Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

> Terrorism is for us a part of the political battle being conducted under the present circumstances, and it has a great part to play: speaking in a clear voice to the whole world, as well as to our wretched brethren outside this land, it proclaims our war against the occupier.

Palestinians, displaced from part of Mandate Palestine in 1948 and under military occupation in the remainder since 1967, have pursued the goal of independent statehood down a variety of avenues, not all of them salubrious. From both inside their homeland, and from the corners of their far-flung Diaspora, they have adhered tenaciously to that so far elusive goal. The quotation above is ostensibly a tough but eloquent expression of a young fighter's attitude to the struggle for Palestine; of his reaching out to fellow-countrymen around the world; and of the need to expel a foreign occupier from ancestral lands. The words, however, were written in 1943 by Yitzhak Shamir, later Prime Minister of Israel.[1]

A question for the historians is this: how was it that one of the peoples inhabiting Palestine before 1948 was victorious in its political battle, while the other remains stateless to this day? That the political aspirations of the one were fulfilled, while

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[1] Cited by Anton Shammas, the Palestinian Israeli writer, in his article "The Morning After", *New York Review of Books*, 29 September 1988. The article must be distinguished from a later one with the same title, by Edward Said (1993).

the aspirations of the other remain to this day a largely unknown quantity? It should at once be said that this study makes no attempt to resolve the essentially historical controversy outlined above. Politics may be anchored in the past, but it essentially seeks an understanding of the present in order to foresee the future. This study, therefore, seeks rather to illuminate a little-researched contemporary aspect of the issue, namely Palestinian attitudes to their homeland and to the conflict within it, for there has been far too little attention given to what Palestinians themselves think about their situation, what made them think it, and what they are prepared to do about it.

In particular, it is the attitudes of the Diaspora which will be examined, since the "brethren" of the Palestinian Diaspora may well have as great a political role to play, and are certainly more numerous than their compatriots in the homeland. In the writer's view, and despite the optimistic nature of some current scenarios being presented on the global stage, the overall impetus behind this study rests upon the basic premise that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is far from over.

Palestinians have traditionally attracted to themselves a number of epithets; as terrorists, victims, refugees, fanatics, anti-semites, revolutionaries, and - most recently - Islamic militants. In the eyes of some, the continued denial of their right to statehood appears to be linked to the negative expectations aroused by this kind of labelling. The fact that equally uncomplimentary epithets were applied to their Jewish adversaries, at an earlier point in time, only goes to show that today's villain may become tomorrow's hero. Much stereotyping of Palestinians

nevertheless continues to be negative, and is applied to them not only in the homeland but also in exile, the latter often in ostensibly democratic societies. It has been remarked of Palestinians that they are one of the most talked about and least understood peoples in the world today.[2] It was in the hope of actively contributing to our understanding of the Palestinian people, and of the politics of their statelessness, that this study was undertaken. In an era which has been called "the age of the refugee, the displaced person, mass immigration" (Said, 1990, 357), the need for such understanding is greater than ever.

WHAT THE PROBLEM IS

In the post-colonial era, Palestinians remain a stateless anomaly - an anomaly more apparent as other non-state actors mobilise for, and successfully achieve statehood. Palestinian marginality, it is argued, occurs both at state, and at sub-state levels. Globally, it was only in 1993 that the PLO achieved meaningful international recognition as the representative of the Palestinian people. At sub-state level, Palestinian minorities in pluralist democracies such as Israel, USA and Australia perceive themselves as subject to various kinds of discrimination and often barred from full political participation.

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[2] This statement forms the opening of Weaver, Gillespie and Al-Jarbawi's 1985 study of Palestinian belief systems. The statement, in the writer's view, holds good to this day.

What contributes to this two-tiered marginalisation? Discrimination, it has been observed, is often linked to negative stereotyping of the individual or group concerned. Palestinians (along with Muslims and other Arabs) often see themselves as victims of such stereotyping. Assumptions that they somehow represent a threat to global, regional and local stability justify their continued exclusion from political processes everywhere, but the task of ascertaining whether these negative assumptions are justified is complicated by a lack of empirical evidence. A further complication is the lack of academic consensus on the issues. Both these obstacles will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

How Palestinians view the continuation of both their statelessness and of the Israeli Occupation will affect not only the prospects for peace in the Middle East, but also Palestinians' relations with the host countries in which they experience - at microcosm level - the discrimination they feel they have long encountered globally. It is argued here that these two issues are inter-twined, and that obtaining information on the political attitudes of groups such as the Palestinians - wherever they may be located - should therefore be beneficial in the following ways:

- Research on the attitudes of stateless groups towards their homeland can yield valuable data regarding the politics of that homeland. Recent emigrants in particular should be able to provide useful information on what attitudes are held, and - more importantly - why those attitudes are held.

- Furthermore, data on how such groups' relations with their new host countries might be affected by the politics of their situation, is highly relevant - or should be - to those host countries espousing multicultural or pluralistic policies.

If it is true that the information vacuum regarding Palestinian attitudes is sometimes filled by discriminating stereotypes, then there would appear to be a role for survey research which could provide the missing data. There is also a need for theoretical constructs within which to site such surveys. In the following literature review, which looks at how others have approached this problem, it will be seen that there remain serious deficiencies in both these fields of research.

WAYS IN WHICH OTHERS HAVE APPROACHED THE PROBLEM

THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

No particular body of theory fully applies to this thesis, which is cross-disciplinary in its approach. Also, scholars dealing with the Palestinian issue have tended to follow a descriptive, historical (and occasionally polemical) approach rather than a conceptually-based or theoretical one. The first question to be dealt with here is the actual extent to which scholars have looked at the broad issue of diaspora attitudes to the homeland, before going on to consider how the approach to such studies was conceptualised. Although specific reference will be made to work done on the Palestinians, the overview of the literature is more broadly-based.

Political scientists in the field of international relations have recently been examining the enhanced role of non-state movements in global politics (Sheffer, 1986; Eickelman, 1992). This focus on non-state actors has seen scholars such as Kirisci (1986), Harik (1986) and Shain (1991) make specific reference to the Palestinian diaspora in terms such as the following: "More attention is given to non-governmental organisations, of which the PLO is one of the most dramatically prominent" (Kirisci, 1986, ix).[3] An Armenian scholar has observed that the Palestinians' increased visibility on the world scene may actually have stimulated the scholarship on diasporas in general, not the other way around (Tololyan, 1991). Kirisci (1986) and Brand (1988) are among the few political scientists who have used a theoretical model against which to test the Palestinian case. Kirisci's focus is global, Brand's is regional; but neither refer to the Western diaspora, so neither model is applicable to this study.

Heightened interest in diasporas notwithstanding, the discipline of international relations rarely treats attitudes within those diasporas as a relevant variable. Thus, while Shain poses the question: "What is the exile's state of mind?" (Shain, 1989, 13), he makes no attempt to answer it. In the Palestinian case specifically, and for stateless peoples generally, the lack of a recognised government is now acknowledged by some as enhancing the political importance of individual attitudes. As Pollock says of Palestinian public opinion: "Because they have no

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[3] Controversy over the PLO's representativeness has meant that some diaspora experts all but exclude it from their analysis (Horowitz, 1986; Esman, 1986). Other scholars regard the PLO's centrality to Palestinian diaspora politics as a given, and examine its institutions in order to test theories of state-building (Brand, 1988) or as examples of mobilisation (Cobban, 1984; Frisch, 1993).

government of their own, the street probably matters more than usual" (Pollock, 1992, 58). Recent calls by Palestinian intellectuals, such as Edward Said, for Palestinian elections to be held around the world, may bring about a re-appraisal of the political relevance of stateless groups in exile.

More sociological studies of ethnic - or migrant - communities in the West have focused largely on issues such as discrimination, alienation and participation. This has been particularly so in countries such as Australia where there is an official policy of multiculturalism. As will be shown below, the homeland dimension of migrant politics is rarely emphasised in such studies. Although communities such as the stateless Palestinians have a close, and highly political, connection to their homeland, the research in Australia and elsewhere has so far failed to illuminate the nature of such connections for them and for similar exile groups.

Finally, scholars in the field of behavioural science have made some interesting contributions to the study of the Palestinian issue, particularly in the field of conflict resolution and attitude formation in the Middle East context (Ben Yehuda and Auerbach, 1991; Bar-Tal, 1990; Inbar and Yuchtman-Yaar, 1989). In terms of diaspora attitudes, however, little work has been done in this field. Moreover, since this thesis is not a psychological study, the findings from such studies must be regarded as no more than suggestive; they will therefore be only selectively referred to. Among the limitations of such research, for example, is the fact that

the clinical approach to psychological testing rarely considers the external political environment as a variable which may affect results.[4]

So far, then, it has been seen that only a limited number of studies over a narrow range of disciplines have examined the phenomenon of diaspora community attitudes. What needs to be examined now is the way - or ways - in which those studies have conceptualised the issue, again with the Palestinian case in mind.

For as long as the theoretical point of departure for social scientists was the state, studies involving stateless groups such as the Palestinians were correspondingly few. For example, in a situation where Israel and the Arab states were assumed to be monolithic edifices, attitudes of the minorities under their control were seen as insignificant. Even where an indigenous population was actually in the majority, as in the case of the West Bank and Gaza after 1967, social scientists tended to be preoccupied with issues such as the mechanisms by which the dominant state maintained control. Popular acquiescence to that control was generally regarded as a given.[5] The eruption of the Intifada damaged the credibility of many such state-centred perspectives.

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[4] Bargal & Bar's 1992 study of attitudes to conflict in Israel by is a notable exception to this rule. They relate their findings partly to the effect of the Intifada on the attitudes of their participants.

[5] McLaurin (1979) argues that the same elements of control used against Israel Arabs were applied in the Occupied Territories. For a discussion of that control, see Lustick (1980).

In the Middle East and other "developing" regions, theoretical preoccupations with modernisation and development at state level was another reason for the under-emphasising of individual attitudes, for:

> No single overarching theory integrates all relevant individual orientations and unites them with other aspects of development (Tessler *et al*, 1987, 4).

Meanwhile, modernisation theory postulated some consequences seen as inevitable when groups from "traditional" societies encountered the twentieth-century state. The first of these consequences was expected to be assimilation, and the second was secularisation. Later, both these expectations were confounded, in the Palestinian case as in others.

Increasingly, as state authority was challenged by mobilised ethnic minorities, assimilationist theory was replaced by that on ethnicity. Minority groups thus assumed new prominence in the literature. Palestinians in Israel, for example, were shown to be not only un-assimilated, but to be increasingly politicised, if not radicalised (Smooha, 1989). In the West, Palestinians and other Arabs were shown to be have undergone a process of de-assimilation (Zaghel, 1976). The focus of academic attention was now increasingly upon the relations between ethnic minorities and the state. Despite this new emphasis in the literature, attitudinal links to the homeland of those minorities were not seen as directly relevant to the new politics of ethnicity.

As assimilation theory crumbled, so did another former expectation on the part of scholars - that modernisation would be accompanied by secularisation. Nowhere was this expectation shattered more forcefully than in the Middle East, where

developments in the region forced some radical re-appraisals. Scholarly unpreparedness was due to several causes:

> Secular presuppositions - which inform our academic disciplines and outlook on life - have been a major obstacle to understanding Islamic politics ..
> Neither development theory nor international relations considered religion a significant variable for political analysis (Esposito, 1992, 200-1).

Some observers of the Middle East, and of its peoples, now choose to define ethnicity almost solely in religious terms:

> Religion is, however, considered to be one of the most important symbolic foci that provide bases for ethnicity.
> .. in many cases religion largely determines the maintenance, expression, and mobilisation of ethnicity (Ben-Rafael & Sharot, 1991, 22-3).

This perspective is often extended to the politics of immigrant communities in the West, where it has been observed that:

> To the extent that religion is a 'primordial' bond, immigrants may seek association through religious bonds when adjusting to an alien culture (Mistilis, 1984, 83).

It is argued here that this approach is not always an appropriate conceptualisation. The Palestinian case is one where there is a notable lack of consensus on the issue. There appears to be, for example, a contradiction between the historical lack of sectarian tendencies among Palestinians, and the recent, highly publicised phenomenon of a growing Palestinian Islamic movement. Many scholars take strong exception to the idea that Palestinian attitudes and behaviour are dictated by primordial factors rather than by the political exigencies of their situation:

> The uprising is first and foremost an uprising of Arab Muslims and Christians. The primary cause of the intifada was not Islam or Islamic revivalism but continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza .. (Esposito, 1992, 182).

The relevant variable determining attitudes - and possibly behaviour - towards a conflict, it is argued by these scholars, is far more likely to be situational than primordial.

The discussion up to this point has shown that one is unlikely to find out much regarding "the exile's state of mind" in any of the fields of research examined so far. For, if international relations fails to take account of attitudes within diaspora communities, so the other social sciences have failed to take into consideration the trans-state dimension of ethnic minority politics. Moreover, there is considerable controversy as to the most appropriate way of conceptualising such issues. The need for empirically-based studies to bridge these gaps in the literature appears clear.

A question to be dealt with in a later section is just why the study of diaspora attitudes - Palestinian and otherwise - is important. First, however, it is necessary to examine the state of the research currently being done on attitudes - particularly Palestinian - in both the Middle East context and in the West.

CURRENT STATE OF THE MIDDLE EAST RESEARCH

Israel

In comparison with the situation in the rest of the region, Israeli survey research is flourishing. There are relatively few restrictions on researchers, and generous

funding is often available. Some observers, noting the current tendency for US government institutions - particularly defence and security agencies - to become involved in Middle East research projects, nevertheless perceive a danger that the integrity of foreign area studies will thereby suffer (Eickelman, 1992, 11-12).

On the other hand, it could be argued that the greater responsibility placed upon the shoulders of academics who have a direct input into policy-making might ensure more, rather than less rigorousness. Peres and Yuchtman-Yaar were sponsored in their recent study of trends in Israeli democracy by the Israel Democracy Institute - "the first pro-active, policy oriented think tank in Israel". In that study they describe how "theoreticians in the academic world are frustrated as they are distanced from the ongoing hectic pace of decision-making among politicians" (Peres and Yuchtman-Yaar, 1992, 58). Yet their study is not alone in failing to fully address the implications for policy-makers - and for academia - of their own data on issues such as Jewish ethnocentrism towards Arabs, a subject on which they make no policy recommendations.

Smooha makes some ambitious claims concerning the function of survey research in Israel:

> These survey data .. can dispel misconceptions and promote understanding between Arabs and Jews. Second, they can be a base for a policy shift from control over Arabs to compromise and to a certain degree of power-sharing. And third, the survey findings are a reliable source about Israeli Arabs' views and desires. This is crucial if their status is to be considered in future negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians .. (Smooha 1989, xviii).

Smooha is partly legitimised in his claims by the fact that he surveyed the attitudes of both Arabs and Jews.[6] Unfortunately, one of the most striking features of survey research in Israel is the routine exclusion of the non-Jewish population from samples. Simon (1989, 127) has drawn attention to the fact that, in the 40 years of its existence, the Institute of Applied Social Research had interviewed no Arabs in its "national" polls. Peres and Yuchtman-Yaar (1992, 6) similarly admit of their own study that: "The most serious limitation of the sample (one that unfortunately appears in almost all public opinion surveys made in Israel) is the nonrepresentation of the Arab public".[7]

It is not easy to explain the Judaeo-centric nature of Israeli research, academic and otherwise. Ben Rafael and Sharot (1991, 202), discussing ethnicity in Israel, have perceptively pointed out that Israeli Jews "do not perceive Arabs as 'relevantly similar' and rarely discuss them in terms of discrimination". As far as many Israeli Jews are concerned, therefore, ethnic discrimination is either not seen as an important issue (Zuckerman, Herzog and Shamir, 1990, 240), or is seen as applying solely to the Ashkenazi-Sephardi divisions among Jews.

The Palestinian inhabitants of Israel, who total about 20% of the population, represent a classic case of the non-assimilated ethnic minority. Smooha (1992, 6)

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[6] Despite the comprehensiveness of Smooha's approach, his assessment in a later study that Arab-Jewish relations are attaining "mutual accommodation" (Smooha, 1992, 7) is highly debatable. His own data contains little to support such a claim.

[7] In an earlier study carried out in collaboration with Inbar, Yuchtman-Yaar did include Palestinian Arabs in the sample (Inbar and Yuchtman-Yaar, 1989).

has described how: "Growing modernization further exacerbates the Arabs' disillusionment with Israel". This resistance to assimilation - when modernisation theory had predicted the seamless absorption of all such groups into the nation-state - has rarely been systematically analysed, and Tessler (1990, 47) has pointed to the latent risks for Israeli political leaders of the fact that their characterization of Palestinian political sentiments has been incorrect.

Two recent developments in the region have highlighted the risks inherent in ignoring, or being misinformed on, minority attitudes. Both the Intifada and the Gulf War are widely acknowledged to have polarised attitudes on the part of both Arabs and Jews (Tessler, 1990; Arian, 1991). The observation by Rouhana (1990, 68) that the Israeli Palestinians' response to the Intifada could be characterised as "profound sentimental identification and limited behavioral support" contrasted sharply with those of others who predicted a second, full-scale Intifada inside Israel: "With every day that the Intifada goes on, the likelihood that the Israeli Arab community will join it increases (Simon, 1989, 126). In Rouhana's view (1990, 68), the problem lay in: "Israeli society's shallow understanding of how the local Arab society relates to Israel .. and to their fellow Palestinians". The Gulf War also saw Israelis and Palestinians locked into mutual incomprehension of the other group's responses to those events, and social scientists have not, it seems, been able to bridge that comprehension gap.

If Rouhana sees a basic lack of understanding as the problem, others claim to find outright bias in the research in Israel.[8] Matched against these perceptions are those of analysts such as Pollock (1992, 49), who sees opinion polling conducted by Palestinians as often aimed at proving some political point. If politics on the ground has become increasingly polarised, so -it would seem - has the research.

Researchers in Israel and elsewhere have sometimes assumed that Palestinian attitudes, particularly those of Muslims, are dictated by primordial forces such as religious fanaticism; entrenched hatred of Jews; a propensity for violence as a means of resolving conflict; and tribal traditions. Such perceptions in turn legitimise Palestinian marginalisation, on a number of levels. Yet there have been a number of studies of Palestinians in Israel in which the findings have confounded such stereotypes. Some of these findings are summarised below:

- Demographic characteristics have no significant effect on Palestinian political attitudes (Tessler, 1977, 323; Inbar & Yuchtman-Yaar, 1989, 61).

- Traditionalism has less effect on Palestinian attitudes than has been thought. Smooha (1989, 149) found that "The treatment of Arabs is, overall, a greater source of Arab ethnocentrism than Arab traditionalism".

- Muslim Palestinians from rural villages do not necessarily hold anti-democratic views when compared to Jews from urban areas. According to Simon (1989, 120) Israeli Arabs were "consistently .. on the side of greater freedom and greater support for the right of dissent than the Jewish community".

- Personal experiences affect Palestinian attitudes (Smooha, 1989, 149), sometimes in combination with other factors such as ideology (Tessler, 1977, 318-9).

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[8] See, for example, Raja Khalidi's distinction between "non-Zionist" and "pro-Zionist" research (Khalidi, 1988, 7 ff).

- Palestinian attitudes are moderated when a distinction is made between what is desirable and what is acceptable (Inbar & Yuchtman-Yaar, 1989, 47).

The above issues represent some of the central questions to be tackled in this thesis.

Among those questions is the extent to which Palestinian politics has been "Islamicised". In Ben-Rafael and Sharot's important study (1991, 22-3, 116) of ethnicity, religion and class in Israel they highlight ".. the religious differences in Israel between Jews and Arabs, most of who are Muslim". Later, they note that ethnic divisions are "based in the US on race and in Israel on religion and national identity". Whether scholars are justified in suggesting that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be viewed solely from a religious or sectarian perspective is questioned throughout this thesis.[9]

Occupied Territories

The research environment in the Occupied Territories has long stood in stark contrast to that in Israel. Military closure of universities; respondent reticence and suspicion; intervention by the military authorities; and the possibility of sanctions against local researchers - are all formidable obstacles which have historically inhibited the progress of academic endeavours. Pollock's assertion (1992, 49) that Palestinian-run opinion surveys are "apparently tolerated by Israeli occupation authorities" may now be partly true, but ignores the legacy of decades in which

[9] Ben Rafael and Sharot (1991, 5) justified the exclusion of Palestinian Arabs from their survey population on the grounds that ethnic divisions among Israeli Jews are "more sociologically interesting".

researchers in the field experienced imprisonment - or the threat of it - and the confiscation of materials (Shadid & Seltzer, 1988, 19; Makhoul, 1986, 9).

Currently, single-issue opinion polls - particularly those carried out by the recently-established Palestinian research bodies to which Pollock refers - are becoming a feature of research activity in the Occupied Territories. There remains, however, a notable lack of in-depth academic studies, and an absence of data from past studies with which to compare current findings.

The establishment of a relationship of trust between researcher and respondent becomes crucial when the target population feels itself under threat from external forces. This factor has inhibited, and continues to inhibit easy access for all researchers, but more so for those openly connected with, for example, Israeli institutions. Moshe Ma'oz, a Defence Ministry adviser when he conducted his study of the West Bank elite, nevertheless felt that his "empathy" with his respondents overcame any prejudicial effect of his status on his findings (Ma'oz, 1984, xiv). For some Israeli researchers working, for example, in the volatile location of Gaza refugee camps at the beginning of the Intifada, the issue of respondent trust is not even raised (Marx, 1992, 282). On the other hand, some Palestinian and other researchers with the undoubted benefits of local access have been criticised for insufficient rigour in the conduct of the research itself.[10]

[10] See, for example, Moughrabi's critique of the methodology used in Shadid & Seltzer's 1988 study (Moughrabi, 1987, 128).

If physical and political difficulties in the field are responsible for the small number of studies done in the West Bank and Gaza, they may also help explain certain imbalances in those studies. Peretz (1991), looking at the impact of the Gulf War on Israelis and Palestinians, contrasted findings from properly-conducted opinion polls in Israel with his personal observations of behaviour in the Occupied Territories. Not all of his conclusions, for example on the connection between the War and an alleged increase in Palestinian violence, were equally supported by empirical evidence.[11]

As in Israel, however, there has been an academic failure to consider local Arab attitudes as relevant to the political process. This was particularly so as long as the population was seen as acquiescing to the military presence. While the Intifada has overturned most of these perceptions, contemporary scholars are still referring to the earlier period as: "what had been a *quasi-normal* relationship between Israelis and Palestinians living in the territories" (emphasis added) (Peres & Yuchtman-Yaar, 1992, 36).

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[11] It is not only the Arab inhabitants of the Occupied Territories who are under-researched; the Jewish settlers have rarely been the subject of academic investigation, and never - to the writer's knowledge - systematically surveyed as to their views. The reasons for the omission are not entirely clear, especially as the settlers' political clout is widely acknowledged. The Israeli writer David Grossman, whose personal odyssey into the Territories became the subject of his controversial book, *The Yellow Wind* (1988, 48-50), acknowledges their unique status as "people who set history in motion", and "impresarios of history". Robert Friedman, in his book *Zealots for Zion* (1992, xxxvi), likewise states that the settler movement "has changed the geography and character of Israel", while the movement's founding ideologies "had combined to set the national agenda of the Jewish state". Events such as the February 1994 Hebron mosque massacre of fifty-odd Muslim worshippers, by a Jewish settler, may lead to more attention being given to the settler dimension of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The fact that a population is under military occupation is not only damaging for the feasibility of survey research projects; it can also be seen as a - or, it is argued in this thesis, the - crucial variable determining attitudes and behaviour on the part of that population. One way of categorising the admittedly limited body of research on this subject is to divide studies into those which admit the centrality of the occupation variable, and those which downplay or overlook it in favour of other factors. Of those other factors, primordialist approaches - particularly those focusing on religious affiliations - are not uncommon, as has been suggested above.

That the primordialist approach can be applied by those who might be most expected to reject it is exemplified by references in the work of Palestinian scholars to, for example, "the traditional medievalism of the Palestinian society" (Ata, 1986, 5) and to romantic assertions, despite the authors' own evidence to the contrary, that "there have been no intrinsic changes in the traditional values of the village" (Escribano & El-Joubeh, 1981, 158).

In a more systematic study of belief systems in the Occupied Territories, the authors - admitting that they were initially influenced by "notions that religion is the driving force in all Palestinian society" - found that: "Most remarkable, perhaps, are the secular attitudes found here with regard to religion .." (Weaver, Gillespie & Al-Jarbawi, 1985, 115-6). In a later, and more specifically political study, Inbar & Yuchtman-Yaar (1989, 51) came to the important conclusion that:

"The political choices of the Palestinians [in the Occupied Territories] cannot be predicted from their religiosity".[12]

Weaver, Gillespie and Al-Jarbawi (1985, 122) had characterised the Occupation largely as a structural impediment to the course of their research. In their conclusion, however, they described Palestinian nationalism as "intensified by 'negative stimuli', in particular the Israeli occupation". The centrality of the Occupation to any study of Palestinian politics in the West Bank and Gaza was also recognised by Shadid and Seltzer (1988), who concluded that socio-demographic factors affected attitudes in the Occupied Territories less than personal experiences such as arrest or land confiscation. The significance of their other conclusions are enhanced by the paucity of similar surveys, and by the accuracy of the authors' predictions. Few researchers have yet been able to carry out surveys of similar size, scope and value.

The effects of occupation on the political attitudes of the population have been perceptively analysed in Sara Roy's studies of Gaza refugee camps. Roy's work follows earlier work done after 1967 by researchers such as Dodd and Barakat (1968). In 1989 she found that, while physical conditions under occupation had worsened for the refugees, a combination of other factors had resulted in an actual *softening* of attitudes towards Israel.[13] Yet Roy's warning (1989, 80-81) - that

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[12] Nor was religious affiliation shown to have any discernible effect on Egyptian attitudes, in another study by the same authors (Inbar & Yuchtman-Yaar, 1985, 715).

[13] One of those factors was the Intifada. In contrast to the view that the Intifada was solely an expression of increased hostility to Israel and to its Jewish population, Israeli research on conflict

lack of political momentum towards ending occupation might lead to a reversal of Palestinian willingness to compromise - proved prophetic. Her later study (1991), written after the Gulf War, noted the disturbing symptoms of political despair. The implication appears to be that, while experiences on the ground can and do affect attitudes, it is less easy to predict the direction in which those attitudes might shift.

Those for whom the Occupation is the central fact of Palestinian politics have argued that Palestinian reactions to both the Intifada and the Gulf War were dictated by hopes that the Occupation would thereby be ended. Opinion in Israel and elsewhere, however, tended to perceive both phenomena more narrowly as manifestations of hostility to Israel and to Israelis. While much was written on the subject at the time, systematic examination of actual attitudes and expectations in the Territories was rare. Peretz's (1991) somewhat superficial treatment has already been mentioned. Finkelstein's analysis (1992, 61-4), on the other hand, argued that Palestinian views were formulated mainly around the hope that Iraq's attacks would be instrumental in ending the Occupation.[14] Echoing Roy's 1991 conclusions, Finkelstein also suggested that Palestinian attitudes towards Israel, which hardened during the crisis, did so as a direct result of the increased repression which they experienced during it.

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management has found an association between the increase in Palestinian self-esteem brought about by the Intifada, and heightened tolerance of Jews (Bargal & Bar, 1992, 151). This issue is a controversial one: an earlier study in Israel, noting an increase in "Palestinian" self-identification, had concluded: ".. one must assume self-definitional change reflects growing alienation from Israelis." (Haddad, McLaurin and Nakhleh, 1979, 99). Clearly, Bargal and Bar's findings challenge such assumptions.

[14] Finkelstein (1992, 63) quotes a West Bank teacher who recalled: "Each missile equalled hope. .. Hope that Israel would finally be forced to negotiate and the nightmare of the occupation would finally end."

The argument for considering experiences on the ground as an important variable in attitude formation is buttressed by Frisch's study (1993, 258-9, 263) of Intifada activists. Regarding the "sociological factors" which influenced levels of commitment to the PLO, Frisch's data can be interpreted as showing that variables such as the individual's age were less important than the fact that many had spent their most formative years in prison, with predictable effects on their politicisation.

Nowhere are the deficiencies in Occupied Territories research more evident than in the treatment of the Islamic movement and its influence on the inhabitants. It is tempting, for example, to take Legrain's statement (1991, 72) that Islam has now become integral to the politics of the Occupied Territories, as signifying a major change in the political spectrum. While so far there is a lack of survey research to systematically explore the Islamic dimension of attitudes in the Territories, there is certainly other evidence to support Legrain's assertions.[15]

The current focus on what AbuKhalil (1992, 25) has termed "theologocentric analysis" has caused more directly political perspectives to recede. The dichotomy mentioned earlier between those who see Palestinian attitudes and behaviour as moulded by the individual and collective experience of Occupation, and those who seek alternative - in this instance, Islamic - versions, is sharply defined by Esposito (1992, 182): "The primary cause of the intifada was not Islam or Islamic

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[15] A French journalist recently claimed that: "Hamas's support throughout all the occupied territories is between 35 and 40 per cent". The claim was made on the basis of elections in universities, chambers of commerce and professional organisations only (*Guardian Weekly*, 9 May 1993), and is seen as exaggerated by some other observers.

revivalism but continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza". In the continued absence of national elections wherein Palestinians can express their own opinions, the need for survey research on this sensitive subject is greater than ever.

Arab World

Social science research in the Arab world has suffered from restrictions similar to those in the Occupied Territories. The methodological and other difficulties have been discussed at some length by researchers such as Tessler and Suleiman.[16] Regime sensitivities, and the difficulties in obtaining the trust of the target population, are accentuated in the case of research involving Palestinian groups. While studies such as Brand's unrivalled work (1988) on Palestinian institutions are clear evidence that logistical and political difficulties can be overcome by skilled researchers, other problems and gaps in the research remain. The recycling of out-of-date material, for example, occurs regularly, as does duplication of the same study in a number of publications.

This is not to say that valuable work has not been done in the Arab context, only that the lack of political liberalisation and the corresponding lack of academic independence have had deleterious effects on the current state of the research. Self-censorship is regularly exercised by the survey researcher. Ghabra's 1987

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[16] See, for example, Tessler *et al. The Evaluation and Application of Survey Research in the Arab World* (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1987). While the book has been criticised for its now somewhat outmoded focus on issues of development (Pollock, 1992, 26), no other study has supplanted it in terms of comprehensive coverage of the subject.

survey of Palestinian families in Kuwait, for example, skirted around issues such as Kuwait's refusal to grant citizenship or permanent residence to stateless Palestinians.

Surveys of Palestinian minorities in the Arab world have often focused on identity - an issue not directly relevant to the discussion in this thesis. It is generally interesting to note, however, that nationalistic orientations have generally tended to be more strongly expressed by Palestinians than by other Arabs for whom factors such as political ideology, family ties or religious affiliation counted more (Melikian & Diab, 1983, 24). As far back as 1971, a survey of Arab students in Beirut had found that among Jordanian-Palestinians, ".. religious affiliation had no statistically significant bearing on their attitudes. If it had any bearing at all, it was the Christians who were more inclined to support the commandos and less inclined to support the peaceful solution" (Barakat, 1971, 95).

Pollock's recent study (1992) of Arab public opinion for the Washington Institute for Near East Policy represents a more overtly political approach. The author's brief was to analyse trends in Arab opinion on "the street" for their relevance to policy makers. He accurately pinpoints the need to ascertain public opinion among Palestinians ".. where - because they have no government of their own - the street probably matters more than usual", while dismissing the Palestinians' own attempts to carry out such surveys as being of "questionable reliability" (Pollock, 1992, 58,48).

Pollock's view of the function of Arab opinion polling, however, is a strictly instrumental one. He sees the exercise as aimed mainly at "influencing the regional political climate". That such ambitions are not far-fetched is borne out by the fact that the government-controlled Syrian press cited American survey data to publicly justify their stance in the Gulf War (Pollock, 1992, 65,35). The problem is not just the uses to which the surveys are put, but the ways in which the political agenda shapes the analysis itself. Pollock's *a priori* commitment to validating the "peace process" leads him to ignore significant aspects of his own data regarding the consistency of Arab views on such issues as the unacceptability of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories.

Within the Middle East context as a whole, then, survey research on Palestinian attitudes has been beset with difficulties, both physical and political. In Israel, there is a belated recognition of the need to include Palestinian citizens in surveys, and in the Occupied Territories it now appears that some of the historical problems besetting survey researchers may be alleviated. The Arab world, where regimes appear to feel less, rather than more secure as the years go by, remains a grey area for survey research. Conceptually, the battle lines between the primordialists and those who might loosely be called the "situationists" appear to remain in place. In the Palestinian case, this means that some researchers see attitudes largely as a product of experiences related to dispossession and Occupation, while others adopt a more Orientalist perspective in their attempts to explain or predict those same attitudes.

CURRENT STATE OF THE WESTERN DIASPORA RESEARCH

While it is acknowledged that Palestinians expelled from their homeland are numerically concentrated within the Arab world (see Table 1-1), the term "Diaspora" is generally used in this thesis as a convenient way of referring to what Anton Shammas has called the "Western Diaspora".[17] The latter term covers places like the United States and Australia. It will have been seen in the previous section that research in the Arab world has only limited relevance for the purposes of comparison with this study, and references to "the Diaspora" will reflect this fact in generally excluding Arab world Palestinians. The Diaspora group most directly comparable to the Palestinian-Australian community is located in the United States.

United States

If survey researchers in the Middle East context have often eschewed political topics, no similar constraints have operated in the USA. The politicisation of ethnicity has been reflected in the academic attention being paid to the study of a host of minority groups. In the case of Palestinian- and other Arab-Americans, the homeland dimension of such community studies has either been central to the analysis, or peripheral, according to the researcher's individual perspective. Yet even the studies which encompass the Palestine issue (rather than, say, attitudes to

[17] The writer has also seen recent references by West Bank Palestinians to an "Inner Diaspora". It is not clear, however, whether this means those who were expelled from Israel into the Occupied Territories, or all Palestinians living in the Middle East who were displaced from anywhere in Palestine.

US policy) have focused largely on what the migrants feel *about* the homeland, without linking such attitudes to what they experienced *within* it.

US Palestinians began to define themselves as a community with distinct political aspirations and needs, only in the early 1970s (Turki, 1980, 17), and the research on them followed that self-definition. Other than Sulemiman's study (1973) of Arab - including Palestinian - elites (Suleiman, 1973), and one study of Palestinians in USA by Tuma in 1981, there was almost no survey work done on Palestinian-American attitudes until the late 1980s. Zaghel's work (1976) on Palestinians in Chicago was mainly concerned with issues of assimilation - or, in the case of his study - of de-assimilation.

Academic research into Palestinian attitudes in USA has generally been carried out by those with one of two main orientations. Some researchers view diaspora communities as "members of the international community of their home nation, a status held regardless of their geographical location .." (Shain, 1989, 51-2). It thus follows that attitudes within a community of, say Palestinians, are examined primarily because of the researcher's conviction that they represent "a microcosm of the Palestinians at large", since "even in their diaspora they remain one people" (Tuma, 1981, 1). Reiser (1987, 94) likewise described his USA-based Arab respondents as representing a sector of *Arab* society. Moughrabi, the pioneer in empirical surveying of US Palestinians, likewise concentrates mainly on issues

relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Moughrabi, 1989; Moughrabi & El-Nazer, 1989).[18]

Set against this global orientation is the more particularistic view of researchers whose emphasis is on ethnic minorities' participation in - or sometimes alienation from - pluralist systems. Of particular interest are the tensions that can arise when a migrant group perceives itself to be the object of generalised hostility in the host society. The research on Palestinian, Arab and Muslim groups has highlighted many of these tensions. Cainkar (1987, 7) notes the contradiction, in the Palestinian case, between the need to "be Palestinian and still be empowered in America". Christison's 1989 survey was explicitly designed to explore "Palestinian-American attitudes *toward being American*" (emphasis added). Christison is also one of the few observers who has explicitly - and usefully - linked statelessness with an inability to commit oneself politically to the host country (Christison, 1989, 19,26). Similar concerns have led Suleiman to interpret the interests of the Arab-American community as parallel to those of American democracy itself (Suleiman, 1991, 28).

Even where researchers homeland issues in their analysis, few studies have postulated the existence of an empirically-based relationship between homeland experiences and the attitudinal stance of the individual in exile. In the Palestinian case, their relatively recent deracination from the homeland has meant that the

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[18] Moughrabi (1989, 19) describes his and El-Nazer's study as "the first major empirical survey of Palestinian opinion in the United States". While this is undoubtedly a fair description of his own work, he does not acknowledge the existence of Tuma's earlier work (1981).

locus of their socialisation was usually in the Middle East. Given the increasing numbers of displaced groups seeking settlement in the West, there is a clear need for more academic attention to be paid to this dimension.

Australia

Australia's policy of multiculturalism, dovetailing with global trends in social science which have increasingly emphasised ethnicity, has meant that both academics and government bodies have become increasingly focused on ethnic issues. Only in the last ten or so years, however, have Arabic-speaking communities - largely the Lebanese - been the subject of such research. As in the USA, the homeland connection has generally been overlooked in favour of issues more directly connected with settlement and participation. Some sociologists, however, have called for a more international perspective on migration which will "allow for some illumination of both ends of the migration story" (Bottomley, 1992, v). Others have noted the importance of understanding migrants' homeland political experiences in terms of their capacity for adjusting to the host country's political system (Richards, 1984, 160-1).

Few empirical studies have examined migrants' political background prior to emigration as explanatory of their attitudes once abroad, although that is not to say researchers are unaware of its relevance. In Mograby's study of Lebanese political behaviour he drew attention to the fact that "it would be useful to examine the role of the ethnic communities .. in homeland politics" (Mograby, 1985, 166-7).

Humphrey's definitive work on Lebanese Muslim ethnicity sees the socio-historical environment of immigrants as including both past and present circumstances (Humphrey, 1982, 317).

Apart from some descriptive studies of Jewish attitudes to Middle East issues (Encel & Buckley, 1978; Beirman, 1990; Rubinstein, 1991), no systematic surveys of political attitudes relating to the homeland of a Middle Eastern community have been carried out in Australia. The respondents in Taft's 1973 studies of Jews in Melbourne, for example, were not Middle East-born.[19] Surveys of Arab-Australians, which began only very recently to include Palestinians as a separate group, have been mostly government-sponsored (AAWC, 1991; Abu Duhou and Teese, 1992), and therefore limited in scope to non-political aspects of settlement and participation.

Two further aspects of current Australian research on Palestinians and on similar groups need to be discussed. Firstly, since the Lebanese dominate not only the official statistics but also the research on Arab migrant groups, it has been almost inevitable for conclusions based on Lebanese data to be generalised to other Arabs. To illustrate: the sectarianism so characteristic of Lebanese society and politics has led Mackay towards the conclusion that "religion can divide more than ethnicity

[19] Some of Taft's data can nevertheless be usefully compared with those for other groups such as the Palestinians. Relevant issues include the influence of country of birth on identification patterns in the diaspora (Taft, 1973a, 66); and the suggestion that, during the 1967 war, it was the reactions of the dominant culture to an event with which the group was identified which might have encouraged the group's own overtly positive reactions to the same event (Taft, 1973b, 124).

can unite" (McKay, 1985, 327). Whether this is so in the case of all other Middle Eastern groups remains to be empirically proven.

The second consideration follows on from the point just made. In the case of exile groups where national identity is above all centred on a political goal, the continued frustration of that goal can lead to perceptions of discrimination, both local and global. Those perceptions are compounded in the event of further discrimination, say racial or religious. Given the multicultural ethos of Australia, the need for ascertaining migrant attitudes not only towards settlement and integration, but towards more explicitly political problems, would seem essential.

"Situational" factors can be broadly defined as referring not only to the host country environment of the individual, but also to the individual's past experiences and present contact vis-a-vis the homeland. The research in Australia can generally be said, not so much to have failed to show a relationship between situational factors and migrant attitudes, as to have overlooked the issue to start with. The next task is to establish why this and similar gaps in the research matter; or, in other words, to outline the actual significance of the problem.

WHY THE PROBLEM IS IMPORTANT

The Assyrians and Kurds - both groups with large diaspora components - define themselves as nations yet are not generally identified with a struggle for full statehood in their ancestral lands. Palestinians, on the other hand, channel almost

all their political activity into precisely that pursuit. The problem under discussion, then, can be broadly defined as embracing not only the continued statelessness of an ethnic group locked into a conflict situation, but also the active rejection by that group of such statelessness. The problem is compounded when the group's national aspirations for statehood are rejected as a legitimate goal by the world community or by the host countries in which diaspora communities are located. In such a situation, the continued frustration of moves towards statehood can have spillover political effects. It is this ongoing tension, and the conflict with which it is associated, which gives the problem its primary importance.

The global environment in which the perceived marginalisation of a particular group occurs is relevant, in that it can add to the perceived magnitude of the problem. As the republics of the former USSR one by one gain their independence, comparisons are inevitably made by the groups who still remain on the periphery of international respectability - "Cains of the modern world", as Yossi Shain (1989, 151) describes the stateless. Palestinians generally class themselves as being among such Cains. In the words of one Palestinian intellectual: "Being stateless is the only state we belong to" (Turki, 1988, 18).

The Palestinian issue has long been integral to Middle East conflict situations. Yet Palestinians' prominence in regional political processes is in contrast to their virtual ethnic invisibility in the diaspora. This invisibility is caused by a number of factors, among them international unwillingness to consider the implications of a large-scale Palestinian "Return" to their homeland in the event of a settlement; and

also Palestinians' own reluctance to acknowledge their ethnic origins and political aims "in countries where they are supposed to be invisible" (Said, 1993, 5).

Academic researchers have been urging for some time that all Palestinians living outside their homeland should be recognised as a part of the Palestinian people (Smith, 1986, 90). Edward Said has explicitly linked the issue of Palestinian statehood to the need to recognise the existence, location and numbers of Palestinians in the diaspora worldwide:

> There is no reason for further Palestinian statelessness .. there can be no excuse for discrimination, abuse, insecurity. As an early step, a census of Palestinians should be taken (*Guardian Weekly*, 31 March 1991).

In the wake of the 1993 Declaration of Principles, there is now a growing consensus that it is time for Palestinians to stand up and be counted - in the most literal sense. It was in 1993 that a Palestine Census Bureau was established in Jerusalem.[20] Since the 1993 Declaration, Edward Said has reiterated his earlier call for the Palestinian Diaspora to be both acknowledged and mobilised, in even more forthright terms than previously:

> One of the first tasks is a Palestinian census, which has to be regarded not just as a bureaucratic exercise but as the enfranchisement of Palestinians wherever they are..
> Now more than ever the process of holding a census - and perhaps, later, world-wide elections - should be a leading item on the agenda for Palestinians everywhere (Said, 1993, 5).

Generally, the ability of scholars, media and government to explain and predict important processes taking place in the Middle East is hampered by lack of information - both demographic and attitudinal - on the people in question.

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[20] Electronic mail message received from Elia Zureik on Palestine News Network, 26 November 1993.

Confusion over Palestinian reactions to the Gulf War is a case in point, as is the expectation of a global Islamicisation of Palestinian politics.[21]

Because of the recent deracination of many Palestinians from their homeland, the link between diaspora and birthplace is very much alive. For, while statelessness might logically be expected to increase attachment to the new host country while loosening ties to the motherland, such is not necessarily the case. In fact, the Palestinian case appears to provide significant evidence that where a group's statelessness is not only rejected by the group itself but is seen as being preserved and maintained by policies on the part of the host country, identification with that host country is negatively affected. If discrimination on the political front is parallelled by ethnic and religious discrimination, or even just the perception of it, the problem worsens.

In this thesis the need to understand Palestinian attitudes is seen as crucial to a comprehension of political processes in the Middle East. Assumptions regarding Palestinian ideology, religiosity, ethnic tolerance, and so on justify the formulation of policies designed to deal with the behaviour expected to result from those attitudes. For, if an "outgroup" is effectively delegitimised by an "ingroup", then policies which deprive the outgroup of its rights are seen as justified.[22]

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[21] Claims have been made, for example, that the headquarters of HAMAS is in the USA (*Middle East International*, 5 February 1993).

[22] Bar-Tal (1990) has usefully pointed out that delegitimisation can result from situations of conflict and/or of ethnocentrism. In the Palestinian/Israeli case, both situations apply.

Importantly, assumptions that the goals of the [Palestinian] outgroup are "far-reaching and evil" (Bar-Tal, 1990, 65) carry over into other countries where Palestinians live, where they influence both policy-makers and public opinion.

There is a need for elucidation of Palestinian aims and beliefs which goes beyond the current patchy and sometimes biased coverage of the subject. Opinion in the Middle East is hardening and polarising, so that the risk of further conflict worsens. Bar-Tal (1990, 67,78) has warned that the delegitimisation occurring in a zero-sum type of conflict can lead to consequences as extreme as genocide. More optimistically, Lesch (1993, 46) expresses the hope that:

> An accord on self-rule could alter the ingrained patterns of behavior and launch the relationship on a different trajectory, away from the current zero-sum game.

Currently, the Middle East imbalance of power appears to dictate the political irrelevance of Palestinian attitudes, and the lack of research reflects that irrelevance. Yet the counter-argument can also be put, namely that accurate analysis of attitudinal patterns among Palestinians can and should provide important input to processes of conflict resolution in the Middle East. In the diaspora where so many now reside - and where they are joined by other minority groups - they form not only a microcosm of homeland politics but also a kind of case study for ways in which such groups relate to and are treated by pluralist systems.

In a nutshell, two principles underlie this study of stateless migrants: the first is that, in order to understand the diaspora, it is necessary to understand the exiles'

relationship to their homeland. And the second is the reverse of the first: namely, that our understanding of the politics of the homeland will inevitably be enhanced by careful study of the diaspora.

WHY THIS STUDY IS IMPORTANT

The data base for this study is a survey of Palestinian attitudes in Sydney. The previous section has concentrated on the general topic of Palestinian statelessness and how those in both homeland and diaspora relate to it, and this section will look in more detail at the impetus behind this particular study. What needs to be established is: why this diaspora is important; why attitudes within it need to be surveyed; and why Sydney was chosen for the carrying out of the attitude survey. Chapter Two will discuss the reasons for, and various aspects of the methodology chosen.

The political activity of most diasporas takes place in relation to a homeland government. In the absence of such a government *in situ*, the political significance of a diaspora is correspondingly enhanced. The argument for the political relevance of the diaspora is also bolstered by its size, relative to the Palestinian population as a whole. Of the roughly 5 million Palestinians, the majority now live outside the borders of mandate Palestine, as Table 1-1 will show:

TABLE 1-1 DISTRIBUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN POPULATION (1984)

	'000
Jordan	1297.6
West Bank	919.0
Israel	602.7
Gaza Strip	509.9
Lebanon	492.2
Kuwait	336.5
Syria	245.3
Saudi Arabia	171.2
Other Arab world	206.0
United States	114.4
Rest of world	151.7
TOTAL	5046.5

Source: "Selected Statistics on the Palestinian Population." Khalidi, 1990, 260. Based on estimates published by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Damascus.
Note: Figures such as the above are only estimates, and are not up-to-date. The 1991 Gulf War, for example, led to a mass exodus of Palestinians from Kuwait, while the figure for USA is now thought to be to be as high as 250,000.

Arguments for the importance of this particular diaspora to regional and world politics go beyond theories related to the newly-enhanced global role for non-state actors, and beyond inevitable comparisons with the Jewish diaspora.[23] Edward Said (1993, 5) has repeatedly called for more recognition of the Diaspora's significance: "Since they comprise at least half of the total Palestinian population their needs and aspirations are not negligible". The call remains valid, whether or

[23] In Sheffer's 1986 study of diasporas, for example, the Palestinian and Jewish case studies are given equal prominence. Several contributors, however, downplay the role of the PLO as representative of the Palestinian population at large. Horowitz (1986, 308), for example, describes the PLO somewhat confusingly as "not a quasi-government of a quasi-state communal organization, but rather a quasi government-in-exile with a diaspora power base".

not there is a large-scale Return in the event of statehood. The larger diaspora communities, for example, have a continual input into PLO policy-making via their representatives in the Palestinian National Council.[24]

Moves to set up a federal council in Australia are currently being made, despite the fact that the groups involved in the moves are not necessarily united. The writer was present at the inaugural meeting of the Federal Council of Palestinian-Australians in Sydney on 25 November 1992. The writer was also present at a public meeting in Sydney on 13 December 1992, held by a another organisation claiming national status - the Australian-Palestinian Council.

It is precisely because they have felt prevented from contributing to PLO decision-making during the period before, during and after the signing of the 1993 Oslo Agreement, that Diaspora communities such as that in the USA have become increasingly restless. Diaspora Palestinian professionals and students recently sent a message to the PLO calling on it to "re-invigorate marginalized democratic structures and processes" and complaining of a leadership minority's "monopoly over decision-making processes" (Electronic mail received on Palestine News network, 14 March 1994).

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[24] Palestinians in Australia have no representative in the PNC. At the 1993 AMESA Conference in Melbourne, the PLO representative cited two reasons for this: firstly, the small size of the community; and secondly, the community's lack of organisation. By way of contrast, he noted that the community in UK had recently set up a national council, and elected a representative to the PNC. He added, however, that there would be no need for this kind of representation in the event of Palestinian statehood.

In the event of statehood, or even of autonomy, the PLO is expected to transform itself into an instrument of government for, as Brand (1990, 232) has noted, the process of transforming the revolutionary organisation into a bureaucracy was begun long ago. The disappearance of the PLO *per se* will not, however, negate the role of the diaspora Palestinians, for a Return by even a fraction of the exiles will affect the very nature of the entity. In the event of a Return, the high level of education and qualifications of what Brand calls "a displaced professional class-in-waiting" (Brand, 1990, 242) may well ensure that those from the Gulf and from the Western Diaspora will exert an influence out of proportion to their numbers. Tuma, who has studied the viability of a Palestinian state over a long period, has pointed out that another important criterion is the citizens' "confidence in identity" (Tuma, 1978, 106). For all these reasons, the need for accurate data on Diaspora Palestinian aspirations and political preferences, is clear.

The Israeli Palestinian writer Anton Shammas (1988) has raised the interesting question of whether a Palestinian state will be as ethnocentric as he perceives the Israeli state to be. If it is, he avers: "An ethnic, non-pluralistic Palestinian state would not appeal to most of the Palestinians living in the western Diaspora." The conundrum suggested by Shammas is whether input from the diaspora will contribute to the democratisation of Palestine, or whether - on the other hand - a non-democratic Palestine will discourage those in the diaspora from contributing their input. In either case, it would be desirable to know the extent to which the diaspora adheres to values broadly defined as democratic.

Further support for the idea of diaspora influence lies in the fact that, in the event of statehood, the PLO has undertaken that all Palestinians will be able to vote for their representatives in Palestine (Brand, 1990, 231). Said, as mentioned earlier, has also canvassed the possibility of Palestinians expressing their political preferences by means of world-wide elections. In the last scenario, Palestinian-Australians (who are currently without direct representation) will have a greater voice in Palestinian affairs of state than they do now. A future State of Palestine will also - like the present State of Israel - remain in need of continuing financial and political support from its diaspora.

What the above goes to show is that, with or without a state, the Palestinian diaspora has and will continue to have an influence which is often under-estimated and sometimes denied altogether. It follows that attitudes within that diaspora should be sought out, rather than overlooked.

At this stage it may be worth repeating Pollock's remark (cited earlier) concerning Palestinian public opinion: "..since they have no government of their own, the street probably matters more than usual" (Pollock, 1992, 58). Pollock's remark raises two issues. Firstly, the lack of a government has been accompanied by the lack of an electoral process, so that Palestinian political preferences have not become general knowledge. Meanwhile, a host of negative stereotypes have achieved wide currency. The application of survey research techniques is one way around such gaps in knowledge, but its limitations in this case have already been described. Pollock's reference to "the street" broaches another matter; in common

with many other surveys of Middle Eastern opinion, surveys of Palestinians have often been confined to elite rather than mass opinion. Moughrabi's latest survey, in the Occupied Territories, is a case in point (Moughrabi *et al.*, 1991).

Palestinian attitudes are often spoken of as if they are globally homogeneous, and indeed there is data to suggest that this is so. But the limitations of the research carried out so far have meant that such assertions lack a strong empirical base. The need for "cumulativeness" in survey research of all Arab populations, by way of replication, or coordinated inter-societal studies, has long been urged by Tessler and other social scientists working in the Middle East (Tessler, 1987, 18).

For all these reasons it was decided that an investigation of attitudes at both mass and elite level, in a part of the diaspora which had never been researched before, and using appropriate survey techniques, would provide some useful insights into diaspora-homeland links in general, and into Palestinian politics in particular.

An added incentive for undertaking this study was the negative stereotyping of Palestinians current in the wider community. A journalist interviewing Hanan Ashrawi for the magazine of a respected Sydney newspaper recently wrote:

> Are the Palestinians now trapped in a world so shaped by lies and betrayal that they suffer from a sort of collective personality disorder? (*Good Weekend*, 19 June 1993).

The rise of HAMAS has led a *Le Monde* journalist to describe young Muslim Palestinians as "ruthless .. desperate and fanatical" (*Guardian Weekly*, 9 May 1993). Among academics, including survey researchers, stereotyping of Arabs and

Palestinians has long occurred. In Gilboa's study of US public opinion on the Middle East, he first states that "The PLO has never been seen as interested in peace", then quotes a US public opinion survey which suggested to respondents that "the Palestinians especially cannot be trusted to honor a land-for-peace agreement" (Gilboa, 1989, 31-2). Mylroie refers to "an element of brutality" in Palestinian politics (Mylroie, 1990, 153). Frankel, during his interviews with members of the Jordanian Palestinian elite, confronted one eminent respondent with the assertion that: "It is also a well-known fact that Arabs engage in slave trade" (Frankel, 1988, 273). Ethnocentrism is an issue on which survey research can and does supply useful data; what is more controversial is the extent to which researchers such as those just cited may actually be *contributing* to racial stereotyping.

As in all survey research projects, practical reasons were undoubtedly a factor influencing the selection of the population, location and methodology for this study. The writer was prevented by financial and logistical reasons from carrying out field work in the Middle East, but had in any case decided that the diaspora was an equally important component of Palestinian politics. Sydney contains the largest concentration of Palestinians in Australia, and is the destination of most Arab immigrants into Australia.

It was anticipated that a study of Palestinian attitudes in Sydney - a study incorporating not only attitudes to Palestine, but also attitudes to the host country - would provide not only a new diaspora perspective onto a crucial Middle East

conflict, but also a glimpse of how displaced ethnic minorities may see themselves in relation to where they live now.

DEFINITIONS

Attempts to define the most basic terms used in this study immediately involve controversy. If the word "Palestine" is one such term, the word "Israel" is another. The original questionnaire design had included a question on whether or not the respondent was born in Israel. The item was immediately rejected by the pre-testing panel, whose view was that respondents - particularly those born before Israel existed - would thereby be alienated.[25]

Accordingly, respondents were asked firstly whether or not they were born in Palestine, and if so, to name the town. By this means it was possible to obtain the necessary information whilst avoiding giving offence. It was then possible to work out whether they came from present-day Israel, or from the Occupied Territories - important variables in the data analysis. No distinction between the different parts of Mandate Palestine was made by any respondent in answering this question, so that birthplaces in Israel, Gaza, West Bank and Jerusalem were all referred to as having been in Palestine.

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[25] As a Palestinian academic put it to the writer: "To use this term means we are denying the United Nations borders of 1947 in which, for example, Galilee is part of the Arab State" (Interview with Dr Shukri Arraf, 26 February 1991).

References to Palestine in this study will often be based upon the respondents' frame of reference, as the context will make clear. On the other hand, where a State of Palestine is mentioned, or inferred, the area of such a state is understood by the writer as referring to the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem only. These distinctions will be reiterated throughout the thesis.

The term "two-state solution" makes a distinction between a pre-1967 Israel, and a State of Palestine comprising the Occupied Territories and including East Jerusalem. It is recognised that opinion in Israel is not unanimous on these issues; it is also recognised, however, that neither the occupation of West Bank/Gaza, nor the annexation of East Jerusalem, have been recognised in international law. Where "Israel" is mentioned, it is the 1948 *de facto* borders of the present-day State of Israel which are implied, although some Palestinians prefer to think of Israel's borders in terms of what was proposed in the 1947 UN Partition Plan.

Diasporas have been defined in many different ways, but Shain's (1989, 51-2) explicitly political definition appears to be one of the most applicable to the Palestinian case:

> In political terms, a national diaspora can be understood as a people with a common national origin who regard themselves, or are regarded by others, as members or potential members of the international community of their home nation, a status held regardless of their geographical location and their citizenship status outside their national soil.

Research on the Palestinians has usually shown that, despite their dispersion, they perceive themselves as one nation, whatever their physical location: "Diaspora Palestinians have come to feel that they belong to a nation much larger than

territorial Palestine" (Turki, 1988, 18). There is less agreement amongst outside observers, however, as to how those outsiders should be classified. Thus, Esman maintains that, if a diaspora is taken to be a minority ethnic group of migrant origin in a host country, then the Palestinians do not qualify, for "they are not by origin immigrants but war refugees" (Esman, 1986, 316). Palestinians, who are generally quite ready to refer to themselves as a diaspora, or else as exiles, reject a classification which describes them either as refugees (with its implied helplessness) or as emigres (where emigration is assumed to have been voluntary).

The term "diaspora" has been consciously used throughout this study because of the sense that it gives of an overt political link to the homeland, and also because it is a term embraced by the Palestinians themselves. Those who define diasporas mainly in terms of their lobbying capacity go even further and maintain that: "The Palestinians in the US, more than any other Palestinians, constitute something close to a diaspora in the conventional sense" (Harik, 1986, 325). Both the general term "Diaspora", and the more specific "Western Diaspora" will be used in this study. The latter term, which is used in this study to include Palestinian-Australians, has already been discussed in some detail in the section on current research.

The term "rejectionist" (and "rejectionism") is given a broad definition in this study, implying rejection of both the PLO's 1988 recognition of the State of Israel and an irredentist repudiation of the concept that a future State of Palestine will be territorially limited to the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, or parts thereof. It

goes without saying that rejectionists also refuse to accept the 1993 Declaration of Principles whereby initial autonomy would be limited to Gaza and Jericho.

This study avoids the term "fundamentalist", which is open to a variety of interpretations, many of them misleading. Piscatori (1991), for one, refers to Islamic fundamentalisms in the plural. "Islamicist" is therefore the term preferred in this study.

LIMITATIONS

Given the pioneering nature of this study - the first real survey of Palestinians in Australia - the main methodological drawback must be seen as the lack of a random sample from which conclusions could be generalised to the Palestinian community as a whole. Although every effort was made to cover a range of attitudes, the possibility of unrepresentativeness must be acknowledged. The sample size - 176 cases - must also be seen as rather small, if not insuperably so.

The inevitable question of bias must also be dealt with. The "snowball" sampling method inevitably involves the possibility of bias, depending as it does on personal networks. Also, some Muslim respondents felt that the Islamic dimension was under-emphasised. This omission was partly a function of the fact that, when the study was initiated, this particular aspect of Palestinian politics had not come into the public prominence it now receives.

An even less foreseen external variable was the occurrence of the Gulf crisis at the time the survey was administered. While the writer believes that core Palestinian attitudes - as opposed to more ephemeral opinions - would have been largely unaffected by what was a transient development, a temporary effect on attitudes cannot be completely ruled out.

Whether the researcher's inevitable closeness to the community has affected her own objectivity remains to be determined by others. Bearing a Palestinian family name (acquired through marriage) certainly helped in gaining access to the community, although the following chapter will make it clear that respondents' confidence in the writer's *bona fides* was by no means automatically given. What is certain, however, is that no project of this kind - where a politically sensitive population is asked to reveal its attitudes to some extremely emotive issues - would be possible without the trust and goodwill of the respondents.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Methodological aspects of the survey, which have not been comprehensively dealt with in this introductory chapter, will be discussed in some detail in Chapter Two. The unusually sensitive and often reticent nature of the target population meant that such issues required considerable attention. Chapters Three, Four and Five contain the analysis of the survey data, supported by reference to qualitative and quantitative material from other sources. Chapter Three deals with the ways in which the Australian end of the Palestinian diaspora experiences and perceives its

host country. The "ethnic invisibility" of the stateless Palestinians in multicultural Australia, together with the issues of discrimination against them - ethnic, religious and political - are discussed.

Chapter Four focuses on how the diaspora views its Palestinian homeland and the politics thereof. After first presenting the data on the sample's attitudes to these issues, the second part of the chapter investigates the effect of socio-demographic factors on the holding of those attitudes. This investigation paves the way for the discussion in Chapter Five, where some more specific hypotheses are tested concerning the effect on attitudes of the pre-emigration homeland experience. In short, Chapters Three and Four seek to clarify what this group of Palestinians thinks and feels about the politics of their situation.

The main analytical thrust of Chapter Five, on the other hand, is to attempt to analyse *why* those attitudes might be held, and to contextualise those findings within developments in the contemporary Middle East. The concluding chapter will draw together the wider implications of the findings for both the future of the Palestinian homeland and for the multicultural society in which this particular Diaspora community is located.

The discussion in this introductory chapter has sought to position diasporas in general within global trends whereby trans-state actors have assumed increasing prominence. In the Palestinian case, contemporary developments in the region and around the world have meant that their own Diaspora has probably never had as

much political significance as it has today. One of the results of such developments has been renewed interest by academics and other researchers in the Palestinians' previously under-researched attitudes. Their reactions to displacement and statelessness; to military occupation and exile: to stereotyping and discrimination - whether in the homeland or in their new host countries - will be described and analysed throughout the following chapters. Before arriving at that point, however, Chapter Two will deal with the conceptualisation and implementation of the research project, focusing on the methodological aspects of surveying this peculiarly vulnerable and often elusive population.

Chapter Two

METHODOLOGY

In deciding to carry out an attitude survey of the Palestinian community in Sydney, the researcher was well aware of the methodological difficulties likely to arise. There was, for example, the almost certain knowledge that a wholly representative sample was likely to prove unattainable. Such knowledge places a researcher in a dilemma, for if equal probability sampling is not possible, there will be little justification for generalising from the conclusions of the study to the wider population. In the case of pioneering studies of unresearched populations, where the findings and conclusions will provide the data base for subsequent studies, the researcher's ability to arrive at general - rather than sample-specific - conclusions is even more desirable than usual. Representativeness of the sample selected is, after all, essential for both the cumulativeness of studies carried out within a particular population, and for the validity of inter-societal comparisons. This having been said, there are also other issues to consider:

- In some situations randomisation of the sample is simply not possible;
- A degree of representativeness can nevertheless be sought in a variety of other ways;
- Given a reasonable likelihood of representativeness in the sample, the data and the analysis thereof can still provide valuable insights into the attitudes of a particular group;

- In some cases the survey researcher's investigation into the reasons why a particular group is inaccessible or reticent, can in itself be a source of useful data.

It is increasingly acknowledged that there are many populations whose characteristics and circumstances make it difficult to select and survey a properly randomised sample - one for which each member of the survey population is equally likely to be selected. Paradoxically, the very factors which may draw social scientists to investigate a particular target group - such as their experience of and reactions to unusual levels of oppression and discrimination - can contribute to major difficulties for the researcher. Conditions in both the Occupied Territories and in parts of the Arab world, for example, present unique challenges to the researcher, yet social scientists have not abandoned their attempts to study those populations. In fact, ascertaining the often political reasons for those difficulties can in itself be a most informative exercise. This was certainly the case in the present study.[27]

The Palestinian case in particular requires patience, flexibility and a willingness to modify some established survey methods. This is so not only in the Middle East but also in the diaspora, where homeland experiences still rankle, and where suspicions born in the Middle East are applied to the host country situation. Moreover, expectations and perceptions of discrimination in the new country cause

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[27] For a comprehensive coverage of the methodological aspects of survey research in the Arab World, see Tessler *et al.*, 1987.

many respondents to shy away from anything resembling or seen as associated with "the authorities", including university researchers. The existence of such fears, together with structural difficulties such as the "ethnic invisibility" of Palestinians in Australian statistics, and the fact that they are not geographically clustered, influenced the way the study was carried out.

Another challenge facing the researcher was the vital need to establish trust within the community. The success or failure of all survey research ultimately rests upon the cooperativeness of the respondents, and Palestinian history has been such that trust towards outsiders is given slowly. Brand has described the methodological dilemma of those studying the Palestinians thus:

> I sometimes wonder if my questions were at times too benign, if I should have pushed harder for additional information. Perhaps. But I was keenly aware of the value of the trust people had placed in me: preserving that trust was ultimately more important than asking for more sensitive information, however it might have strengthened the study (Brand, 1988, 264).

Not everyone shares Brand's view. The fact that the Palestinians are Middle Eastern, Arab and mainly Muslim has led some researchers to categorise them according to somewhat "Orientalist" concepts, and to arrange their methodologies accordingly. In one study of the Occupied Territories, respondents were asked their reaction to the statement that "It is impossible for a country to be both Islamic and democratic" (Weaver, Gillespie and Al-Jarbawi, 1985, 119). Such statements had been "chosen to represent the major perspectives that exist on the subject" (*Ibid.*, 115) although the authors did not say whose perspectives they were. Not surprisingly, the response was strongly negative. In this case, the authors

acknowledged that the terms they used may have been unacceptable to the respondents, but felt that their first duty was to remain in touch with their Western readers.

In the writer's experience, Brand's empathetic approach is ultimately the most productive. In designing the survey instrument for this study, for example, there were as many items rejected for their alienating effect as were chosen for their expected yield of information. In-depth interviewing; careful pre-testing and piloting; constant feedback; ongoing adjustments to the questionnaire design; and the use of well-placed informants all contributed to a reasonably successful methodology. Much was also learnt from the pitfalls encountered, however, and some of these will be referred to below.

Precisely because of the difficulties encountered in devising appropriate methods of approaching this sensitive population, the methodological aspects will be described in some detail. It is hoped that some of the lessons learnt thereby will be generalisable to the study of other populations with similar characteristics.

GENERAL RESEARCH METHOD

Most surveys contain at least an element of description, and the material presented in this study is no exception. The opening sections of both Chapter Three and Chapter Four contain descriptive profiles of the sample - the former on socio-demographic aspects, and the latter on their attitudinal characteristics. The profiles

were felt necessary because of the absence in Australia of other data on this group. Yet much more than mere description is needed if anything is to be learnt about why, for example, certain attitudes are held. Examining relationships between variables can enable hypotheses to be tested regarding what influences the holding of certain attitudes. The research method employed in this thesis can therefore be seen as having an explanatory, as well as a descriptive aspect.

Because of the lack of documented information on the community, the formulation of hypotheses early in the project was a multi-faceted exercise. Given Moser and Kalton's warning (1971, 4) concerning arbitrary hypothesising - that it can be as bad as indiscriminate data collection - a variety of sources were referred to in support of some implicit hypothesising. The writer's personal experiences in the Middle East and her interactions with Palestinians in Sydney; the qualitative data obtained from interviews; and relevant material from other studies both in Australia and elsewhere; were all utilised in, firstly, the generating of hypotheses and, secondly, in the design of the survey instrument. It was noted in other published studies, for example, that Palestinian political attitudes were less affected by socio-demographic than by political factors (Shadid and Seltzer, 1988). Again, a Palestinian colleague, author of a study of Lebanese politics in Sydney (Mograby, 1985), had suggested that the homeland experience should probably be examined for its possible effect on attitudes, and interview data had corroborated this.

Broadly speaking, the study utilised three standard methods of social science research: personal observation of and participation in the community's activities

over a number of years; qualitative data collection by means of formal and informal interviews; and quantitative data collection by means of a survey questionnaire, with subsequent statistical analysis of the data being carried out by means of the SSPS package.[28]

The survey instrument was intended to generate a body of data against which the hypotheses would be tested and/or validated. Quantitative data alone, however, is rarely sufficient for a well-rounded analysis. To cite Moser and Kalton again: "Sometimes good judgement requires the deliberate sacrifice of quantitative precision for the greater depth attainable by more intensive methods of attack" (Moser & Kalton, 1971, 3). Finkelstein's (1992) investigation of Palestinian attitudes in the aftermath of the Gulf War, and Roy's invaluable work in Gaza refugee camps (1989, 1991) are both good examples of what a solely qualitative approach can achieve.

Throughout this study, attempts have been made to integrate the quantitative data into discussions that draw on, and are enriched by other sources of data. Personal encounters with individuals, whether in formal or informal interviews, were of inestimable value - as they always are for researchers in an Arab milieu - on several levels: firstly, in obtaining the kind of information which was not likely to be committed to writing or which was too sensitive to be solicited by means of the

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[28] The avoidance of the actual term "participant observation" is deliberate here, since it implies the kind of anthropological field work undertaken by, for example, Rugh (1984) and Wikan (1985) in their studies of the urban poor in Cairo. The writer, although invariably welcomed into community activities, was much more the observer than the participant.

questionnaire; secondly, in establishing the inter-personal bonds which then enabled the efficient distribution of the questionnaire to take place; and finally, as a window onto the intense personal emotions involved in some of the issues raised. One woman, who wept as she filled in the questions on Jerusalem, asked: "Do you know how we *feel*?"

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Foremost among "contextual" factors in much Middle East research is the obstructionism of the local authorities. As mentioned in Chapter One, this is certainly a factor inhibiting social science research in the Arab world and in the Israeli-occupied Territories, despite some recent liberalisation. In the case of the present study no such externally-imposed obstacles existed. The respondents' internalising of past Middle East experiences, however, is relevant in terms of how they reacted to the survey instrument and to the researcher. In some cases, their experiences in Australia had also contributed to their suspicions. Zureik (1987, 227) has commented that research in politically charged environments is bound to be linked to the socio-political context within which the research is conducted - a comment particularly apt for groups whose identity is defined in political terms.

LOCATION

The state of NSW was chosen as the location for a number of reasons. Sixty-seven percent of Australians born in an Arab country reside in NSW (Abu Duhou &

Teese, 1992, xvii), as do the majority of other Middle East minorities such as Armenians and Kurds. The 1992 *Atlas of the Australian People* states that: "Indeed it is clear that NSW and especially Sydney is the focus of Middle Eastern settlement in Australia" (Hugo, 1992, 174). For purposes of inter-ethnic comparison among Middle Eastern groups, then, NSW is obviously a practical choice of location. More importantly, NSW - in fact, Sydney - receives the majority of Palestinian migrants, as the figures in Table 2-1 show:

TABLE 2-1 ANCESTRY DATA FROM 1986 AUSTRALIAN CENSUS

	Numbers Reporting "Palestinian" Ancestry
NSW	1315
VIC	458
Other	386
Total Australia	2149

Source: ABS Validation Tables VF035 and VF036 1986 Census.

The community in Sydney is generally considered more politically active, and is known to be more numerous, than that in Melbourne. It can reasonably be described as a microcosm of the Palestinian-Australian community as a whole, bearing in mind the fact that the nature of the sampling employed does not allow for statistically-based generalisations to be made beyond the sample itself. The process of piloting the study in Melbourne revealed marked demographic and attitudinal similarities between the two dominant communities in Australia, but there is still a need for proper inter-state replication of studies such as this one. Abu Duhou and Teese (1992) were the first, and so far the only, researchers to

attempt a national study involving the Palestinians, although they did not touch on political issues.

Estimates from the community itself and from the PLO as to the numbers in Sydney are much higher than the above figures, although they vary widely - from 6,000 to 15,000. Since numbers of Palestinians are known to have emigrated from the Gulf states in the last few years, as well as a constant flow from Lebanon, Jordan and the Occupied Territories, the number is now probably close to the higher estimate of 15,000. Certainly, if the community had really been as small as the Ancestry figures above seem to indicate, the survey would hardly have been worth undertaking. For reasons which will be explained in Chapter Three, Palestinians are known to routinely deny or mis-report their ethnic origins. Christison has noted the phenomenon in USA where, out of an estimated population of about 200,000 Palestinians, only 21,000 acknowledged "Palestinian" as their ancestry in the 1980 census (Christison, 1989, 18).

Part of the motivation in selecting Sydney as the location of the present study, was the possibility of some kind of comparability with other diaspora communities such as those in USA. In the USA, Palestinians are concentrated in major cities (Moughrabi & El-Nazer, 1989, 91), as they are in Australia, and likewise tend to be well-educated and well-integrated in comparison to other Arabic-speaking migrants. The communities are not, however, demographic mirror-images of each other; the US phenomenon of a large, transient, politically active student population - for example - is not to be found in the more settled Australian community.

In demographic terms, the composition of the Sydney community has not remained a constant; changes in Australian immigration laws, and the course of events in the Middle East have both affected patterns of migration. Because of the relatively small numbers involved, however, there have been no large "waves" of the magnitude experienced by the Lebanese community in the wake of the civil war. In short, the situation of Palestinians in Sydney can be said to be both relatively stable and relatively representative.

POPULATION

Perhaps the first methodological problem encountered by those seeking to research the Palestinians in the Western Diaspora is their ethnic invisibility. Post-1948 official statistics have rarely recognised "Palestine" as a birthplace, or "Palestinian" as a nationality, and the corollary of statelessness has been the disappearance of Palestine and its former inhabitants from official records. The next chapter will look in detail at the history of how Palestinians feature in official publications; for the purposes of this chapter, suffice it to say that neither census data nor immigration statistics were of much utility in assisting the selection of a sample.

Ethnic "markers" such as language and religion, which can normally be used as surrogate indicators of ethnicity to distinguish groups such as Armenians and Jews, respectively, are inapplicable in the Palestinian case. In having Arabic as their mother tongue they resemble millions of other Middle Easterners. Their names are not usually distinguishable from those of other Arabs, thus negating the telephone

directory approach to sample selection, and they may adhere to either Islam or Christianity.[29]

Only in the case of Israeli Palestinians can their religious affiliations be definitively used to isolate them statistically. In a recent study of Arab settlement needs in Sydney the researcher noted that: "Christian and Muslim Arabs giving Israel as their birthplace are included in the analysis as Palestinians" (AAWC, 1991, 19).

The existence of geographic clustering or ethnic enclaves can facilitate the survey researcher's task. In a recent national study of Arab Australians, areas with high concentrations of Arab households were first identified and then: "Interviewers were asked to knock on every house in the street until they encounter an Arabic house" (Abu Duhou & Teese, 1992, 21). The method is inapplicable, however, to the relatively well-integrated Palestinians who, being generally dispersed into the wider community, are not amenable to a geographically-defined sampling approach. The authors of the study mentioned above described the process of identifying the location of Palestinians in Sydney as "very complicated and expensive" (Abu Duhou & Teese, 1992, 20). This is not to say that Palestinians do not have preferred suburbs; only that they are not nearly as concentrated in enclaves as, say,

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[29] Palestinians often make the point that all three monotheistic religions were represented among the Palestinian Arabs until 1948. In the words of one elderly female respondent: "In Palestine there were three religions. I never saw religious divisions until I came to Melbourne." There are also individuals, born before 1948, who still identify themselves as Palestinian Jews. The Armenian Bishop in Sydney told the writer of one such Jewish friend of his who insisted on writing "Palestine" as his birthplace when he visited Israel. Using rather unclerical language, the Bishop said that the Israeli officials "gave the man hell for two hours" (Interview, 10 April, 1990).

the Lebanese, whose concentration in the Marrickville area of Sydney is as high as 400 Lebanese-born in every square kilometre (Hugo, 1992, 174).

For all the above reasons, random sampling of the whole Palestinian population was never an option. Would it then be feasible to target certain groups within the community, instead? Many surveys of Arab opinion have concentrated on Arab elites (Suleiman, 1973; Frankel, 1988 and 1989; Ismael & Ismael, 1993). Other studies have focused on the students which so often constitute a captive population for the academic survey researcher (Farah, 1983; Reiser, 1987; Starr, 1987), often on the assumption that "today's students are tomorrow's leaders" (Tessler, 1987, 6). Whether or not such selectivity is warranted outside the Middle East context can be argued, but neither option was available in Sydney. There is nothing resembling an established elite in this recently-transplanted group, and the student population numbers at most a few dozen.[30]

It was therefore decided that this pioneering study of the community should aim at a broad coverage of groups within the community, accessed through individual networks. Individuals were eligible for inclusion in the sample if they:

. were born in (pre-1948) Palestine or had at least one parent born there;
. were at least 18 years old;
. were residents of Australia, and had spent at least one year there;
. were ethnically Arab.[31]

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[30] One educated but youthful respondent, disgruntled at the paucity of like-minded peers within his community, complained that: "You can't import good people here from Palestine; you get just anyone .. Wealthy and educated Palestinians go to USA, Canada or Europe."

[31] The last criterion may seem redundant in view of the fact that Palestinians generally identify themselves strongly as Arabs, and are so identified by others. Interviews with Palestine-born Armenians, however, had revealed that they identified themselves primarily as Armenians and only secondarily as Palestinians, if at all. Another informant told of a small Shiite community in Sydney,

SAMPLING

The method fixed upon in the end was that of "snowball sampling", a method described by Moughrabi and El-Nazer as:

> .. a nonprobabilistic form of sampling in which persons originally chosen for the sample are used as informants to locate other persons having the necessary characteristics making them eligible for the sample (Moughrabi and El-Nazer, 1989, 92).

It would perhaps be more accurate to refer to the sampling as a "limited snowball". Each group contacted by an informant formed a kind of cluster. Although each cluster was expected to be fairly homogeneous, in that informants were thought likely to concentrate on their own peers, it turned out that the clusters ended up being quite heterogeneous, for a number of reasons. Firstly, informants had been asked to contact as wide a variety of individuals as possible, and some adhered rigorously to this. Others, attempting first to get their immediate family and friends to participate, had failed, and thus were forced to go beyond their own immediate circle. What needs to be borne in mind here is that, technically speaking, the sum total of informants plus their networks becomes not so much a sample, as a population in itself. The term "sample" will nevertheless continue to be used in this thesis.

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from the Lebanon border area, who had been given UNRWA identity papers as refugees, thus making them officially Palestinians. The informant said: "If I ask them, they say they are Palestinian; if a Lebanese asks them, they say they are Lebanese." Informants were thus told to make sure that everyone who filled out the questionnaire identified themselves primarily as Palestinian.

The snowball method is increasingly used in community studies (Bailey, 1982, 99), and appears to be peculiarly suitable to Arab populations, where informal inter-personal connections have been described as constituting "the basic sinews of the social system" (Bill & Springborg, 1990, 85). The Arab preference for measuring the trustworthiness of outsiders - including researchers - in terms of how they are rated by one's personal connections or by respected community figures is not solely determined, however, by cultural factors. The pervasive presence in the Middle East of the *mukhabarat* - the Arab state security forces - and of their Israeli counterparts, has reinforced an entrenched paranoia among Palestinians in particular. Perceptions that spies exist within the community are not uncommon, and one informant described some elements in the community as having a siege mentality: "They think everyone is out to get us". These issues will be examined in more detail below, under Refusals, and in the next chapter.

Studies of Palestinians and other Arabs which have utilised the snowball method include those by Tessler (1977); McKay (1985); Moughrabi & El-Nazer (1989); Christison (1989); and the Australian Arabic Welfare Council (1991). In addition, Inbar and Yuchtman-Yaar (1985) utilised what may be called a quasi-snowball method.

The method has the obvious advantage of allowing a sample to be gathered when the population cannot be enumerated. A further benefit is that - provided informants are stringently scrutinised - it can help legitimise a researcher coming from outside the target community. Clearly, unless the researcher can establish

trustworthiness in the informant's eyes, and unless that informant is similarly well-regarded in the community, the whole project will be much less viable. Zureik (1987, 227), for example, has observed of Israeli Arabs that they "are more likely to admit their Palestinianism to a member of the 'in-group' than they would be to someone who is perceived to be associated with the dominant group."[32]

INFORMANTS

Of those originally interviewed in the early stages of the project, eighteen were leading figures from the Palestinian community, two were Lebanese activists, and one was an Australian connected with the Palestinian Human Rights Campaign. The PLO representative in Australia was also interviewed. The formal interviews took place over a twelve-month period, although informal interviews continued whenever an opportunity arose, or whenever a particular issue or problem needed illumination.

Several of the interviewees, who had become familiar with the aims and methods of the survey during the interview process, later became members of the pre-testing panel and suggested amendments to the draft questionnaire before it was finalised. Later still, some were selected to assist in distributing and collecting the questionnaires. Other, selected members of the community who had not been

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[32] The authors of the survey on Arab Australian participation were actually forced to abandon their attempted random sampling frame and use informants' networks instead, at least in the case of some groups: "After more than three months of field work in Sydney the survey did not reach the Syrians. A trip to Sydney recruited two more interviewers, *one of whom was an influential community person*. They were able to reach several persons of Syrian background." (emphasis added) (Abu Duhou and Teese, 1992, 22).

formally interviewed, but who were instructed in detail of the aims, purposes and methods of the survey, were also asked to help in the distribution. In this thesis, the term "informants" refers to the 26 individuals who took part in the distribution of the questionnaire.

The informants were chosen for their range of ideologies and occupations, as well as for their wide networks and personal standing in the community. Ideologically, they included Arab nationalists; Syrian nationalists; supporters of the major PLO factions (Fatah, PFLP); committed Christians; supporters of the Islamic movement, including a part-time *sheikh*; those who identified passionately with Palestinian nationalism; and those who could fairly be described as "closet Palestinians" with no particular ideology at all. Occupations varied widely; students, businessmen, housewives, public servants, engineers, trade unionists, clerks, journalists, barristers and the unemployed were represented. All were Palestinian.

Obtaining the cooperation of would-be informants was not always a simple matter. It has to be said that, while many of the older, more patriarchal figures in the community were quite willing to be personally interviewed, helping out with the questionnaire distribution was another matter. Not wishing to commit the discourtesy of refusing to cooperate, they vowed eternal helpfulness while failing to return a single questionnaire. In this respect the writer found women in the community were often more active and helpful. Being a suitable subject for interviewing, therefore, did not automatically equate with being useful as an informant - an important distinction in this method.

In the snowball method the informant chosen becomes a determinant factor in itself. It is not only that the method allows the informant's own bias to exert a ripple effect throughout his/her contact group. The choice of a particular informant also affects which sub-groups within the sample will be accessed via his or her networks, as the "snowball" increases in size. Alternatively, the choice of a disliked or distrusted informant almost guarantees high refusal rates, and may eliminate sub-groups which are vital to a comprehensive coverage of the community.[33]

Sub-groups can disappear from the sample in other ways. At one stage a student informant was given a number of questionnaires to distribute to his peer group. It was noted on the returns that all the student's friends were 40-50 years old; subsequently, it transpired that his father had passed them on to *his* friends instead. The student group then had to be pursued via other informants.

SOURCES OF BIAS

Every user of the snowball method recognises the informants as major sources of possible bias. By the nature of the process, activists were probably over-represented among the informants, since a willingness to assist in such a project tends to be found mainly among the politically committed. On the other hand,

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[33] One young activist, explaining why nobody had trusted a particular person (G) enough to return questionnaires to him, described him as "useless, even dangerous." G himself later admitted to the writer that some of those he had approached said: "How do we know that you won't read our answers once we pass the questionnaires back to you?" This was clearly a case where the writer's background research had been deficient.

Palestinians in general are known to be more politically aware - and active - than many other Arabs, in Sydney and elsewhere. Networks may have been accessed selectively to ensure the "right" sort of people were included. More sophisticated informants may well have "helped" or "guided" some of the less educated respondents in their answers, since respondents were likely to defer to the judgement of informants whose respected status in the community was a pre-requisite for their role. In short, there was a strong possibility of intra-class correlation. However, the purposeful selection of informants associated with widely differing groups ensured heterogeneity in the sample as a whole.

In terms of possible sampling bias, it would have been easy to over-represent Christians. In most diaspora communities the Christians have predominated, for a number of historical reasons, although in the Palestinian population as a whole they are a small minority. Particular efforts were therefore made to ensure adequate coverage of the more recently-arrived Muslims, and as it turned out the sample was divided almost equally between the two religious affiliations. Information obtained from the interview stage had indicated that the proportion of Muslims to Christians in the community was now probably nearing parity, so that the proportions in the sample were an approximate reflection of this. Less balance was achieved in terms of gender ratios, with males outnumbering females two to one, as they did in Moughrabi and El-Nazer's survey of Palestinian-Americans (1989, 93). Fortunately, gender turned out to be of very little significance as a determinant of attitudes.

In the sample, with its high proportion of Middle-East born, those born in Australia were very under-represented, comprising only 5 individuals. The Australia-born thus had to be excluded from some tabulations. It would clearly have been preferable to have had more of a numerical balance between them and the migrants, or else to concentrate solely on the Middle-East born. It was not, however, possible to ascertain in advance the likelihood of such an imbalance, and it can only be suggested that a future study might draw some useful comparisons between the two groups.

REFUSALS

The number of potential respondents who were approached but refused to participate in the survey is not known, since most informants would simply replace a "refusal" with an "agreeable" from within the same network. A majority of informants encountered refusals to some degree. It was noted that the personalities who appeared to enjoy the highest respect in the community also reported - as one might expect - the lowest refusal rates. Once again, the need to select the right informants must be emphasised.

The discussion of why some members of the community refused to participate opens up issues broader than those merely concerned with sample size. While cultural norms and levels of education and literacy are routinely cited as inhibiting social scientists' access to Middle Eastern populations, an alternative perspective is offered here. Barbara Ibrahim, discussing survey research in the Arab world,

recommends "taking the field experience as a source of data in itself and remaining alert to the perceptions and concerns of respondents" (Ibrahim, 1987, 85). The concerns of these Palestinians varied, but appeared to be dictated by political rather than cultural factors.

Feedback from respondents and informants indicated that serious questions were asked within the community as to whether the writer was working for the Israeli Embassy, Mossad, the PLO, Arab governments, the Australian government, or the Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO).[34]

One respondent asked, for example: "How do we know her supervisor won't pass the information on to ASIO?". There was a widespread assumption that universities have close connections to government, and that information would therefore pass easily from one to the other. Some assumed that the information would also reach the Israelis, with implications for their relatives still in the West Bank, and for themselves if they visited the homeland. Among recent migrants there was apparently also a conviction that to express views critical, for example, of the Australian government, would have a negative effect on their chances of finding employment.

Perhaps the clearest articulation of the community's concerns came in the form of a letter passed on to the writer in December 1990 by an informant, from one of his

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[34] Shadid and Seltzer (1988, 20) noted that, in their survey of the Occupied Territories, "some people might have thought we worked for the PLO and others that we were working against it."

contacts. The man, "Y" - not his real initial - had refused to fill in the questionnaire, but had agreed to write down his objections to it. The informant said that "Y" had been harassed by the authorities in Australia, and that this was why he had refused to take part in the survey. Extracts from the text of the letter may be found in Appendix III.

It is clearly a matter of concern for all researchers when a whole community appears to lack confidence in assurances that the data will be anonymous. A cause for equal concern is the widespread assumption that the results of university-sponsored research are automatically passed on, not only to the government in Australia, but also to foreign governments. The known pro-Israel sympathies of the Hawke government in power at the time may have exacerbated such perceptions, as well as the fact that ASIO surveillance of the community increased at the time of the survey, due to the Gulf Crisis. The relations between the community and government agencies will be discussed in Chapter Three.

RATE OF RETURNS

313 questionnaires were sent out, of which 176 useable ones were returned - a return rate of 56% . This was considered adequate, and was incidentally higher than several colleagues had predicted when the project was first mooted. The Moughrabi/El-Nazer study in USA had found that refusals were less than 1% in personal interviews; 35% when the instrument was sent by mail; and up to 100%

with particular groups (Moughrabi & El-Nazer, 1989, 92). Thirty-seven per cent of Reiser's Arab students in USA responded (Reiser, 1987, 87).

The geographical dispersal of Sydney Palestinians means that they do not interact socially as frequently as some other ethnic groups. Informants could not always guarantee that they would be seeing their acquaintances in the near future. Also, as newly-arrived migrants, many were pre-occupied with the fundamental urgencies of settlement. The survey's timing was inconvenient for the student respondents, most of whom were sitting for examinations at the time. Logistical factors such as these undoubtedly reduced the return rate.

Non-returns do not automatically mean actual refusals. Several of the early interviewees had confidently volunteered to take, say, 10 questionnaires, but were subsequently revealed to have had no intention of actually distributing them. This clearly amounts to one refusal, but not necessarily ten. Other informants lost the questionnaires, forgot whom they had given them to, or claimed that they were "in the mail". Some respondents went to the trouble of posting back a totally blank document. A journalist informant described how he had distributed the questionnaires to his fellow guests at a wedding, but had to promise to feature the wedding in the social columns of his newspaper as the price for their cooperation. In terms of motivating informants to persist with the necessary follow-ups, other researchers might note that an element of inter-informant rivalry can usefully be fostered: "X has been so helpful in getting all *his* questionnaires back".

In terms of timing, the Gulf Crisis had an undoubted effect upon the return rate. Respondents were pre-occupied, especially those - the majority - with relatives in the war zone. The informants, many of whom were activists, were either personally involved in political protests against the war, or else felt it was an inappropriate time to access their networks regarding the questionnaire.

The fact that respondents were guaranteed anonymity meant that, in cases where follow-up was needed, it was difficult to re-contact a particular respondent. Sometimes the informant could help. Otherwise, either the questionnaire was classified as a non-return, or the response to a particular item was coded as "missing data".

Exhaustive follow-up activity on the part of both informants and researcher was certainly necessary for maximum retrieval, with dozens of telephone calls and house visits being required. On the other hand, useful feedback - including explanations as to the reasons for refusals - was often obtained from such post-distribution contacts.

THE INSTRUMENT

While a schedule of open-ended questions had been prepared for the early interviews, it was not rigorously adhered to, serving more as a guide than as a blueprint. The researcher employed her own discretion as to which questions were appropriate in each case. In the case of the questionnaire, however, every attempt

was made to ensure that 100% of the items were responded to. In order to achieve a maximised rate of response from this particularly sensitive survey population, considerable care had to be taken with the design, development and testing of the instrument. Certain lessons were learnt during that process, and from subsequent respondent feedback, regarding the need to modify some of the standard approaches to survey research:

- Labaw's statement (1986, 20) that "The very act of interviewing a respondent makes an issue salient and creates respondent attitudes" was not borne out in this study. Issues were already highly salient, and attitudes forthrightly expressed, including criticisms of the wording of certain items.
- Sensitive or personal issues, such as income, are routinely left till the end of many surveys, to allow the respondent time to relax into the procedure. In the Palestinian case, however, it is the political issues which are most sensitive. Accordingly, personal bio-data was ascertained at the beginning, though items on religion did not appear until page 3, and items on Middle East political issues were placed towards the end.
- The sequence or context in which an item occurs may influence responses. It has been pointed out, for example, that "the meaning of almost any question can be altered by a preceding question" (Converse and Presser, 1986, 39). This possibility is increased in the case of attitude questions, as opposed to factual ones, and increased again in sensitive populations. One solution is to rotate items or sections. Rotation was not, however, thought suitable for this survey, for the following reasons:

. Since the survey was not interviewer-controlled, the logic for rotation disappears. There is nothing to prevent the respondent from reading forward and back at leisure.

. Notwithstanding the previous point, any benefit to be gained from a carefully planned "funnel sequencing" - where items follow on from one another in a logical order - will be negated by randomising item order.

. Nor would section rotation work: to put the section on political issues first for, say 50% of cases, would immediately confront those respondents with the most difficult issues.

. Finally, the twin facts that the piloting showed responses to be remarkably homogeneous, and issues to be remarkably salient, meant that this was a case where responses were not likely to be influenced by context factors.

- Apart from placing sensitive items at the end, other means were used to reduce the sense of threat arising from them. Unobtrusive measures such as asking "How do you think most Palestinians feel..?" were adopted in preference to "How do *you* feel..?"

- Question wording is crucial both in reducing respondents' sense of threat, and also in avoiding possible bias stemming from the researcher's own perceptions and opinions. This is a controversial area. The Palestinians on the pre-testing panel felt strongly, for example, that respondents would be alienated by being asked if they were born in "Israel". The question on birthplace was therefore left open-ended, and the panel members were

vindicated when no one wrote "Israel" as birthplace. Reference to PLO "terrorism" was similarly questioned, but allowed to stand; a few respondents later wrote in critical comments.

- The previous point leads on to the desirability of leaving open-ended any item where the response may be suggested by the researcher's choice of categories. The pre-testing suggested that a reductive approach to the crucial question of representation would be counter-productive, and so respondents were simply asked to write in their own choice.
- The sensitivity of many items meant that a five-point Likert-type scale was needed to explore all possible attitudinal nuances. Three-points would not have allowed respondents sufficient flexibility, and seven-points would have been a strain for the less-educated. Ordinal scales were favoured over nominal scales, to facilitate the analysis later. Binary (Yes/No) variables were allowed only for the most simple factual items.
- The Palestinian and non-Palestinian pre-testers did not always agree on how topics ~~which~~ should be covered. Some of the latter group were keen on a "forced choice" approach to questions such as whether respondents identified primarily as Arabs or as Palestinians. Since the perception on the Palestinian side was that respondents would resent having to choose, regarding themselves as both, the forced choice format was abandoned in that instance.
- Similarly, for items where more than one category was likely to be favoured, the Multiple Response or Multiple Dichotomy options were allowed, so that respondents would not be forced into an artificially imposed

single choice. This method was thought preferable to the more taxing option of ranking a number of choices in order of preference.

- Certain subject areas were deleted altogether at the pre-testers' suggestion, because of their perceived divisive effect: these included the questions on who might, or should, replace Yasser Arafat as PLO leader; and the extent to which different factions in the PLO were supported. Also deleted were items which appeared to test respondents' loyalties to Australia.
- Complex and emotive issues such as the two-state solution, and the question of Jerusalem were tested by more than one item, and in such cases the respondent was also asked to "Comment further" in writing if they wished. The large number who chose to add written comments was an indicator of the issue salience mentioned earlier. The important distinction between preference for one option, and willingness to accept another - possibly less palatable - one, was also borne in mind.
- Finally, transient and peripheral phenomena were left unexplored. At the time of the survey, Russian Jewish immigration into Israel was a major concern of Palestinians, but has since been overshadowed by other more pressing developments. It was not included. The Gulf Crisis was touched upon, but only in passing.

This section cannot be concluded without mention of what has been called "the problem of the unperceived concept" (Palmer, 1987, 110). Because of the fact that no one on the pre-testing panel had a strongly Islamic orientation, the instrument was constructed in such a way that several respondents later complained, with

some justice, of a lack of "Islamic" alternatives in the categories offered. Although this lack elicited some noteworthy write-in comments under the heading of "Other", and although religion in general was certainly incorporated as a key variable in the analysis, the omission remains a deficiency in the design of the instrument. The oversight can be partly explained by the fact that the Islamic factor in Middle East politics was receiving far less attention at the time this project was initiated than it is today. This is witnessed by the fact that Georgetown University's prestigious Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, which devoted its 1989 Annual Symposium to the Palestinians, did not include a single paper on the Islamic dimension of Palestinian politics (Hudson, 1990).

PROCEDURES

THE SURVEY

As mentioned above, structured, open-ended interviews with leading community figures had taken place over an extended period, from May 1989 to April 1990. These early interviews were aimed primarily at familiarising the researcher with the community.[35] The familiarisation was a two-way process. In other words, the interviewees, some of whom later became informants, were apprised of the researcher's personal background, as well as of the survey's aims and methods.

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[35] As Barbara Ibrahim (1987, 81) has pointed out: "As a general rule, when the study's aim is to enter a new research area - and ask 'What's going on here?' - it is probably too soon for surveying."

Work also began on the English and Arabic versions of the draft survey instrument and it was ready for pre-testing by April 1990. By June 1990 the pre-testing process was complete, with the instrument having been modified according to the panel's suggestions.[36]

The draft questionnaire was piloted in Melbourne, home to Australia's second-largest Palestinian population. A Palestinian academic colleague assisted in locating respondents. After further modifications, the instrument was finally ready for distribution to the target group in Sydney. (See Appendices I and II for the text of the English and Arabic versions of the survey instrument.) Distribution began in October 1990, and retrieval was complete by early January 1991. Although the survey was administered during the Gulf Crisis, the cut-off point for returns was before the actual Gulf War.

The categories had not been pre-coded on the instrument itself, so codes were devised as returns came in. While written answers were coded, no systematic attempt was made to categorise general written comments. All written comments, however, were recorded verbatim under ID number, and were to prove a useful source of information later in explaining some response patterns.[37]

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[36] The pre-testing panel consisted of four Palestinians, including the academic who was later to assist with the piloting in Melbourne; two academic experts on the statistical aspects of survey research; two sociologists with experience in researching Arab and Jewish communities respectively; and the thesis supervisor.

[37] It was a bilingual informant who spotted an error in the translation of the questionnaire. Item 27 (see Appendices I and II), which asked respondents how easy it was to express their views *to* the PLO, was rendered into Arabic as referring to the expression of their views *about* the PLO. There were now two different variables, one applying to the Arabic-speakers, and one applying to the English-speakers. The item was therefore omitted from analysis.

The categories, as coded, did not always match those on the original schedule; for example, although many respondents referred to their birthplace as "Palestine", those responses were allocated codes according to whether the actual birthplace was in Israel, West Bank, Gaza or Jerusalem.[38]

Once the process of code allocation and data entry was completed, the first lot of frequency tables were run in June 1992. This moment has been described as the high point of any survey. It is the first time the researcher gets a real overview of what the sample thinks as a whole, and what the univariate percentages reveal of response distributions. As with the results of the Melbourne piloting, a high degree of homogeneity and issue salience was apparent. The uniformity of some response patterns meant that not all variables would be suitable for cross-tabulation with others (see below). The univariate percentages relating to socio-demographic variables and to attitudes towards the host country will be discussed in the next chapter; those relating to "Middle East" variables will be presented in Chapter Four.

DATA ANALYSIS

As soon as the first univariate frequencies were run, it became apparent that transformations of the data would be needed in order to reduce the large number of

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[38] At one point the writer considered referring to "Palestine" throughout the thesis, in quotes. But reading a comment by the Palestinian writer Fawaz Turki (1972, 149) about times "When I and my people are dismissed contemptuously within quotation marks" led to a change of heart. For other considerations regarding this issue, see Chapter One, Definitions and Limitations.

individual cases down to manageable sub-groups.[39] Categories with no cases were deleted; those with only a few were collapsed; and sometimes a new category was created. Among such new categories, prompted by write-in responses which had not been fully anticipated, were the categories for "To obtain citizenship and/or a passport" in the item on reasons for emigrating; and the provision of "Islamic" alternatives in a number of items, such as the question on representation.[40]

Since the members of the sample generally had firm ideas about the survey topics, their responses tended to be either bunched at one end, or else polarised towards both extremes of the five-point attitude scale. The occurrence of "nonattitudes" - so often a problem for the survey researcher (Weisberg & Bowen, 1977, 85) - was rare.[41]

Decisions on recoding were done on purely statistical grounds according to the number of cases per category, rather than the content of the answers, thus avoiding

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[39] Since length of residence is a standard variable used in measuring attitudes among migrants, the five persons who were Australia-born would now be excluded from future tabulations involving this variable, appearing simply as Missing Cases. Likewise, the two "Non-believers" in the sample were recoded so as to appear as Missing Cases in any procedure involving religion.

[40] Some respondents felt there should have been an item asking whether or not they were refugees. Interview data had suggested that there were very few refugees among the Sydney Palestinians, most of whom were of urban origin. Moreover, the Australian government has only rarely granted official refugee status to Palestinians (see Chapter Three). The question, therefore, did not seem appropriate for this group.

[41] In reporting survey results, the "Don't knows" can be and are used to give misleading impressions of response distributions. Gilboa, reporting American opinion on proposals for Palestinian autonomy, stated flatly that "the public had no faith in this solution". However, while only 35% said they were in favour of autonomy, 33% did not know enough to answer the question, so that of those who knew enough to answer, a majority were actually pro-autonomy (Gilboa, 1989, 33).

the researcher's natural tendency to "see what one wants to see" and describe the data accordingly.[42]

The procedure central to the analysis was that of cross-tabulating for bi- and tri-variate relationships. The chi-square statistic, appropriate for this study because it can be used when the sample is not a random one, was applied to determine the extent to which the cross-tabulated variables were related in the sample. Because of the fact that the chi-square statistic varies according to sample size, and because the sample was not as large as could have been wished, it was at times difficult to arrive at statistically valid conclusions regarding sub-groups. For example, respondents from Israel often had to be grouped with those from the Occupied Territories in order to achieve sufficient numbers for meaningful results.

Once relationships were established, the "elaboration model" was used to help interpret or explain them. Babbie succinctly summarises the elaboration paradigm as follows:

> Having observed an empirical relationship between two variables, you seek to understand the nature of that relationship through the effects produced by introducing other variables (Babbie, 1990, 272).

This exercise - controlling for the effect of a third variable in an attempt to clarify the relationship between two other variables - pointed the way to some of the study's major conclusions.

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[42] I have to thank Alan Taylor for this, and many another helpful recommendation regarding the analysis.

The data in this study fell naturally into three categories, as follows:

- Socio-demographic data;
- Attitudinal data concerning the respondents' Australian experience;
- Attitudinal data on Middle East issues.

Each of the three sub-sets of data required different handling in the analysis. Broadly speaking, the socio-demographic data was intended to contribute to a profile of the sample (see Chapter Three), and also to supply the "standard" variables to be matched against the key attitude variables.

It was planned to match the next lot of data, that relating to the sample's perceptions of Australia and their situation within it, against the standard variables used in measuring migrant attitudes, such as age, length of residence, etc. The data distribution, however, was so homogeneous that no cross-tabulations could usefully be made; almost everyone had the same view of the Australian government's Middle East policy, of media bias, and so on. The imperatives of the distribution of the data meant that the analysis could only be descriptive in tenor.

With the "Middle East" data, on the other hand, attempts at explanation could be added to description. Attitudes on homeland-related issues were sufficiently heterogeneous to allow for more complex analysis. More precisely, although there tended to be a majority consensus on many issues, there was also a minority whose views were so strongly expressed that they exerted an influence on the sample as a whole. Here was where the elaboration model came into play, as the underlying causes of the inter-variate relationships were sought.

CONCLUSION

The lack of a large sample, plus the fact that the sample was nonrandom, meant that the statistician's ideal framework for survey procedures and data analysis could not be aspired to. This is not to deny the validity of the ideal itself, only to suggest that valuable insights can still be gained in its absence. It was felt that the data obtained had an intrinsic and unique value in themselves, and also that the data would provide the groundwork for other studies yet to be implemented. To insist on rigorous sampling methods would have meant, in effect, abandoning the study. In other instances involving the collection and analysis of the data, where similar choices had to be made, the pursuit of quality data took precedence over strict adherence to more usual survey research methods.

In the early stages of a survey's design and implementation, there is a need for informed selectivity in deciding which of the standard survey research techniques are most applicable to a particular population. In several ways, the Palestinians proved to be the exception to the survey researcher's rule. Another lesson learnt here was that the opinions of those who are closely connected with the target community should be given no less - and possibly more - credence than those of academic experts whose suggestions are based on more theoretical precepts. Often, where there was a difference of opinion on how, or indeed whether, an issue should be approached, it was those in daily contact with the community who were later vindicated by the survey results.

Finally, the definition of the context in which a survey is to be conducted must be a broad one. It is not enough to discuss the context only in terms of, for example, levels of literacy and education within the target community. In the Palestinian case at least, the political environment is a factor affecting not only the attitudes themselves, but also the willingness to articulate those attitudes in the first place. In this sense, what is learnt during the process of administering the survey can be as informative as what was learnt from it.

In global terms, countries such as Australia continue to receive migrants from all over the world, including refugees, displaced persons and political exiles. Since many of these people have endured traumatising homeland experiences, survey researchers need to exercise more than usual sensitivity when choosing methods for studying such groups. All migrants who have been socialised elsewhere bring attitudinal "baggage" with them, including the way in which they are likely to react to survey researchers in general. While experienced researchers are generally aware of these constraints, there is perhaps less awareness of the fact that groups such as the Palestinians have a perception that their participation in a survey carried out in the host country may have harmful implications for themselves, for their community and for their relatives still in the homeland. It is therefore hoped that some of the suggestions made in this chapter regarding ways of handling such methodological challenges can be usefully applied to other studies of similar migrant groups.

Some of the possible reasons for Palestinian reticence regarding the survey, already touched on in this chapter, will be explored further in Chapter Three. The sample will first be described in terms of its socio-demographic characteristics, and then in terms of how the respondents perceived their situation in Australia.

Chapter Three

THE PALESTINIANS OF SYDNEY:

ETHNIC INVISIBILITY AND POLITICAL MARGINALISATION

In the previous chapter it was indicated that the Palestinian community's reactions to the survey instrument were dictated largely by political concerns. In this chapter it will be argued that Palestinian attitudes to the host country, in the Western Diaspora, may be similarly affected by the politics of their situation. In this sense the thesis argues for a "situational" perspective on how attitudes are formed. For, while the condition of statelessness might be expected to dilute an exile's attachment to his or her homeland, the Palestinian case suggests that the opposite is true.[43]

It is not always sufficiently acknowledged that the lack of a recognised homeland can actually inhibit full participation in the new host country. In the words of one of Christison's interviewees (1989, 26): "I feel I cannot identify with any other part of the world until I get my full identity first as a Palestinian". Similarly, a Sydney community leader noted: "Because we are in trouble, we feel we are Palestinians first. If we had no trouble, we might forget about it" (Interview, 12 October 1989).

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[43] One government source, while acknowledging that the experience of dispossession probably affects Palestinian attachment to the homeland on one level, suggested to the writer that - more importantly - "their dispossessed status motivates them to seek a settled status" (Interview, 11 August 1989). Another officer expressed an even stronger opinion to the writer regarding the relevance of the homeland factor for Arab communities generally: "People here over-emphasise Middle East factors. There is a tendency to focus on the exotic, and to pay too little attention to the daily grind of real life here" (Interview, 15 August 1989).

Willingness to participate in the host country may be further affected by perceptions that the host country government is itself contributing to the continuation of a group's statelessness. In the blunt words of a Palestinian trade unionist: "They would be more loyal to this country if this country gave the Palestinians more support" (Interview, 24 October 1989). Another perception from within such a community may well be that their marginalisation from mainstream Australian politics, for example, is simply a facet of a larger, global process of exclusion. From a researcher's point of view the difficulty lies in finding empirical evidence of these causal linkages; in other words, can it be proven that migrant rejection of the host country's policies on a homeland issue is linked to migrant reluctance to participate in the new country? The fact that the respondents in this study exhibited remarkable homogeneity and uniformity of views on some of these issues - though constituting a finding in itself - actually impeded attempts to prove the underlying **causes** of those attitudes.

The Australian government's policy on the Israel-Palestine issue has long been officially described as one of "even-handedness". At home, the ethos of multiculturalism assures all groups equality of opportunity in Australian society. Yet the data on this ethnic group shows that perceptions of policy bias, marginalisation, negative stereotyping and discrimination co-exist. While not classifiable as a "visible minority", these Palestinians had nevertheless experienced negative ethnic and religious stereotyping as Arabs and Muslims respectively - both phenomena exacerbated by the Gulf Crisis. On the political front, Mograby's reference (1985, 1) to the "political invisibility" of migrants in Australia is apt for

a group which has been both deleted from official statistics and denied input into policy-making processes.

While ethnic and - its corollary - political invisibility can certainly be seen as a function of discrimination, Palestinians in Australia are undeniably more secure than their US counterparts. The 1985 assassination in Los Angeles of Alex Odeh, a Palestinian office-bearer in the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, shook the community there. Also in Los Angeles, and probably even more threatening for the community, occurred the arrest of the "LA Eight", seven of whom were Palestinians and all of whom were accused of belonging to "a subversive organization". The arrests were made by the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (*Christian Science Monitor*, 21 October 1988). Palestinian-Australians, already on the political fringes of society, may in some cases have decided that - in the light of the events in Los Angeles - it was safer to stay on the fringes. For, while an ethnic community's sense of threat can have a mobilising, participatory effect, it is probably more likely to contribute to their alienation from the mainstream.

In her study of Arab-American politics, Samhan uncompromisingly described Arabs in the United States as victims of "political racism" (Samhan, 1987, 11). Abraham, referring less controversially to their "political marginalisation", interestingly suggests that the Arab-American community has "actively interwoven their marginality into their collective consciousness" . Abraham describes the strategies adopted to cope with this marginality, and includes the Palestinians

among those likely to opt for ethnic denial or ethnic isolation (Abraham, 1989, 21-23). There is evidence in this study to corroborate some of Abraham's observations.

It has been argued throughout this thesis that politics in general, and homeland-related politics in particular, receive too little attention in studies of migrant communities, especially in the case of government-sponsored studies. This lacuna in the research means that, when a crisis such as that in the Gulf occurs, and when politics suddenly does become the host country's focus of interest vis-a-vis a particular community, little data is available.[44]

US survey researchers investigating Palestinian attitudes fall into a neat dichotomy. Some, like Tuma (1981, 1), "look at Palestinians in the United States as a microcosm of the Palestinians at large". Moughrabi and El-Nazer (1989), whose study focused almost entirely on Middle East issues, share Tuma's international perspective.[45] Others, like Christison, describe their research, as "a study of Palestinian-American attitudes towards being American" (Christison, 1989, 19). Cainkar likewise sets out to find "a believable way to say that one can be Palestinian and still be empowered in America" (Cainkar, 1987, 7), while Suleiman

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[44] Active links with the homeland are not confined to first-generation migrant groups. The Jewish community's commitment to Israel has been well documented (W.D.Rubinstein, 1987; Rutland, 1988). In a personal communication to the writer from Professor Ronald Taft (15 November 1992) he cited a Melbourne survey which found that 56% of Jews would live in Israel if they had to leave Australia; 72% had visited Israel; and 73% have friends or relatives there. Interestingly, despite a number of studies of the large Lebanese community in Australia, there has been no systematic research - to the writer's knowledge - on the community's links and attitudes to the homeland.

[45] Tuma's 1981 survey of US Palestinian attitudes appears to have been the vanguard study in the field. Strangely, in Moughrabi's preamble to his own study, he makes no mention of Tuma's work, stating that "there are no empirical studies that give us an in-depth look at the opinions of Palestinian-Americans" (Moughrabi & El-Nazer, 1989, 91).

found that his Arab-American respondents were seeking to "advance the interests of their community as well as American democracy" (Suleiman, 1991, 28).

Since members of recently-arrived migrant communities are socialised in the homeland, it seems only logical to examine both ends of their experience. The two-pronged approach of this study seeks to illuminate this dual perspective. This chapter will, therefore, investigate attitudes in the diaspora towards the host country, together with the implications of those attitudes for multiculturalism and democracy in Australia. The following chapter will look at how homeland issues are viewed, in the context of current Middle East political developments.

PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

This section will briefly profile some of the characteristics of the survey population. A complete set of frequencies relating to the socio-demographic and attitudinal characteristics of the sample population is to be found in Appendix IV. The sample, as has been made clear, was not necessarily representative of the community as a whole, but exhibited characteristics which were both in line with other sources of non-quantifiable data on the community, and similar to those revealed by other studies of Arab-Australians in which Palestinians featured. In some respects, however, the Palestinians diverge from the socio-demographic "norm" for Arabic-speakers in Australia, such as the Lebanese.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The minimum age for inclusion in the survey was 18, and 72% of respondents fell in the 18-45 age range. Over a quarter were under 30. Over two-thirds were male, and most had lived in Australia for a relatively short time; fully a third had been residents for less than 5 years. Although 50% spoke mainly Arabic at home, the remainder spoke English as well, and the language chosen for the questionnaire was as likely to be English as Arabic. Educational levels were high, with 40% already holding, or about to complete, university degrees, including post-graduate.[46]

Two-thirds of the sample were in employment at the time of the survey, and 40% described their occupation as "Professional" or "Business". Only 2% were unskilled. As with many educated non-English speaking migrants, however, their income levels did not reflect the level of their qualifications or education; less than 10% earned over $50,000, and a fifth earned less than $10,000. In Hugo's *Atlas of the Australian People* he notes that for the Lebanese, who dominate the Arabic-speaking community numerically:

> There are positive correlation coefficients with all the low socio-economic status indicators especially unemployment and low income families and a strong negative correlation with professional employment (Hugo, 1992, 508).

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[46] Together with the Egyptians, Palestinians are reckoned to be the best educated Arabic-speaking migrants in Australia, with those educated in the Middle East out-performing those coming through the Australian school system (Abu Duhou & Teese, 1992, 100 ff).

By way of contrast, a Department of Immigration officer described the Palestinians to the writer as "hard-working, self-reliant, with a high tradition of education" (Telephone interview, 11 August 1989).

RELIGION

57% of the sample were Christian, and 43% Muslim. Levels of religiosity varied, although about a fifth said they had become more religious in recent years.[47] The sample strongly rejected suggestions that the community was divided on religious or sectarian lines.

HOMELAND LINKS

Links to, and memories of the homeland were still vivid and often painful. 97% were born in the Middle East, and 70% within pre-1948 Palestine, where over three-quarters still owned property. Displacement or dispossession was shown by the large number who had lived outside Palestine - mostly in Jordan, Lebanon and the Gulf - before emigrating.[48] Harassment and discrimination had occurred in both Israeli-controlled and Arab areas. Those experiences were the reasons for emigration most often cited. Seventy-two per cent had suffered economic loss in

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[47] It was suggested to the writer by a Palestinian academic that religiosity among both Christian and Muslim Palestinian migrants sometimes increases in their new country - due, in his opinion, to feelings of alienation. He also said, however, that on a scale of religiosity ranging from white to black, he would rank the average Palestinian as grey.

[48] Abu Duhou and Teese (1992, 158) note that Palestinians in their survey reported ten different countries from which they had obtained their university degrees prior to emigration.

Palestine. The variables relating to these experiences in the homeland were considered key variables for the purposes of the data analysis presented in the next chapter, and will be discussed in more detail at that point.

Numbers of Arabic papers were subscribed to by the respondents, notably the PLO's *Felasteen al-Thawra* (55%). Fifty-nine per cent thought that community funds should be sent - via the PLO - to the Occupied Territories rather than be spent in Australia. Eighty-nine per cent wanted a Palestinian passport in the event of statehood, although only 58% were committed to the idea of a permanent move there. Judging from interview data, the latter figure may be questioned; while the Right of Return is axiomatic for Palestinians, actual and immediate repatriation is unlikely, particularly for those (over two-thirds) with children. Moughrabi (1989, 19) found that 65.5% of his respondents said they would return, but the community in the United States has a much larger proportion of students who envisage a return to some part of the Middle East anyway.

COMMUNITY

Three quarters of the sample read the pro-Palestinian Sydney paper *An-Nahar*, although an even higher proportion read local papers in English. They tended to spend time with other Palestinians, often relatives, though not necessarily in the same suburb.[49] Attitudes to the community organizations were ambivalent;

[49] Palestinians appear to rely less on relatives, and also less on government services, than other Arabic-speakers (Abu Duhou and Teese (1992, 196, 218).

although half had contacted one upon arrival, only 38% were actually members, regarding them as ineffective both for the "cause" and for the community itself.[50]

Finally, respondents were associated with a wide range of political activities, as would be expected from a politically aware group such as this, and about half saw Palestinians as generally willing to get involved at community level. A similar proportion favoured local political contacts with Jews; indeed, enhanced contacts between Palestinian groups and some segments of the Jewish community, notably the Jewish Left, were among the more positive outcomes of the Gulf Crisis, and of subsequent Middle East events.

RELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Before concluding this section, it will be informative to look at the results for some non-parametric tests carried out on the socio-demographic variables. The variables for age, sex, occupation, income, education and religion were correlated to find out which variables were associated with one another. The strongest correlation (0.506) emerged between level of education and occupation, but the looseness of the job categories used in the item meant that the results were not really definitive. The same reservation applies to the somewhat weaker correlation (0.358) found between age and occupation. Having a "better" job, then, was associated with being better educated and with being older, but not definitively so.

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[50] Abu Duhou and Teese's (1992, 201) figure for Palestinian participation in community organisations is 38.5% .

Being older was also associated (0.23) with being Christian, which corroborates the general view that Palestinian Christians (like the Lebanese Christians) have been in Australia longer than the Muslims. Some Christians in the community perceive themselves to be better educated and wealthier than the Muslims - a perception not necessarily shared by the Muslims.[51] While being Christian was associated with being older, and being older in turn was weakly associated with being both better educated (0.24) and wealthier (0.2), there was virtually no correlation between religion per se, and either wealth or education. The conclusion is that, if the Christians in the sample had an advantage in education and in income, it was by virtue of being settled longer.

It is often assumed of Arab communities, and appears to be true of the Lebanese in Australia, that the women are less educated than their men. This assumption was not borne out by the results for this group; there was almost no correlation between sex and education levels. There was a negative relationship between sex and income (0.258), showing that women earn less than men. This finding may show that Palestinian women suffer more than the men do from the usual migrant problem of being unable to find a job with the income-earning power that their education and qualifications would normally qualify them for. Certainly, for the sample as a whole, the correlation between education and income (0.2) was far less strong than that between education and occupation. It is possible that the sample declared the occupation they were qualified for, rather than the job they actually

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[51] One well-educated respondent, himself a Christian, articulated his views on this subject as follows: "The Christians are well-educated, have professional jobs, and so on; and the Muslims are less so."

held at the time of the survey. The data generally indicated that this group of Palestinians, like many other Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) migrants, was highly qualified but under-employed.

A quick overview of other Australian surveys in which Palestinian communities have been included suggests that the results of this study are generally in line with the findings of others, at least as regards the socio-demographic profile of the respective samples. (The two studies referred to below are those by Abu Duhou & Teese (1991), and the Australian Arabic Welfare Council (1991). They will be referred to as "Abu Duhou" and "AAWC" respectively, for brevity's sake.)

Some of the relevant findings are:

- Christians outnumber Muslims (Abu Duhou, 25; AAWC, 30).
- Younger people, and those with less than 15 years residence, predominate (Abu Duhou, 26-27; AAWC, 39,6).
- Participation, aspirations and achievement in education were found to be high in the Abu Duhou study (p 100 ff), but less so in the AAWC study, which focused mainly on recent immigrants from Israeli-controlled areas.
- A large proportion have professional-managerial occupations (Abu Duhou, 186), but correspondence between skills and jobs is low (Abu Duhou, 159; AAWC, 46).
- English ability is high (Abu Duhou, 181; AAWC, 29).

Of the studies carried out in the United States, a few (Tuma, 1981; Christison, 1989; Moughrabi and El-Nazer, 1989) attempted national surveys; the rest focused on one particular community or sub-community such as Cainkar's (1987) Muslim villagers in Chicago. Clearly neither type of study is really comparable to the present one, and one can only anticipate the day when cross-national survey replication will be feasible. Certain socio-demographic features of the samples - such as relatively high levels of education and professional skills; English ability; and the recent nature of emigration (particularly of Muslims) - do recur, but the data shows less homogeneity than that on attitudinal characteristics. In other words, Palestinians in both USA and Australia seem to view their respective host countries, as well as their homeland, in markedly similar ways. For this reason, reference will be made throughout this chapter to comparable data from USA sources.

ETHNIC INVISIBILITY

There are various ways of interpreting the ethnic invisibility of Palestinians in Australia. One point of view, not uncommon within the bureaucracy, is that the well settled and well educated Palestinians "are relatively successful as migrants and therefore relatively invisible" (Interview, 15 September 1989). Ethnic invisibility is therefore seen as an indicator of successful settlement. If a group causes no problems, it is assumed to have no problems.

An alternative view is that it is, in fact, the group's problems which cause the invisibility. The disappearance of Palestine from the map was accompanied by a global, particularly Western, unwillingness to acknowledge its inhabitants' existence as a stateless ethnic group with aspirations to independent statehood. In the Australian context, Palestinians rarely featured in official statistics. Although - for reasons to be given below - some of this ethnic invisibility was part of a conscious choice, there was also a perception within the community that ethnic invisibility in their new host country reflected a more global marginalisation. Such sentiments were articulated in an unpublished paper prepared by a member of the Australian Palestinian Welfare Society in Lakemba, Sydney in 1990:

> I would like to insist here that the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs should carry out a study on the number of Palestinian migrants in Australia which might encourage the Palestinian community to feel again they are not isolated and they have got the same rights of other communities.

Calls for a global census of Palestinians have long been made by Diaspora personalities such as Edward Said: "There is no reason for further Palestinian statelessness .. As an early step, a census of Palestinians should be taken" (*Guardian Weekly*, 31 March 1991).

BIRTHPLACE DATA

In Australia the Palestinians began to fade from sight, statistically speaking, with the 1948 establishment of the State of Israel in what had been Mandate Palestine. Prior to that year those born in Palestine were recorded as such in official statistics.

After 1948, however, the terminology used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) was changed to "Israel" (see Table 3-1).

TABLE 3-1 SELECTED AUSTRALIAN CENSUS STATISTICS ON BIRTHPLACE

Year	Country Classification of Birthplace	Total Numbers
1901	Palestine	51
1947	Palestine	1658
1954	Palestine-Israel	2669
1961	Israel	3471

Source: Price, 1987, 8.
Note: Although the ABS had switched to the term "Israel" by the time of the 1954 Census, this particular source uses the hyphenated form "Palestine-Israel".

Palestinians had joined the ranks of those categorised by Brass (1985, 25) as: "Not even recognised by the census authorities, that is, they are not even counted in the literal sense of the term and, in such cases, do not count politically."

Birthplace data have been collected in every Australian Census since Federation, becoming increasingly important to government planning as post-World War II immigration grew. As a recent ABS publication noted: "Data on birthplace are critical in targeting settlement assistance to migrants" (ABS 2613.0, 1989, 22). It follows that groups whose self-described birthplace is not officially recognised are unlikely to qualify for such assistance.[52]

[52] The Department of Immigration in Canberra informed the writer in December 1989 that although Palestinian organisations had applied for Grants in Aid, none had so far received any. Among the criteria for such aid were the numbers the organisation claimed to represent.

There were controversies over how to define birthplaces, and whether birthplace is a useful measure of ethnic origin. The current ABS view is that:

> As an indicator of ethnicity, birthplace is obviously deficient but, despite changes in classification which have occurred from time to time as the result of changes in political geography, it retains objectivity and consistency (ABS 4112.0, 1989, xv).

For the Palestinians, who had had their ethnic origins redefined - or denied - by one of these "changes in political geography", Australian government policies in this respect probably appeared neither objective nor consistent. It was not, of course, when filling in a self-administered Census form that respondents encountered problems, but rather at places like the airport immigration desk, or when submitting a passport application. Fawaz Turki (1988, 176), the writer who lived for a time in Australia, gives a poignant description of how Palestinians experience airports:

> Airports, after all, are where Palestinians have traditionally been turned away, held up, detained, questioned. .. At airports, the very pivot of Palestinians' being is stripped of meaning, right there before their eyes; every sheltering symbol of their national self is wrenched away from them as they stand abjectly arguing with immigration officials.

The father of one informant, born in Palestine before 1948, had written "Haifa, Palestine" under Place of Birth on the immigration form at the airport. The immigration official warned him about the fate of persons who gave false information, and forced him to write "Israel" instead (Interview, 10 April 1990). A second informant, born in Bethlehem, wrote "Palestine" as his birthplace on a passport application, but was told he had to either put "Bethlehem, Israel" (despite Australia's non-recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank), or else could simply write "Bethlehem". He chose the latter (Interview, 21 November

1990). Another tactic reluctantly adopted by some West Bankers was to write "Jordan" as their birthplace. The official attitude was particularly resented by those such as Turki (1972, 163): "Maybe the Australian authorities were not aware that when I was born Israel had not come into existence." [53]

Australia's system of country classification was, until recently, the rather clumsy one used by the United Nations. Nowhere was a category of "Palestine" admitted, and Census respondents writing "Palestine" as birthplace were recoded as having been born in Israel. Most Middle East countries appeared under the general heading of "West Asia", and the Gaza Strip came under "Other West Asia". The West Bank, however, was entered under Jordan.

The issue of confidentiality is always of concern to the Bureau. Because of this concern, whenever a small number of cases are involved in any particular category, the category will normally disappear into another, larger one. For the same reason, the Bureau also introduces deliberate sources of error when cells of fewer than five individuals appear in their tabulations. Moreover, no further statistical breakdowns - such as cross-tabulating Birthplace by Local Government Area to find out where a particular group is located - are carried out by the Bureau if the number of cases is small.

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[53] The Department of Immigration has now amended the regulations governing passport regulations so that, for people born before 1948, the word "Palestine" is accepted as a valid description of birthplace in the passport. Documentary evidence such as a British-issued birth certificate is required.

It will thus be seen that, up to this point in the discussion, the exclusion of Palestinians from Australian statistics has followed partly from the government's 1948 recognition of the State of Israel; partly from the relatively small numbers of Palestinians involved; and partly from Australia's adoption of the UN classification system.

COUNTRY CLASSIFICATION CHANGES

The situation was clarified somewhat when a new country classification system - the Australian Standard Classification of Countries for Social Statistics (ASCCSS) - was introduced in 1990. The Bureau of Statistics, acknowledging that more emphasis was now given to political criteria in determining country classifications, denied that they were thereby expressing any opinion concerning the legal status of any particular country or territory. The fact that Australia has never recognised Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, however, may have underpinned the decision to allocate the West Bank and Gaza their own separate country codes. Noting that not all the territorial units referred to are independent countries, the ABS in fact made specific reference to:

> Units which are recognised geographic areas, the ownership or control of which is in dispute, e.g. Gaza Strip, West Bank (ABS 1269.0, 1990, 3).

The ASCCSS system, however, also had a classification for countries referred to as "defunct", and it was under this heading that responses of "Palestine" were put. Palestine was included as one of the countries "no longer in existence, the previous area of which is not wholly contained within a contemporary country", and was accordingly coded under the general heading of "Middle East Not Further Defined"

(ABS 1269.0, 1990, 8). Gaza and the West Bank now existed in the records, but Palestine did not. Moreover, although Australia does not recognise Israel's annexation of Jerusalem, all Census responses referring to Jerusalem were allocated the code of "Israel" (Fax from ABS in Sydney, 13 September 1993). An officer at the ABS in Canberra, noting that the PLO representative had lobbied to have Palestine included as a separate country, commented: "We do not accept Palestine as a country" (Telephone conversation, 23 November 1990).[54] Palestinian responses to the Birthplace item in the 1991 Census are summarised in Table 3-2.

TABLE 3-2 1991 AUSTRALIAN CENSUS STATISTICS ON BIRTHPLACE

Birthplace	Total Numbers
Gaza Strip	30
West Bank	47
Total Occupied Territories	77

Source: ABS *State Comparison Series* (Cat no 2731.0), 1993, 10-12.

There is a huge discrepancy between the above figures and what is known from other sources regarding the size and composition of the community. As indicated in the previous chapter, the actual number may now be as high as 15,000. In the

[54] In the period leading up to the 1991 Census, the PLO representative appears to have advised Palestinians in the community to write "Palestine" as their birthplace, despite the fact that persons doing this would effectively disappear from the record altogether. Moreover, since Census forms are destroyed once the data is entered, there was no possibility of retrieving figures for the Palestine-born at a later date.

survey sample alone there were 32 respondents born in the West Bank, and 6 born in Gaza.[55]

A number of explanations for the discrepancy suggest themselves, but prominent among them must be the conclusion that the ethnic invisibility of the Palestinians is at least partly self-imposed. The pattern of responses to the Ancestry Item in the 1986 Census, as will be seen below, had already indicated a high level of reticence when it came to asserting Palestinian ethnic origins. On the other hand, the nationalistic individuals who insisted on writing "Palestine" as birthplace as a gesture of defiance were - ironically - the first to be "disappeared" by the statisticians.

ANCESTRY DATA

By the early 1980s the government was acknowledging the increasingly diverse ethnic origins of the Australian population, and the corresponding need for accurate data on ethnicity. There exists no single, universally recognised measure of ethnicity, but an item on ancestry, in which people were asked to declare the ethnic group from which they were descended, was introduced into the 1986 Census for the first time. Part of the rationale was to identify groups whose ethnicity could not be ascertained, for example, from their birthplace. Apart from helping to ascertain the size of communities such as the Palestinian one, the figures were also

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[55] Since the Gulf War, when hundreds of thousands were forced to leave their jobs in the Gulf, the numbers of Palestinians applying to emigrate to Australia have increased. This was confirmed by the Australian Embassy in Amman during the writer's visit there in April 1992.

seen as likely to indicate "the degree of self-identification by community members with their ethnic background" (Letter to the writer from Department of Immigration, 16 August 1990).

In the Bureau of Statistics' study of the Ancestry item's effectiveness, reference is made to "the so-called 'lost groups' such as the Armenians, Assyrians and Kurds" (ABS 2603.0, 1990, 25), and clearly the Palestinians qualify for similar status. The 1986 Census, it seemed, would provide them with the means to put an end to their statistical invisibility.[56]

As mentioned earlier in this study, a total of 2149 individuals declared a Palestinian ancestry in 1986, 1315 of them living in NSW. The figures, once again, bear little relation to reality. The Bureau concluded that the figures for Palestinians were so small that they were not useful for further analysis (ABS 2603.0, 1990, 29). This policy with regard to the Palestinians was continued after the 1991 Census when the Bureau had this to say:

> Due to the small number of people identifying the Gaza Strip or West Bank as their birthplace in the 1991 Census, the Ethnic Communities package cannot be used to analyse the birthplace data for these areas (Letter to the writer from the ABS in Canberra, 4 August 1993).

Standard indicators of ethnicity such as birthplace, language and religion do not resolve the statistical dilemma regarding the Palestinians, whose ethnicity is wholly based on a nationality unrecognised by the authorities. The fact that they often

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[56] It was not realized at the time that the Ancestry item was to be short-lived; it was deleted from the 1991 Census. At the time of writing it was unclear whether the item would re-appear in the next (1996) Census.

choose to deny or under-report their national origins is another, and - in some ways - more significant issue which will be discussed below.

It is possible to locate some groups of Palestinians, despite their own reticence, by other, more subtle means. The validation tables done by the ABS on ancestry reveal details of categories which probably contain Palestinians "in disguise". Although no systematic analysis of the Census data on this item has been attempted here, the following are suggested as categories which may contain significant proportions of Palestinians. There is undoubtedly considerable inter-group overlap, and so actual figures are not given here because of the likelihood of double-counting:

- Persons of "Arab", "Jordanian" or "Lebanese" ancestry, who were born in Israel;
- Persons of "Arab", "Jordanian" or "Lebanese" ancestry, whose fathers were born in Israel;
- Persons of "Israeli" ancestry who speak Arabic at home.[57]

PALESTINIANS IN DISGUISE

Generally, persons originating in Israel who are Arabic speakers or of Arab ethnicity may reasonably be considered as Palestinians. Religious affiliation can also indicate Palestinian ethnicity ; Muslims and Christians born in Israel are almost certain to be Palestinians. Certainly the latter assumption was made in one recent study of Arabic-speaking groups in Blacktown, Sydney (AAWC, 1991, 19).

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[57] For actual figures, see 1986 ABS Validation Tables CX1137-1139 (for Australia) and Tables VF034-039 (for NSW).

Recognition of Israeli Palestinians, who form 20% of the population of Israel, is negated not only by routine references to "the Jewish state" in the media and elsewhere, but also at government level. The ABS, testing for consistency between birthplace data and ancestry data, noted that for those born in Israel: "Corresponding ancestries are Jewish and Israeli" (ABS 2603.0, 1990, 20).

Most of the preceding discussion relates to those born in Israel or the Occupied Territories. Most "Lebanese" Palestinians - unlike those who went to Jordan - were never given passports or citizenship. Those entering on Lebanese travel documents are regarded as stateless by the Department of Immigration (Telephone interview with the Lebanese Ambassador, 25 October 1990). Statelessness, of course, all but guarantees ethnic invisibility, and at times opprobrium. Shain, noting that loss of citizenship can signify loss of national identity, refers to the stateless as "the Cains of the modern world" (Shain, 1989, 147,151).

Regarding Jordanian Palestinians, sources of information are rather less authoritative; an Arab diplomat was overheard to say in private conversation that six out of eight Jordanians arriving in Australia are of Palestinian origin. There is a general consensus in the community that most Jordanians coming to Australia - particularly if Christian - are ethnic Palestinians.

The Gulf countries have also been a source of Palestinian emigration. Statistics published by the Department of Immigration in their Annual Reports of 1990-1 and 1991-2 show that a very large proportion of former residents of Gulf countries who

became Australian citizens in recent years were not former citizens of those countries. It is likely - though difficult to prove - that Palestinians were among these. Palestinians forced out of Kuwait as a result of the Gulf War, and unable to find work in Jordan, Lebanon or the Occupied Territories, had a strong incentive to leave the Middle East altogether. Of the 400,000 Palestinians who used to reside in Kuwait, it was estimated that 350,000 were forced to leave (*Guardian Weekly*, 19 January 1992), for only 2000 had ever been given Kuwaiti nationality (Ghabra, 1987, 162). Many went back to Jordan where, according to a *Guardian Weekly* report (3 May 1992), 25,000 of these "Kuwaiti Palestinians" besieged the Australian and Canadian embassies, seeking to emigrate.

REFUGEES

One last category in immigrant statistics where Palestinians might have been expected to feature is that of refugees. In 1993 the Australian government contributed A$2.65 million to UNRWA's programs for the more than 2.7 million Palestinian refugees in the Middle East (UNRWA Press Release, 23 June 1993). Resettlement of these refugees in Australia is a separate issue, and the Minister for Immigration pointed out in 1993 that:

> Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program (RSHP) does not include a special component for Palestinians. I might mention in this regard that Palestinian organisations have not generally regarded third country resettlement as the appropriate solution for Palestinian problems.
>
> .. there have been no policy changes relating to the intake of Palestinians. Nor is a change envisaged, in the light of the lack of any pressure from Palestinians in Australia for a special intake, and the recent developments in relation to the Gaza-Jericho accord.

> Palestinians who apply for humanitarian entry will, of course, continue to be considered under normal policy (Letter to the writer from the Minister, 18 November 1993).

Palestinians have never qualified for a special entry program such as those applying to Zoroastrians, Bahai's or Assyrian Christians. Some may have entered under the Special Concessional Program for people from Lebanon, although having relatives in Australia was a pre-requisite. Part of the reason for the exclusion of Palestinians from such programs lies in Immigration's view that: "Generally speaking, Palestinians are regarded as enjoying protection provided by the UNRWA" (Letter to the writer from Department of Immigration, 16 August 1990). Another rationale was offered by an officer in the Determination of Refugee Status Secretariat (DORS) who noted with regard to the Palestinians that DORS has difficulty in giving refugee status to members of a large group: "How can an individual prove that he or she has suffered more than any other member of the group?" (Interview, 8 June 1990).

Finally, the PLO does not support the idea that a Palestinian exodus from the homeland or surrounding region should be encouraged, and therefore does not take steps to facilitate the entry of refugees to Australia. The Arab states, who pressured governments of Western countries (including Australia) *not* to give refugee status to displaced Palestinians after 1948, have historically been at one with the PLO on this issue.

For all the above reasons, the Palestinians in Australia have never obtained a quota for refugees. Despite the Minister's optimism (see above), anecdotal evidence

regarding individual applications is that they have almost invariably been refused. A human rights campaigner told the writer in October 1990 that she had been involved in the first successful application by a Palestinian for residence on special humanitarian grounds.[58]

The Bureau of Statistics officially recognised the existence of Palestinians as an ethnic group within Australian society only in 1986, nearly forty years after Palestine ceased to appear on the map. This is not to say that other government agencies had not identified, had dealings with, and sometimes carried out surveillance of Palestinians prior to that time. Generally speaking, however, those officers in the bureaucracy who are responsible for administering policies on the Arabic-speaking communities have a benevolent view of Palestinians, describing them as a settled, educated, employed, English-speaking and crime-free community. Comparisons with the Lebanese community are often to the Palestinians' advantage, although this does not negate the fact that lower-echelon officials are often insensitive and occasionally hostile when dealing with individual Palestinians over the counter. Regarding Palestinian identity and ethnicity, times have changed. The government's current position, as expressed in a letter from the Department of Immigration on 16 August 1990, is as follows:

> DILGEA does not take into account ethnicity for migrant entry statistical purposes .. (but) .. The government's ethnic affairs policies are predicated

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[58] The case of Yusuf, a stateless young Gazan who had been imprisoned by the Israelis several times for political offences, is instructive. In Australia for a year, he had certificates from the Red Cross regarding his imprisonment, and documented proof that he had been banned from all political activity in Gaza, on pain of re-imprisonment. He had been given provisional approval for residence in Australia, on humanitarian as well as on family reunion grounds. Permanent residence was conditional, however, upon his obtaining a certificate of good conduct from the Israeli Embassy. The certificate was refused, and so was his application.

> on the basis that ethnic groups are free to express their own perceived ethnicity and cultural identity .. On this basis, the Australian Government acknowledges and accepts the Palestinian community as a matter of fact.

What is noteworthy in this context is that, despite the newly receptive stance of the bureaucracy regarding Palestinians, many are still actively choosing to conceal or deny their ethnicity. The ethnic invisibility which was initially imposed on them appears to be now largely self-imposed. The next two sections examine the possible reasons for this, in the Australian context.

STEREOTYPING AND DISCRIMINATION

To say that many ethnic minorities experience negative stereotyping at the hands of the dominant culture is not to deny the impact such stereotyping can have upon any one such community, particularly if it is accompanied by actual discrimination and harassment. External events such as the Arab oil embargo of the 1970s and the 1990-91 Gulf Crisis (during which the survey was carried out) have periodically fuelled negative stereotyping of and racist discrimination against Arabs - "a tribe of ratbags" (Baldock, 1991, 26) - and against Muslims - "Islamic terrorists from the Middle East" (Wakim, 1991, 34). The possession of a generally low ethnic profile as Palestinians has not given the community immunity from the way some elements in the host society have treated them as Arabs and Muslims.[59] Moreover, stereotyping in specific relation to Palestinians has also occurred, often as a legacy of the period when hijacking and terrorist operations were carried out

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[59] Marsha Hamilton's bibliographic essay "The Image of Arabs in the Sources of American Culture" (*Choice*, April 1991, 1271-1281) is an excellent reference on the stereotyping of Arabs and the implications thereof.

by Palestinian groups. The "terrorist" label has been particularly persistent, and came to light again during the Gulf Crisis.

The existence of racist prejudice against Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular may have a deleterious effect on the individual's ability and willingness to fully participate in the host country's society and politics. It has been suggested in the US context, moreover, that such biases in society have a further, double-edged effect:

> These biases have not only allowed the government to operate relatively free from public criticism of its actions, but have also been seen to have affected the government's own view of Arabs and Arab-Americans (Fischbach, 1985, 88).

This section of the chapter will therefore look at ethnic and religious aspects of discrimination, while the following section will highlight some of the political dimensions suggested by the American research. The chapter will conclude with an examination of how attitudes towards participation in the host country may have been affected by these factors.

DISCRIMINATION

At the time of the survey, instances of Gulf-Crisis-related racial vilification were being documented by the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB). The ADB noted in their "Racial Vilification Summary" (February 1991, 3) that "Arabs were still more vilified than any other group" (see Appendix V). The Human Rights Commission's 1991 *Report on Racist Violence* (514-516) also detailed a large

number of instances of harassment against Arabs and Muslims at around the same time.[60]

It is possible that responses to questionnaire items on discrimination were influenced by external factors such as the rise in racist incidents at the time. On the other hand, there has long been prejudice against Arabs and Muslims in Australia, much of it based on stereotypes (Tillett, 1991, 13). Moreover, Abu Duhou and Teese (1992, 117) found that, among Arab students in Sydney and Melbourne high schools, "Prejudice against one's national background was more experienced by Palestinians". This thesis does not attempt to examine the causes or roots of anti-Arab or anti-Muslim stereotyping and discrimination in Australia, but merely to establish the nature, extent and implications of the respondents' own perspectives and experiences in this respect.

The survey data provided evidence that perceptions of discrimination were widespread among this group of Palestinians, and were experienced on a number of levels. A third of the sample had experienced discrimination "All the time" or "Often" and almost half experienced it "Sometimes". Table 3-3 illustrates the multi-layered nature of the discrimination. According to the figures in the table, respondents were more likely to feel discriminated against as migrants or as Arabs than as Palestinians or as Muslims.[61]

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[60] Many instances involved Muslim women wearing the *hijab* (headscarf) - a group who (unfortunately for them) do qualify for the sobriquet "visible minority".

[61] One respondent wrote:"I believe most Aussies view Palestinians as Muslims. I'm a Christian and feel left out on both sides."

TABLE 3-3 DISCRIMINATION EXPERIENCED BY SAMPLE IN AUSTRALIA
(Item 31. How would you describe the kind(s) of discrimination you have experienced in Australia?)

Type of discrimination	n	% of cases
Anti-Arab	94	66.2
Anti-migrant	81	57.0
Anti-Palestinian	43	30.3
Anti-Muslim	41	28.9
Other	13	9.2

Note: The figures refer only to the 142 persons who answered this item. Seventeen per cent of the sample reported no discrimination.[62]

Although the numbers reporting anti-Muslim discrimination appear relatively low, it must be remembered that only 43% of the sample were Muslims. What these figures actually indicate, therefore, is that over half the Muslims in the sample felt discriminated against on the grounds of their religion.

While the data for Item 31 indicate that less than one-third had come across anti-Palestinian discrimination, another item explored the possibility that Palestinians often have an expectation of discrimination, and take steps to circumvent it. To test whether such expectations had a behavioural dimension, and prompted by what had been revealed in interviews, respondents were asked about those who had found it expedient to conceal their Palestinian origins upon arrival in Australia. In

[62] In Multiple Dichotomy items such as Item 31 and Item 37 (Table 3-11), respondents gave a "yes" or "no" to each category. The figures given for each category relate to the numbers, and proportion, of all the persons answering the item who chose that category. For this reason the percentage figures total more than 100. In the tables for such items, categories have mostly been arranged in order of frequency.

this sample, nearly two-thirds knew at least some other Palestinians who had done this. Tuma (1981, 6) found that 25% of his sample agreed that "Palestinians are afraid to make their identity known".[63]

Palestinians who choose to conceal their identity do so for a number of reasons. Some act primarily on the basis of a perception that public opinion in countries like Australia and USA is largely pro-Israeli and anti-Palestinian - a perception reinforced by much of what they encounter in the media (see below). A businessman who had been most reluctant to be either identified as Palestinian, or to be interviewed as such, told the writer: "There is no point expressing my views when society here has been brainwashed by the pro-Israeli media." In the American context, Abraham (1989, 21) has observed that:

> In those instances where emphasizing a specific ethnic or national identity would stigmatize individuals (for example, Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian, Libyan), the strategy adopted often involves the complete denial of one's background.

Information obtained from interviews in Sydney indicated that there were also some whose tendency to deny their origins was rooted at least partly in their Middle East experiences. One informant noted, for example, that Palestinians brought up under Jordanian rule, in the West Bank before 1967, or in Jordan itself, were barred from asserting their national identity: "They were not allowed to say they were Palestinian - it was a crime". Another noted that those who were expelled to Lebanon were looked down upon by the Lebanese, including, later,

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[63] This was an item (Item 32) where unobtrusive measures were thought appropriate. Few of those interviewed were willing to admit that they themselves had denied their origins, although most knew others who had done so. Accordingly, they were asked if they knew other Palestinians who had tried to hide their origins.

some Lebanese-Australians, as "refugees". Concealing one's identity became an ingrained habit for many "Jordanian" and "Lebanese" Palestinians. As has been argued elsewhere in this thesis, the homeland experience once again proved to be an important factor affecting attitudes in the host country.

In contrast to these ingrained inhibitions, several informants had the view that a greater sense of pride in being Palestinian was now becoming apparent, that a readiness to admit one's origins had begun with the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and that this readiness had increased with the Intifada. Certainly, when asked how the Intifada had made them feel as Palestinians, 85.5% of respondents answered "Very proud". Christison (1989, 33) also noted that the Intifada had had "a marked consciousness-raising effect" among Palestinians in the United States. A boost in pride among Jews was one of the results reported by Taft (1973b, 124) in his study of Jewish reactions to Israel's successes in the 1967 war. Taft made the important observation that, during this episode, Australian society was "very sympathetic to the Israeli cause". If external events, and the host society's reaction to them, can increase a community's sense of victimisation, they can also - it appears - have the opposite effect, that of reinforcing a sense of national pride.

Single-factor explanations for shifts in identity patterns are rarely adequate, however. In the case of this group, the "pull" towards identification with the Intifada occurred at the same time as a "push" away from the Lebanese community with whom some had chosen to identify themselves. The huge increase in Lebanese immigration as a result of the civil war had resulted in a certain amount

of host society hostility towards that community.[64] The civil war had the added effect of cooling relations between the local Lebanese and Palestinian communities. Some Palestinians appear to have felt all these factors were added incentives for the re-asserting of their own national identity.

Generally speaking, although a considerable proportion of the sample reported some kind of discrimination, it did not seem to be a cause of great bitterness. Christison likewise found (1989, 27, 34) that most Palestinian-Americans do not regard ethnic discrimination as a very large problem, and deal with it - when it occurs - without paranoia. Many respondents in this study appeared resigned to being called "wog" as part of the general migrant experience. More importantly, as one young activist commented: "There is now no immediate negative reaction when you say you are Palestinian." Attitudes towards the media, however, were expressed with greater force.

MEDIA BIAS

The items on discrimination had elicited some negative comments from respondents regarding the role of the media. Manifestations of discrimination were attributed, for example, to "Ignorance and the misleading media" and to "Television, radio and other aggressive media". In the words of one interviewee:

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[64] According to Hugo (1992, 171): "The national Lebanese population increased from 7,253 in 1961, to 10,668 in 1966, 24,218 in 1971, 33,425 in 1976, 49,623 in 1981, 56,345 in 1986 and 75,400 in 1991. Those migrants arriving prior to the mid 1970s came predominantly as the result of chain migration but following the civil war of 1975-77 many have come as refugees without direct family linkages in Australia."

> The media shapes the minds of others, and what is in the minds of other people affects one's actions. Thus there is a dilemma as to whether to say one is Palestinian or not - this was especially so in the 1970s.

In the case of recent immigrants, attitudes to the media may well be influenced by the political realities of the homeland. While Israel has a relatively free press, the state-controlled media in most Arab states function as mere mouthpieces for government. Therefore, while most Palestinians are *au fait* with the independent status of the Australian media, others feel that the government could, or should control media output. For such individuals, anti-Arab or anti-Palestinian material surfacing in the media is seen as reflecting a similar bias on the part of government.[65]

It was clear that the media issue in general was a highly salient one for the sample, and not just in terms of ethnic and religious stereotyping, although the latter remained a concern.[66] Ninety-two per cent of the sample felt that media treatment of the Palestine issue was important to them personally. Asked to describe how the media treated the issue, 32% felt that the coverage was "quite" pro-Israeli, while a further 56% held the uncompromising view that the coverage was "very" pro-Israeli. Articles in the influential *Bulletin* in early 1991 could have been seen as reinforcing perceptions of a bias which was specifically anti-

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[65] At a meeting held by the NSW Ethnic Affairs Commission to discuss with the Arab and Muslim communities the problems of biased media reporting of the Gulf Crisis, it was pointed out to the communities that the police could not control media reporting2 (CRSRG Vol II, 1991).

[66] The Committee of Arab Australians (CAA) in Sydney worked with their Melbourne counterparts in 1990 to produce a report entitled *Documentation of Incidents of Harassment of, and Racism towards, Australians of Arab Descent and Australian Muslims*. The report covered instances of racism in the media during - and before - the Gulf Crisis, and was pivotal in alerting government to the problem. Offensive media coverage was also criticised by government bodies. The Human Rights Commission referred to coverage that was "not only ill informed but inflammatory", and warned that sensationalist reporting could lead to scapegoating (HREOC, 1991, 363).

Palestinian. In one article, pro-Iraqi Palestinian factions were said to have demonstrated their capacity for operations in Australia, supported by "local Arab fanatics" (January 22 1991). In a later article, a statement that a new wave of global Palestinian terrorism was about to begin was accompanied by a warning that "former members of terrorist organisations have established themselves in Australia" (April 30 1991).[67]

The next question to be considered is whether or not such perceived biases in the media are parallelled by biases - real or perceived - in public opinion on the same issues. As the data in Table 3-3 indicated, many members of the community feel the effects of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim discrimination as keenly as anti-Palestinian manifestations. The discussion below will therefore continue to take account of these wider identities.

PUBLIC OPINION

There has been little data published in Australia on public opinion regarding Arabs and Muslims; even less on Palestinians; and almost none on Middle East political issues. Interviewees were generally critical of public ignorance and prejudice regarding their culture, belief systems and politics. The published data which is available indicates that ignorance is probably more prevalent than actual prejudice, although it is clear that the holding of negative stereotypes, regarding many Middle

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[67] Elements within the Jewish community, on the other hand, often regard the media as biased against Israel and its supporters. According to Rubinstein (1986, 2): "Mainstream and highly respectable sources such as the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the Melbourne *Age* had, since the mid-1970s, been increasingly hostile to Israeli policy."

Easterners, persists. The quality of the available data has also been affected by methodological shortcomings. The subject area remains severely under-researched, and it is therefore difficult to measure the extent to which Palestinian perceptions are objectively justified. Nevertheless, it will be instructive to look briefly at some of the relevant published poll material. While some of the material dates back to the 1970s, it should be remembered that this was precisely the time when many Palestinians were arriving, in the wake of the 1967 war. A third of the sample were of very recent Middle East origin, but half had been in Australia since at least 1970. A number of respondents mentioned the anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian atmosphere they encountered at that time.

In the wake of the Arab-Israeli war and subsequent oil embargo of 1973, *The Age* (25 March, 1974) in Melbourne published the findings of an opinion poll on the subject. While no respondents thought Australia should support the Arabs (13% thought Israel should be supported), 81% thought Australia should remain neutral in the dispute.[68] Table 3-4 shows the results for the personal sympathy question.

A *Bulletin* poll in the following year (1 February 1975) found, similarly, that while 41% sympathised with Israel (and only 5% with the Arabs), over half the sample were either undecided, or else sympathised with both, or with neither.

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[68] The headline to this report was "Public favors Labor's 'even hand' in Middle East", and indeed it is possible that Australian reactions generally are influenced by the government's stated policy of "even-handedness". The policy has not changed in any significant way since the 1970s, although one government official told the writer recently (and ruefully) that: "The problem with having an even-handed approach is that you offend everyone".

TABLE 3-4 AUSTRALIAN SYMPATHIES WITH ARABS AND ISRAELIS (1974)
(Which group of people do you feel more sympathy for - the Israelis, the Arabs, or both equally?)

	%
Israelis	37
Arabs	5
Both equally	48
Don't know	10
Total	100

n = 2492
Source: The Age, 25 March 1974.

In 1986, some time after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs (AIJA) published a commissioned survey examining public opinion on a wide range of Middle East issues (Rubinstein, 1986). Informative in terms of its breadth of coverage, including discussion of the Palestine issue, the study is marred by shortcomings such as bias in the question wording and in the reporting of results. The findings are nevertheless instructive: while 57% of those polled admitted they knew little or nothing about the Middle East conflict (AIJA Table 3), personal sympathy levels are shown in Table 3-5.

Once again, the large proportion who either didn't know, or who wished to remain uncommitted, is noticeable. Members of the sample were then asked to describe the PLO. Three out of four of the categories offered made a reference to PLO terrorism, and were chosen by 65% of the sample, although 29% said they knew little or nothing about the PLO (AIJA Table 28).

TABLE 3-5 AUSTRALIAN SYMPATHIES WITH ARABS AND ISRAEL (1986)
(To whom (*sic*) do your personal sympathies lie?)

	%
Arabs	3
Israel	19
Both	14
Neither	50
Don't know	14
Total	100

n = 2112
Source: Table 24, AIJA Report 1986.

Polls in USA have regularly elicited negative public opinion towards "the Arabs" or "the PLO", but much more positive reactions to "the Palestinians". The AIJA poll was no exception to this rule. The item on Palestinian rights to a homeland elicited what the author of the report called "by far the highest degree of agreement found in *any question in the poll*" (author's emphasis, 47). The results were as shown in Table 3-6.

TABLE 3-6 AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDES REGARDING PALESTINIAN HOMELAND (1986)
(Do you believe that Palestinians
should have a homeland of their own?)

	%
Yes	84
No	7
Don't know/not stated	9
Total	100

n = 2112
Source: Table 27, AIJA Report 1986.

Although a number of opinion polls were conducted during the Gulf Crisis (Goot, 1992), most concentrated on aspects of support for Australia's military commitment. None looked, for example, at how attitudes to Arabs and Muslims might have been affected. In recent years, however, government departments concerned with immigration policies and the settlement of migrants have carried out a number of studies of Australian attitudes to Arabic-speaking migrants. The source of the funding has dictated the exclusion of political issues. A 1986 Department of Immigration survey found that, while Australians surveyed appeared to either tolerate or ignore Middle Easterners in their neighbourhood, some also adhered to stereotypical views of them as a group. Thus, although 70% thought of them as hardworking, it was also found that:

> Nineteen per cent .. strongly agreed with the stated view that young Middle Eastern migrants are too fanatical and political. As well, 19 per cent also strongly agreed with the statement that our drug problems have increased because of the connections with Asian and Middle Eastern migrants (DIEA 1986 Vol II, 186-7).

The generalised nature of such prejudice was highlighted again in a 1988 *Sydney Morning Herald* poll on migration, which found that:

> The immigrants regarded as least desirable were from Middle Eastern countries, with more than twice as many people opposing their entry as favouring it (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 February 1988).

As in so many other Australian polls on such subjects, a closer look at the figures (Table 3-7) reveals a large proportion to be non-committal. The poll results described above show that Australians' attitudes towards the PLO, Arabs and Middle Easterners have traditionally been negative, although a very high proportion of the public either admits ignorance, or else is unwilling to express a committed

view. However, there were indications of a high level of public sympathy for Palestinians' need for a homeland.

TABLE 3-7 AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDES TO MIDDLE EAST IMMIGRATION (1988)
(If you think Australia should take immigrants, where should they come from?)

	Encourage	Don't encourage	Prevent	Don't know
	%	%	%	%
Middle East	17	42	36	5

n = 1000
Source: Sydney Morning Herald poll, 9 February 1988.

From the sample's point of view, interview data had shown that few thought of their public image in positive terms. One informant recalled: "A few years ago, when you said you were Palestinian, Australians thought you were a terrorist .. and Arabs were seen as monsters". Respondents were therefore asked, firstly, how important the Palestinians' public image was to them; and, secondly, whether they had perceived any change in that image over recent years. Seventy-nine per cent of the sample viewed the issue of Palestinians' public image as "Very important", and a further 10% felt it was "Quite important". Significantly, an improvement in that public image, compared to a few years earlier, was noted by nearly three-quarters of the respondents. During questioning, most had seemed to think that the improvement was due to the impact of external events, so Item 47 (Table 3-8) asked respondents about the impact on public opinion - as they perceived it - of a number of Middle East events.

It is always difficult to measure in retrospect how past events may have influenced the holding of present attitudes. Bettelheim has described as *logificatio post eventum* the human tendency to explain away past events in the light of what one knows about the present. However, the way the data is distributed shows that the sample had carefully considered the implications of each event, and that their assessment of those implications betokened considerable political awareness.

TABLE 3-8 PERCEIVED EFFECT OF MIDDLE EAST EVENTS ON AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDES TO PALESTINIANS
(Item 47. Do you think any of the following Middle East events have led to a change in Australian attitudes to the Palestinians?)

	Positive effect	**No effect**	**Negative effect**		
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**	**Total (n)**
a) Israeli actions in Lebanon	52	40	8	100	(134)
b) The Intifada	84	13	3	100	(160)
c) PLO's renunciation of terrorism	50	39	11	100	(143)
d) PLO's recognition of Israel	51	41	8	100	(145)
e) Iraqi actions in Kuwait	15	28	57	100	(148)

Note: The number responding to each of the sub-items varied, and the overall number of missing cases was quite high. Only b) - the Intifada - elicited a high response rate (91% of the total sample). Respondents may have had trouble with the complicated layout of the question.

As the figures in Table 3-8 indicate, the Intifada was seen by a very large majority as leading to an upgrading of the Palestinian public image. This was not unexpected, given the graphic effect of images in the media and elsewhere of unarmed youths confronting the Israeli Defence Forces. What was less predictable, especially as the Palestinians were widely assumed to be supporters of Saddam Hussein's actions in the Gulf, was their negative view of the effect of those actions on their own standing in Australian public opinion. Although the holding of this view was not, of course, incompatible with personal support for Saddam's actions, the sample's awareness of opinion trends outside their community, at a relatively early stage in the crisis, indicates a relatively high level of political awareness. One informant described the wider effect of overseas developments thus:

> Any gain made by the PLO abroad strengthens the community here, and helps it deal with issues relating to integration. Such gains also help the community interact with Australians (Interview, 21 June, 1989).

The implied corollary is that a loss for Palestinians in the Middle East would mean a similar "loss" in terms of their situation in the diaspora communities. These findings regarding the sample's views also seem to bear out the importance of "situational" factors in determining attitudes. Account must be taken, it seems, of the interactive nature of individuals' opinions and the political environment. The section on political aspects, below, will look more closely at these issues.

The effect on public opinion of Middle East events is often seen in "zero-sum" terms, whereby any "gains" for the Palestinian side are exactly offset by "losses" on the Israeli side, and vice versa. Thus, the results in Table 3-8 show that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was seen by the sample as leading to just as great an

improvement in the Palestinian image as were unilateral acts by the PLO such as renouncing terrorism, recognising Israel, and so on. It is difficult to prove empirically that overseas events exert a direct influence on attitudes in the country of residence, whether within a certain community, or among the population at large. Without a longitudinal study it is equally difficult to ascertain whether such shifts are permanent.

Studies which have looked at the effect of Middle East wars on attitudes and identity within Arab and Jewish diaspora communities include Taft (1973b); Zaghel (1976); Abraham, Abraham and Aswad (1983); and Beirman (1990). In broad terms, one set of reserachers concluded that "The community's responses were 'situational', that is, they were contingent upon events taking place in the Middle East" (Abraham, Abraham and Aswad, 1983, 179). More specifically, Zaghel (1976, 312-3, 337) had found that most of the Ramallah Palestinians in his study adopted a more "Arab" identification after the 1973 war - partly as a result of the Arab armies' improved performance, and partly in reaction to "the hostile environment towards Arabs in the larger American society".

While this study makes no attempt to trace attitude shifts within the community, the data does suggest, firstly, that homeland events exert a direct influence on attitudes within diaspora communities; and, secondly, that the host society's reactions of hostility or approbation - towards the events and those associated with them - constitute an equally significant factor in this respect. In the Palestinian

case, their own sense of pride at the achievements of the Intifada were further boosted by perceptions of host society sympathies favourable to them.

Before concluding this section - and as an introduction to the next - it must be noted that for this group of Palestinians, the salience of the public opinion issue went beyond its effect on their personal self-esteem. There was an assumption that, if public opinion could somehow become more sympathetic towards the Palestine issue, and towards Palestinians, then policy changes at government level would automatically follow. One activist, describing the Intifada as "the miracle of the century", maintained that: "Even the Australian government respects the Palestinians now (and) there is increasing pressure being put on the government". What may have been gained during the Intifada, however, appeared to be lost during the Gulf Crisis. A Palestinian speaker at an anti-Gulf War public meeting explicitly linked the rise in anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian feeling, in Australia, with the government's policies in the Gulf and in the Occupied Territories:

> How would a racist take the anti-racist policies of our Government seriously when they see our Government's double standards in foreign policy? .. And Australia was one of the nations .. which called for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and security for all? (Committee of Arab-Australians Public Meeting, 24 August 1990).

Public opinion may or may not influence policy formation at home and abroad. In an area, however, where the public has not been historically well-informed, it appears much more likely that the policy-makers will influence public opinion, not the reverse. Goot, in his study of Australian opinion polls throughout the Gulf Crisis, found *inter alia* that:

> Public opinion can be led - not just by pollsters but also by politicians and the press .. The fashionable argument that government action cannot change attitudes is invalid (Goot, 1992, 181).

If Goot is correct, public opinion on the little-understood Palestine issue could be influenced by government, should it so choose.[69]

The next section will discuss some of the ways in which the government's view of the issue has manifested itself in Australia; how the sample responded to the government's perceived policies towards their homeland; and the ways in which the sample viewed government treatment of their community.

POLITICAL MARGINALISATION

If Palestinian-Australians can come to terms with a certain amount of ethnic and religious discrimination, they are considerably more aware - and resentful - of discrimination on the political front. Christison has described how Palestinians in the United States are confronted by "political prejudice .. which is every bit as painful as ethnic prejudice, and generally much more common." This section will deal with the political aspects of the Palestinian experience in Australia.

Respondents' critical attitudes towards the media and public opinion were echoed in their negative views of Australian foreign policy. Interestingly, only 58% viewed government policy as "Very important" - a much smaller proportion than

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[69] For a historical account of Australian policy on the Arab-Israeli conflict, see White's unpublished MA thesis, University of Western Australia, 1989. For a more up-to-date outline of current policy, see the address given to the Zionist Federation of Australia, by Michael Costello, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Canberra, 20 May 1990).

those who gave a "Very important" rating to media coverage and to Palestinians' public image (75% and 79% respectively). This may be due to a perception that Australia exerts little influence over events in the Middle East, or alternatively to the fact that foreign policy has little impact on one's daily life. Yet, if the issue was considered marginal in some ways, it appeared to be highly salient in others, as the next results will show.

Almost total unanimity was expressed when describing Australian policy on the Palestine issue; only 3 individuals agreed with the government's own description of policy on the Palestine issue as "Even-handed", while 98% of the sample saw it as "Quite" or "Very" pro-Israel. The sample's sense of involvement with such issues was tested when they were asked how they would react to a specific change in Middle East policy - if Australia recognised the State of Palestine. Almost one hundred per cent said they would be happy. There appears to be no reason to think this proportion would be less today.

The uniformity of the data on questions relating to government policy meant that the underlying causes for such attitudes could not be determined by means of statistical analysis. Since certain concerns had been voiced repeatedly by members of the community, however, it seemed possible that those concerns might underpin the negativism of the sample's attitudes. Prime Minister Hawke's personal views regarding the Palestine issue, for example, were regarded by the sample as very significant in determining policy both at home and abroad. It has been observed that, in the Middle East, "the patrimonial leader .. plays a disproportionate role in

the decision-making process" (Bill and Springborg, 1990, 177). Palestinians in the diaspora may somewhat over-estimate the policy-making powers of the chief executive. A second concern often raised was what some Palestinians saw as harassment of their community in Australia by the security agencies. Again, their experiences in the Middle East may have shaped certain expectations in this respect, although there exists anecdotal evidence to support their assertions regarding the Australian environment. Both these issues will be discussed below.

At the time of the survey, the Hawke government had been in power for eight years, and the sample's near-total condemnation of Australian Middle East policy probably reflects in part their rejection of the Prime Minister's personal ideology. That ideology had been apparent since long before he became Prime Minister. As his authorised biographer pointed out:

> The problem is that in his speeches on the Middle East, Hawke has devoted only a small percentage, if any, of each one to the plight of the Palestinians, while highlighting the violent physical and verbal assaults upon Israel by her neighbours. He thus projected the impression that, for him, the Palestinians were irrelevant (D'Alpuget, 1982, 258).

Some had the impression that Hawke considered the Palestinians and other Arabs as worse than irrelevant; one newspaper headline in 1974 read: "I'd A-Bomb Arabs, says Hawke" (*Daily Telegraph*, 16 February 1974). In the same year he led an unsuccessful, but very public campaign to force the government to drop its "even-handed" policy in favour of one more supportive of Israel (*The Age*, 15 February, 1974). Soon after, Hawke learned that a PLO delegation had been invited by the government to visit Australia. According to his biographer, he was outraged, spoke to the Prime Minister at the time, and the delegation's visas were

cancelled (D'Alpuget, 1982, 275). For a diaspora community as isolated as the Australian one, such visits represent a vital connection to the homeland. Going to hear a visiting Palestinian speaker was the political activity specified by more members of the sample (73.4%) than any other activity. The visits - or their cancellation - receive considerable publicity in the community.[70]

Hawke's standing with the Palestinian and Arab communities did not improve once he himself became Prime Minister, although he outwardly adhered to the "even-handed" policy that he had inherited. As one of his biographers put it: "The veneer of neutrality is thin, and his continuing devotion to Israel regularly shows through" (Anson, 1991, 141). The Palestinians were unable for years to procure an audience with Hawke, whose refusal to see a delegation from the community came to be seen as symbolic of their political marginalisation more generally. It was not until 1989 that he finally received a Palestinian delegation. One informant put the community's view bluntly: "Until recently, Hawke was the worst enemy of the Arab world".

Perceptions that an anti-Arab bias in Australian foreign policy was reflected in anti-Arab policies at home were reinforced during the Gulf Crisis. Once again, these perceptions may have influenced responses to the survey. As anti-Arab racist

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[70] In conversation with government officials, the writer learnt that Foreign Affairs' policy on "Controversial Visits" had long meant an effective exclusion of PLO officials coming to Australia in an official capacity. This policy was not relaxed until the PLO's 1988 renunciation of terrorism, after which PLO visitors were allowed into Australia as long as they were not associated with acts or advocacy of terrorism. Among such visitors was Nabil Shaath, a senior adviser to Yasser Arafat, who came in 1989. Another sign of a more relaxed government policy vis-a-vis the PLO came in 1990, when the Governor-General had his first meeting with the PLO representative, Ali Kazak (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 September 1989, 30 May 1990).

incidents mounted, organisations such as the (largely Palestinian-led) Committee of Arab Australians called for a public statement at Prime Ministerial level in condemnation of such incidents. Although Hawke received a Jewish delegation as early as November 1990 and stated publicly that he was "appalled" at incidents of anti-semitism (*The Age*, 27 November 1990), he did not see representatives from the Arab community until 14 January 1991. By this time - the very eve of the Gulf War - government bodies were becoming increasingly concerned that the war would provoke a further upsurge in racism.[71] Palestinians in Sydney drew a comparison between the dilatory nature of Hawke's response, and the fact that the NSW Premier, Nick Greiner, had come out with strong public statements - on the issue of racism against Arabs - as early as September 1990.[72]

On 21 January 1991 the government banned ministers and officials from initiating dialogue with the PLO representative in Canberra. The Minister for Defence announced: "So the Palestinian people are going to have to find themselves new, more moderate and more realistic representatives" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 February 1991). Such developments on the political level, combined with the alienating effects of societal (and media) prejudice against them as Palestinians, as Arabs and (for some) as Muslims, may help to explain the sample's extremely

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[71] Hawke's media release contained the statement: "I condemn utterly any attacks made by racist elements in Australian society against any group on the basis of their ethnic origin or religious or cultural adherence. I am particularly concerned that the recent increase in such incidents towards Arab Australians and Australian Muslims relates to the crisis in the Gulf .." (Media Release, Prime Minister's Office, 14 January 1991).

[72] At the Premier's quarterly Press Conference with Sydney's ethnic communities in September 1990, he noted that Arab-Australians were being attacked for their opposition to the Gulf War, and that they had the right to express their views freely (Press conference transcript, 4 September 1990).

negative views on these issues. The possibility exists, however, that the sample's strongly-held view of bias in government policy might have moderated somewhat since Hawke was replaced as Prime Minister.

While respondents were willing to express in writing their views of Australian policy on the Palestine issue, it was not feasible to include more sensitive issues when designing the survey instrument. Among those issues was the community's relations with instruments of the Australian government such as the security and law enforcement agencies. The data collected on these subjects was obtained mainly from informal interviews, and from personal observation.

The community's conviction that the government has an anti-Palestinian foreign policy is mirrored by their sense that the Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), and federal and state police forces, including the Special Branch, routinely carry out surveillance of their community. Several activists told of incidents since the 1970s when they had been visited and questioned by ASIO officers. These accounts were confirmed by the PLO representative (Ali Kazak), who saw such episodes as "very counter-productive and dangerous", since they risked creating the anti-Australia attitudes that the community was being suspected of in the first place:

> The danger was that the community felt that they were second-class citizens, alien, in a foreign land, and that Australia did not belong to them (Interview, 12 December 1989).

Mr Kazak, like others in the community, was at pains to point out to the writer that no Palestinian had ever been charged with any act of political violence in Australia.

During the Gulf Crisis, Palestinians and other Arabs began to report instances of unusual levels of harassment by ASIO officials, and to suspect that they were also under surveillance by such means as telephone-tapping. One Palestinian activist said that he had been questioned by the Special Branch, ASIO and the police. Several reported visits in the middle of the night. While it is almost impossible to verify such reports, some articles in the media tended to confirm the community's suspicions. A *Bulletin* article on the official response to an alleged threat of terrorism in Australia spoke of:

> .. an operation which has seen the surveillance of scores of Moslems living here, phone tapping, a recommendation to intern certain people and an unprecedented vigil on our ports, public utilities and foreign diplomats. It also involves a search for Islamic terrorists from the Middle East known to have infiltrated Australia (*The Bulletin*, 22 January 1991).

The article made several references to Palestinians (and to Arabs in general) in the context of supposed sources of terrorism. ASIO was cited in the *Herald*, soon after, as the source of reports that "NSW could be a target of Arab terrorist attacks or sabotage" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 1991). The end of the Gulf War did not mean an end to such articles, some of which singled out Palestinians as suspected terrorists. As late as April in the same year, David Barnett was stating in the *Bulletin* (30 April 1991) that:

> It is feared there are "sleepers" - agents of Moslem extremist groups, of the secret services of Arab countries and of the Palestine Liberation Organisation embedded in the Moslem communities .. There was good reason to assume the Prime Minister's life was in danger.

This article also quoted a Canberra source who maintained that a new wave of Palestinian terrorism was about to begin, and warned that "we in Australia have imported quite a few Palestinians".[73]

For the community, the fact that such allegations appeared to emanate from quasi-official sources made them qualitatively different from tabloid items which routinely denigrate Arabs, Muslims, and other minorities. Observers of Arab-American politics have referred to the "political marginalisation" (Abraham, 1989, 18) of Arabs in general, and of those supporting the Palestinian cause in particular. Samhan (1987, 11), as mentioned earlier, has used the term "political racism" to describe the political exclusion of Arab-Americans - a problem she sees as more serious than that of "generalized societal prejudice". Samhan's term is probably an over-statement if applied to the Australian context, but on the other hand the community in Australia may be influenced by the extensively documented instances in USA of this particular brand of discrimination.

Fischbach (1985, 93-8) has described "blatant cases of discrimination and harassment based merely upon Arab ethnicity", noting a number of instances in USA where Palestinians in particular have been harassed.[74] Fischbach's references to CIA and FBI coordination of activities with Mossad have been

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[73] Some of the allegations in Barnett's article were disputed by ASIO and by the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board in the May 21, 1991 issue of *The Bulletin*.

[74] For a more up-to-date account of the situation of Arabs in USA, see Suleiman (1993).

echoed at times in the Australian press with regard to coordination between ASIO and Mossad, and may add to the Palestinians' sense of insecurity.[75]

To sum up, the sample's unanimously critical views of negative stereotyping by both public opinion and the media, coupled with equally negative perceptions of official policies which they see as biased against them both at home and abroad, may contain the seeds of alienation. Although some improvements had been noted in the Palestinians' public image over recent years, the Gulf Crisis appeared to constitute a severe setback, since the debacle in the Gulf appeared to be accompanied by undeserved victimisation at home. The explicitly political nature of some of the perceived discrimination was later described by Eddie Zananiri, a prominent activist in the community, in the following terms: "Palestinians have been negatively stereotyped in Australia as the result of a political agenda on the part of certain groups" (Radio National broadcast, 17 September 1993). In the next section the discussion will focus on attitudes to the host society more broadly, including the important questions of self-identification, and of willingness to participate in the political life of the host country.

PARTICIPATION IN THE HOST COUNTRY

In general terms, the Palestinian attitude towards full participation in the society and politics of their host country is ambivalent. While in many ways they are

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[75] Fischbach (1985, 99) quotes the Israeli lawyer Felicia Langer as stating that, when a young Palestinian-American was arrested in Israel in 1977 for belonging to the PFLP, the FBI forwarded data to Israel for use in his prosecution.

anxious to be seen as model citizens, their sense of identification with Australia - and their attitudes towards taking part in its political life - are inhibited by a number of factors. The Palestinian case is one where, as Richards (1984) has suggested with regard to migrants in general, past homeland experiences exert a direct effect on their attitudes to politics in the new country.

In Christison's important study of Palestinian-Americans (1989, 29), she explicitly linked Palestinian statelessness to their high level of political awareness in the Diaspora:

> For the very reason that there is no sovereign Palestinian state, Palestinian Americans tend to be acutely conscious of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects, and it is virtually impossible to be a Palestinian in America without also being political about it.

Yet Christison (*ibid.*) also makes a distinction between political activism and political consciousness, in the Palestinian case. This distinction is corroborated by some of the data below.

When it comes to measuring Palestinian attitudes to participation in Australia, standard indicators are not always totally reliable. Christison (1989, 20) has noted of Palestinian-Americans:

> Failure to speak Arabic in the home, the ability to speak unaccented English, marriage to a non-Arab, socializing with non-Arabs are all signs of assimilation, but they need not also indicate the loss of a Palestinian identity.

Likewise, the fact that 97% of the sample in this study had taken up citizenship was probably due more to their statelessness than to a desire to immerse their

identity in that of their host country. As one informant put it: "Palestinians have a passport complex".

The anglicising of Arabic names is also done for a variety of reasons; a member of the legal profession (whose family name had been anglicised) told the writer that: "Palestinians in Australia keep their heads down; they keep a very low profile." Asked why, he replied: "There's a very simple answer to that; the community is Jewish-oriented." Homeland factors can also affect Palestinian attitudes towards name-changing, and to their anxiety to obtain a passport as soon as they legally can. Some had found, on trips to the Middle East, that having an Australian passport solved some problems at the airport, but that an anglicised name on the passport was even more useful in avoiding harassment.[76] Nonetheless, the sample's eagerness to take up citizenship was not accompanied by equal readiness to fully identify with Australian society, as Table 3-9 will show.

TABLE 3-9 SAMPLE'S IDENTIFICATION WITH AUSTRALIA
(Item 39. To what extent do you identify with Australian society?)

	n	%
Completely/Very strongly	52	30.0
Quite strongly but with reservations	68	39.3
Not very strongly/Not at all	53	30.6
	173	99.9

[76] Citizenship - and a passport - can normally be applied for after two years' residence in Australia.

It is suggested that the data in previous sections, relating to perceptions of unfair treatment at both local and international levels, may provide some of the rationale for the reservations felt by the largest group in the sample. When it came to defining their own identity in more detail, Table 3-10 shows the multi-layered nature of diaspora Palestinians' identity patterns.

TABLE 3-10 SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF SAMPLE
(Item 38. Which one of the following terms describes how you think of yourself?)

	n	%
Palestinian-Arab-Australian	68	39.1
Palestinian-Australian	42	24.1
Palestinian	30	17.2
Palestinian Arab	15	8.6
Arab-Australian	10	5.7
Arab	4	2.3
Australian	3	1.7
Muslim	2	1.1
	174	99.8

Note: "Muslim" was not offered as a category on the original schedule; the 1% here is due to write-ins.

As Table 3-10 indicates, 89% insisted on a Palestinian component, while 71% saw themselves as Australian in some way. The Arab dimension was also important to many in the sample, and the most favoured identification was a three-way one. The hyphenated form "Arab-Australian" had not been widely current in Australia prior to the Gulf Crisis, although in USA the term "Arab-American" had been used for some decades. Once the Committee of Arab-Australians was set up in August

1990, the term was taken up by the media, politicians and government officials. Although Palestinians were prominent in Arab-Australian activities and organisations at the time of the survey, the table shows that the sample had not abandoned their Palestinian identity in favour of the newer, more public label. Assad Abdi, the main spokesperson for the Committee of Arab Australians during the Gulf Crisis (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 February 1991), was also responsible for media releases put out by the Palestine Cultural Centre at the time. Palestinians formed the majority of the 500 people who had participated in a candlelight march to commemorate the Intifada in December 1990 (Interview with Palestinian journalist, 10 December 1990).

Several respondents admitted to the writer that the identity items had been a particular challenge, partly because they were unexpected. Salience may therefore have been created by the survey instrument itself. By way of contrast, the items relating to foreign policy, media coverage and the Palestinians' public image (see above) had all covered topics familiar to Palestinian discourse. The responses, on those apparently much more salient issues, were notable for their uniformity.

Reference has been made elsewhere in this thesis to the few studies done in Australia which include Palestinians in studies of Arab participation in education and the workforce (Abu Duhou and Teese, 1992); and in activities related to settlement (AAWC, 1991). No research has systematically examined Palestinian participation in politics, whether in the community or mainstream spheres, and this section will therefore concentrate on the political dimension of participation.

A curious contradiction exists in the fact that the absence of reliable data on the politics of this community co-exists with periodic upsurges in official and media spotlighting of the community on the grounds of their alleged - or suspected - political activities. As Peterson (1990, 233-5, 251)) has pointed out, media spotlighting leads to issues being noticed, and thus can affect the agendas of both citizens and public officials. That the process is not necessarily uni-directional, however, is also acknowledged by Peterson when he says that elites can in turn manipulate media messages in order to influence the masses. As has been indicated above, there existed strongly-held views within the sample that both public opinion and the media were being manipulated to their disadvantage, and that anti-Palestinian bias existed at the highest policy-making level. It is suggested here that such perceptions may have negatively affected the community's willingness to participate in Australian politics; this is despite the fact that Arab community sources often describe the Palestinians as being more politically aware than the rest of the Arab community.

In the profile of the community outlined earlier in this chapter, the sample's somewhat ambiguous position on participation in community politics was mentioned. Thus, while 91% felt that such participation was desirable, only 38% were actually members of a community organization - a figure similar to Moughrabi and el-Nazer's (1989, 93) rate of 44% for their respondents. There appeared to be a sense of general disillusion - felt by 60% of the sample - resulting from the organisations' ineffectiveness. Only 13%, for example, thought that the

organisations should be responsible for sending community funds to the Occupied Territories.[77]

Another disparity between what is considered desirable and what is performed in reality was evident in the sample's responses to items on party politics; while 88% thought Palestinians should "Definitely" or "Probably" get involved in the struggle for Palestine through Australian party politics, only 15% were actually party members. Compared to other Arabs, however, this figure is relatively high. An Arab community source told the writer in December 1993 that the equivalent figure for the Arab community at large would be "extremely low - definitely under 10%". The Palestinians in the Diaspora are often described as being highly politicised. Christison is cited (Moughrabi, 1989, 19) as saying, for example, that their participation in American political life is much higher than average. The sampling for this study was not based on those known to be politically committed or active, which makes the respondents' level of political awareness the more unusual.[78]

Respondents were divided on the question of whether Palestinians known to them were willing to participate in party politics, although over 40% saw them as unwilling to do so. This was another item where unobtrusive measures were used,

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[77] While it is standard practice to include, in a thesis of this type, a list of community organisations, it was decided not to do so in this case. Splits and dissolutions of the older Palestinian organisations have been accompanied by the establishing of new ones, some of which only last a few months. A listing is therefore soon out of date. The Department of Immigration publishes a Directory of Ethnic Community Organisations which contains some (but not all) of the Palestinian ones.

[78] At the time of the survey, an Australian-born Palestinian was President of the NSW Young Liberals. Although his family had anglicised its name upon arrival in 1948, and had generally sought assimilation, he told the writer that he found himself becoming "more and more aware of being Palestinian."

since Palestinian anxiety to be *seen* as active for the cause might have led them to over-report their own willingness in this respect. Asked about possible disincentives for such participation, the sample's responses were as shown in Table 3-11.

TABLE 3-11 FACTORS AFFECTING SAMPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN AUSTRALIAN PARTY POLITICS
(Item 37. Do you think any of the following have affected Palestinians' willingness to participate in the Australian political party system?)

	n	%
Lack of language ability	70	44.3
Not understanding the system	70	44.3
Negative experiences with M.E. authorities	60	38.0
Lack of time	56	35.4
Fear of discrimination	54	34.2
Negative experiences with authorities here	49	31.0
Lack of interest	37	23.4

It is characteristic of the migrant situation that language, unfamiliarity with "the system", and lack of time would all inhibit political activity. It might be thought that, for the third of the sample who were not working, time would be available for politics. Peterson's research suggests, however, that stress - resulting, for example, from unemployment - will often turn people away from politics "as they try to cope with the challenges facing them" (Peterson, 1990, 183,50). Survey researchers should probably not under-emphasise the stress experienced by migrants who have not only been traumatised by homeland events but whose arrival coincided in many cases with a severe economic recession in their new country of residence.

The sample largely rejected the suggestion that members of the community were not interested in working for the cause. Seen as much more important inhibiting effects were negative experiences with Australian authorities, and the expectation of discrimination in general. This study does not attempt to site the Palestinians within the wider context of migrant participation in Australian party politics, but the data tends to support observations such as Mistilis' (1984, 94-5) that: "..continual frustration of immigrants' attempts to gain more power in party structures may lead to alienation."

The Palestinians may have a high rate of political awareness, but an Arab community source commented to the writer that in terms of being able to manipulate the party system, the Arabs generally remain very marginal in both the ALP and the Liberal parties. The same source drew a comparison with the Italians and Greeks, who now realise the political benefits of being part of the mainstream political system, and who are consequently increasingly represented there (Telephone interview, 14 December 1993).

Some informants made a conscious linkage between day-to-day discrimination and policies emanating from the top; in the aftermath of the Gulf War, a prominent activist commented to the writer:

> As long as Australia has a foreign policy which is openly pro-Israel and anti-Arab - a policy which is in itself discriminatory - there is a mandate for anti-Arab discrimination locally (Interview, 6 June 1991).

Nevertheless, negative aspects of the local scene were not viewed quite as seriously as the legacy of homeland experiences - a factor mentioned by well over a third of

respondents. It is also a factor increasingly taken into consideration by social scientists concerned with migrant participation.[79] Whether the effect of the homeland factor might have been overcome by more positive experiences and expectations in the host country, cannot of course be determined with any accuracy. It could be suggested, however, that the alienating effects of societal prejudice may be offset to some extent - as has been the case with Australian Aborigines - by clearly-enunciated government support for minority rights.[80]

The previous section described the sample's perceptions of how certain events - or, more exactly, the host society's reactions to those events - had led to an improvement in their position. Whether an upgrading in their public image was accompanied by an increase in willingness to get involved politically, was tested by means of an item asking about changes in their sense of involvement since roughly the time of the Intifada. Only 4% were less willing to get involved in the cause, while just over a third reported no change. Sixty per cent, however, said that they were now more willing to get involved than they were two or three years previously.

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[79] See, for example, the chapters by Mistilis and Richards respectively in Jupp's *Ethnic Politics* (1984); and Bottomley's recent book *From Another Place* (1992).

[80] There is evidence that Australian Aborigines have felt more ready to identify themselves publicly as such since government agencies such as the Bureau of Statistics have begun to encourage them to do so. At the same time, programs promoting a sense of pride in Aboriginality have led to a realisation that: "Once we were made to feel ashamed because we were Aboriginal, but not any more. We're bringing back our identity slowly" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 April 1993). Given that there is still considerable prejudice against Aborigines, such reports suggest that the role of government is crucial in fostering both a sense of community identity, and a willingness to declare that identity publicly.

As mentioned earlier, the homogeneity of the data on many of these issues negated most attempts to explain the findings by statistical methods. It would have been useful, say, to see whether perceptions of an improved public image were associated with increased willingness to get personally involved, but the sample's unanimity regarding the public image issue made such an exercise unproductive. The data shows, for example, that such perceptions *co-existed* with a willingness for more personal involvement. It cannot be said, however, that improvements in the Palestinians' public image *caused* an increase in their willingness to get involved in politics - it can only be suggested as a possibility.

Enough variation in the data existed, however, for cross-tabulations to be feasible in the case of two of the variables looked at; personal experiences of discrimination, and extent of identification with Australia. There was a significant, if rather weak, correlation between the two variables, mainly due to the high proportion of those reporting constant discrimination who were unwilling to identify with Australia. These results are not surprising, although they do have implications for the future of a supposedly multicultural society. Yet the weakness of the correlation means that other factors must be responsible for these signs of alienation. It is suggested that the sense of political victimisation described earlier is almost certainly involved. Cainkar's research among Palestinians in Chicago (1987, 7) found that the rate of integration in that community was decreasing:

> The majority of new Palestinian immigrants are more alienated than those who came before them, mostly due to US foreign policy and its collateral, anti-Arab racism. They are more resistant to assimilation and feel more ambivalent about participating in the American political process.

The findings of some other researchers (Moughrabi, 1989; Christison, 1989) are at odds with those in Christison's study in that they have found Palestinian-Americans to have quite a high rate of political participation. Most are in agreement, however, that government policy - foreign and domestic - in the host country plays a large part in the alienation of this displaced minority. Smooha's data regarding the attitudes of the Palestinian minority in Israel may also be suggestive in this context. In his survey, 80% said they would, or possibly would, feel better as Arab citizens of Israel if a Palestinian state were to be established (Smooha, 1989, 93).

The reasons for migrants' political quiescence are, however, rarely related to host society factors alone. Once again, homeland factors intervene. It will be recalled that, among the reasons given in Chapter Two for the sample's reticence regarding participation in the survey, the fear of repercussions for one's self and one's relatives in the homeland was a major issue. The same fears seemed to apply to the sample's willingness to become involved in politics in the diaspora. One student told the writer in 1990 that, since he was planning to visit the West Bank soon, he knew it was "crazy" to get involved in politics in Australia. Another student informant said he could not get involved in politics, because his ID card was being held by the Israeli military at the Jordanian border, adding that Palestinians like him fear there are spies in the community. He said he knew personally of cases where students active in the diaspora had found, on returning to the homeland, that the Israelis had information on their previous activities and had prevented them from entering.

The PLO representative (Interview, 12 December 1989) confirmed this, stating that when Palestinians on Australian passports visit the homeland, many are detained and questioned at the airport. According to Mr Kazak, they fear for their families in the homeland; for their own chances of being gaoled on arrival; and for the likelihood that - should this happen - they will not be supported by the Australian authorities. For recently uprooted migrants such as the Palestinians, the homeland not only constitutes the focus of their political aspirations, but is also the source of real and ongoing fears. Such fears are not necessarily dissipated in the diaspora, but may even be increased. If this is so, there are implications for a pluralist society espousing freedom from fear for, and full participation by all the ethnic groups within that society.

CONCLUSION

The socio-demographic data presented in the profile of the sample, at the beginning of this chapter, suggests that this particular community is well equipped for smooth integration into Australian society. Yet the data in subsequent sections indicates that Palestinians in Australia have historically been statistically and ethnically invisible in their host country, while being marginalised on the political front. Official recognition of their separateness as an ethnic group within a multicultural society is now taking shape, but the Palestinians themselves have not always been ready to assert their national identity, nor to publicly articulate their political aspirations.

While it is difficult to attempt definitive explanations for this reticence, the explanation appears to lie in what may broadly be called "situational" factors. The Palestinian situation begins with homeland considerations, and is carried over into their diaspora experiences and perceptions. Thus, while harassment in the Middle East by both Arabs and Israelis has undoubtedly contributed to their fears, those fears have not always been allayed in their new country of residence.

As Arabs and - for some - as Muslims they have felt the alienating effects of stereotyping and discrimination - in both the media and in public opinion - which have been to some degree endemic in Australia, and which were revived during the Gulf Crisis.[81] For Palestinians, although they share in wider Arab and Muslim concerns, perceived discrimination on ethnic or religious grounds appears to be less frustrating than discrimination of a more overtly political kind. During the Gulf Crisis, the bureaucracy took public steps - backed by some policy-makers - to address problems of racism. On one level, then, a sense of Arab efficacy was enhanced. Having mobilised in the early stages of that crisis, the activists achieved some concrete gains.[82]

In the political arena, however, the members of the sample expressed concern at what they saw as a continuing anti-Palestinian bias at the highest policy-making

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[81] For a more detailed discussion of the Arab-Australian experience in the Gulf War, including the ways in which the community achieved a degree of empowerment in some ways, but were disillusioned in others, see the writer's own study (Asmar, 1992).

[82] The first Federal Centre for Palestinian Australians was set up soon after the Gulf War, on the crest of a mobilisational wave. In July 1992 the Centre issued a joint statement with Jewish organisations in Australia, in which they asserted the human and national rights of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 July 1992).

levels. The Palestinians resemble the Kurds in that their politics are centred on a homeland cause. For this reason their motives for participating in mainstream politics are likely to based on the perceived benefits of such activity for the cause, rather than, say, for local community concerns.[83] It follows that, if the host country remains unreceptive or hostile to these homeland-centred political aims, then the group in question is likely to be continually frustrated or alienated.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980, 6) have shown that a person's attitudes and behaviour are influenced by that person's belief about the consequences of performing an intended action. In the case of this group of migrants, the fear of consequences occurring both in the homeland, and in Australia, seem to have inhibited the free expression of their attitudes. Moreover - and this is particularly significant for the multicultural future of Australia - the perception of a political bias operating at high levels appears to be inhibiting full identification with and participation in Australian life, especially in politics. For Palestinians, one of the broader ramifications of political discrimination is the continued frustration of their search for statehood - a dilemma which led some of Christison's respondents (1989, 26) to say that, in the absence of a Palestinian state, they felt unable to make a full political commitment to the United States. The data presented in this chapter has suggested that there may be a parallel situation developing within the Australian context. For these reasons the next chapter will deal with the sample's attitudes to the Palestinian homeland, including the issue of statehood.

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[83] I have to thank Chahine Baker for drawing my attention to this particular parallel between the Kurds and Palestinians.