordinated this responsibility to its goal of concentrating the Bedouin Arab population in designated settlements. The educational infrastructure continues to be used for this purpose up to the present time. During the 1999–2000 school year, approximately

6,000 Bedouin elementary, middle, and high school students from unrecognized villages were required to travel great distances (up to even 100 kilometers one way) daily on overcrowded buses to attend school (Arbeli 1999). A nine-year-old boy who gets up at 5 a.m., walks two kilometers to the bus stop, and then rides on the bus for an hour and a half in each direction described some of the difficulties of his commute to school: "The most difficult time is the winter because our mother wakes us up when it is still dark outside. When it's very cold and raining, we rush as fast as we can to the bus stop, but if we're even a little bit late, the bus doesn't wait for us" (Arbeli 1994, A4).

These policies continue to take their toll on student retention, especially for girls. Traditionally, females were restricted to the world of the extended family, where they took responsibility for many aspects of the household economy (herding; milking and processing milk products; making the animal hair and wool into carpets, tents, mattresses and pillows; harvesting crops). In addition, they were and continue to be considered the "bearers of the family honor"; thus, their families preferred not to risk their reputations by allowing girls to travel alone and mix with males from other tribes (Abu-Saad et al. 1998; Maddrell 1990). Therefore, there was much more reluctance among the Bedouin to send their daughters to school than to send their sons to school, especially when schools were far away.

School staffing is also problematic on several levels. First, the Ministry of Education is in charge of hiring teachers (completely at the elementary and intermediate school levels and partially at the high school level). Since this is a government office, any Arab who is blacklisted by the security services for political activities is banned from obtaining employment in government agencies, including schools. A security services adviser participates with the Ministry of Education in hiring and firing school teachers. Thus, "a young educated Arab can expect to get and keep a job as a teacher only by staying off the government's blacklist" (Lustick 1980, 193–94). The refusal of teaching positions due to security reasons is a widespread phenomenon in Arab schools, even at the high school level where the local authority plays a major role in the process of hiring and firing teachers. Potential candidates for teaching positions are interviewed by a joint professional committee that includes representatives of the local authority and the Ministry of Education. The list of candidates they select is then sent to the Ministry of Education for final approval. Al-Haj (1995) found that about 10 percent of the candidates approved by the professional committees were rejected by the Ministry of Education. According to interviews with Arab mayors, the real but unwritten reason was usually "security considerations." The mayor in one Arab village described his experience as follows:

> Every year we send the list (of selected candidates) for approval to the Ministry of Education. But it is very often that some of the candidates are refused to be given a teaching permission. Then the negotiations start with officials of the Ministry of Education, who inform us, in most cases orally, that the refusal is not connected with them but with the security system. (Al-Haj 1995, 170–71)

Again, the Ministry of Education's responsibility to provide the schools with qualified teachers is secondary to other political considerations, such as the security system's mandate of hiring only teachers who, according to their criterion, are "politically correct" (that is, quiescent, uninvolved in Arab student movements or any other struggle for equal rights) (Al-Haj 1995, 1996).

While professionally qualified teachers can be turned down because of political reasons, the Bedouin schools suffer from a serious shortage of qualified teachers, with the Ministry of Education reporting that 23 percent of the teachers lack basic training and credentials (Melitz 1994; Katz 1998). According to the Report of the Investigatory Committee on the Bedouin educational system in the Negev (Ministry of Education and Culture 1998), 978 new teachers need to be trained and hired by 2002.

In addition, approximately 50 percent of the teachers are not local, but come from Arab communities in the central and northern regions of Israel (Abu-Saad 1997). These teachers are concentrated at the middle and high school levels, since teachers at these levels are required to have a bachelor of arts degree and not simply a teachers college education. Instructors from other parts of the country are hired because they have the appropriate qualifications; however, this results in high rates of teacher turnover because they generally leave the Negev region as soon as teaching positions open up closer to their home communities.

These problems of curriculum, infrastructure, and staffing have affected the capacity of the Negev Bedouin schools to retain and educate students. Approximately 55 percent of Negev Bedouin Arab children drop out of school before graduating from high school, as compared to 16 percent and 33 percent in the Jewish and broader Arab sectors, respectively (Ben-David 2000; Ministry of Education and Culture 1999).

To compound the problem of high dropout rates in the Negev Bedouin schools, the success rates of the children who do stay in school and complete the twelfth grade tend to be very low. In the 1997–98 academic year, for instance, only 10 percent of Negev Bedouin high school students passed the matriculation exams (compared to 43 percent and 27 percent in the Jewish and broader Arab sectors), a basic requirement for going on to higher education (Ministry of Education and Culture 1999). There are approximately two university graduates per 1,000, which is far below the Israeli national average of more than 100 per 1,000 (Abu-Saad 2000). Higher education is broadly

recognized as an important tool, particularly for minority groups, for self-development and self-directed integration into the larger society.

Despite the fact that faith in education has eroded to some extent in the recent past, it still expected to play a pivotal role in development. Higher education assumes great significance, for it is through higher education that a community produces the critical mass of leaders—the entrepreneurs, the intellectuals, the professionals, the managers and political leaders—that it needs for social and economic development (Gunawardena 1990). Furthermore, with regard to educational reform, indigenous teachers' associations have formulated many effective models of indigenous intercultural education, indicating that the development of a core of educated people is a great asset to, and perhaps even a prerequisite for, the development of positive models of indigenous intercultural education and community educational involvement (Aikman 1996; Freeland 1996). Thus, while it is clear that comprehensive change is needed at every level of the Bedouin educational system, higher education may well prove to be an important catalyst in initiating the process insofar as a community with more educational capital can en masse simply refuse to accept a substandard educational system and will also possess the professional educational skills to create something better. Major systemic change will remain blocked until the community and its supporters apply enough political pressure to finally let them have a say in the quality, content, and curriculum of their schools.

Finally, the effort to devise specific strategies for future development must be at least two-pronged. A number of political changes must be made touching on all aspects of the lives of indigenous Palestinian Arabs in Israel in order to facilitate effective educational change. The changes called for can be briefly summarized as: (1) the allocation of national resources on the basis of equality, regardless of ethnic identity in all fields of state funding including education and the reallocation of resources to close the socioeconomic gaps that have been created and perpetuated from the inception of the state by inequitable funding; (2) the participation of Israeli Arabs in all sectors of national life, including senior government posts, employment possibilities, and qualification for state benefits; and (3) the redefinition of the state of Israel from the "Jewish state" to the state of all its citizens, and the extension of full civil and national rights to the indigenous, Palestinian Arab minority.

For specific strategies in this area, I defer to those working in the fields of politics, law, and community advocacy. The only thing I will add is that a community needs a good measure of economic security or independence to unite in an effective political struggle. Currently, the vast majority of the Bedouin are dependent on integration into the high-tech, western Israeli economy, within which they fill the most vulnerable ranks of unskilled labor. Every educational gain they make will improve their economic security and independence, and will also add to their political strength.

With regard to specific strategies for development in the area of education, I return to the issue of increasing the number of Bedouin with higher education as a catalyst for bringing about broader community involvement and, eventually, systemic educational reform. At the university level, through the Center for Bedouin Studies and Development, several developmental educational strategies are being implemented. The first is financial and academic support for female Bedouin university students. In the 1993–94 academic year, only four of the 135 Bedouin Arab university graduates and eight of the 163 university students were females. In the 1995–1996 academic year, we began a very small project offering financial and academic support to five Bedouin female university students at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and they in return were required to do community work several hours a week. The Bedouin community is, by and large, quite poor, and families tend to invest the limited resources they have in sons rather than daughters. We targeted financial resources specifically for female candidates to increase the opportunities for female Bedouin students to attend the university. Second, we provided these students with the academic and social support they needed to succeed at the university. Bedouin students admitted to the university often face serious obstacles. Since the language of instruction is Hebrew (the Bedouin students' second language) and many of the reading materials are in English (their third language), weak language skills represent a formidable barrier for many of these students. In addition, their high school education generally does not provide them with the analytical thinking, research, and writing skills they need at the university. Individualized and small group tutoring programs were developed to address these needs. Third, the students were required to become involved in community work four hours a week, through which they provided needed services such as after-school activities with Bedouin K–12 pupils, tutoring and assisting students at risk of dropping out of school, teaching literacy courses for illiterate Bedouin women, and so forth. Through this component of the program, we hoped to provide the community with positive role models of educated Bedouin women, and also strengthen the awareness and concern of these female students for the problems and developmental needs of their community.

This project has had a positive impact on the community, both in providing a useful role model of university-educated Bedouin women, and in providing young women and their families with the possibility of financial support for university studies. It also aids the community by increasing the number of educated women who will have the tools, as well as the consciousness, to work to improve the quality of their children's education. Since

the development and expansion of this financial and academic support program, the number of female Bedouin university students has grown from eight in 1993–94 to ninety-five in the 1999–2000 academic year, thirteen of whom are doing graduate studies.

A second major educational project of the Bedouin Center, named the Budding Scientists, is aimed at preparing a group of Bedouin high school students to enter the fields of engineering and science, in which currently there are almost no Bedouin academics or professionals. In the 1997–98 academic year, when this project was planned, there were 108 Bedouin students at Ben-Gurion University, of whom 81 percent were in the humanities and social sciences, 11 percent were in the health sciences (primarily nursing and medical laboratory studies), 7 percent were in the sciences, and 2 percent were in engineering (virtually all of whom in the last two fields went to high school in high-quality, private Arab schools in northern Israel). These figures reflect the orientation of the Bedouin schools in the Negev. While their best students succeeded in matriculating and gaining acceptance to the university, they were in no way equipped with the "educational capital" needed to qualify for entrance into the fields of engineering and the natural sciences. The Budding Scientists program was designed to redress this issue by bringing a small group of high school students to the university from the tenth through the twelfth grades, for additional studies in mathematics, physics, and English. The goals of the program are: (a) to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed for admission to the faculties of the natural sciences and engineering; (b) to reduce the psychological barriers of students as well as teachers, parents, and communities that prevent students from moving beyond externally imposed limitations and aspiring to study the natural sciences and engineering; and (c) to begin preparing a core group of Bedouin scientists, engineers, and technological professionals who can play a role in the development of the Bedouin community and more effectively meet the challenges of integration into the technologically oriented Israeli and global economies. The interaction between the high school and the university project staff has resulted in challenging the systemic barriers that automatically exclude Bedouin students from opportunities in these fields. Physics, which was not even offered at all in this high school, is now being taught there, and negotiations are underway for building a physics laboratory.

These are two examples of using education as a tool for the development of the Bedouin Arabs in the Negev. While these are admittedly limited efforts in the face of great problems, they are nevertheless equipping young people with the skills they need to survive and succeed in their new social, political, and economic context. In addition, they are providing Bedouin youth with the economic security and skills they need to reclaim and restructure their own people's future development.

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