

ROUTLEDGE STUDIES ON THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

The Naqab Bedouin and Colonialism

New perspectives

Edited by
Mansour Nasasra,
Sophie Richter-Devroe,
Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder,
Richard Ratcliffe



ROUTLEDGE

The Naqab Bedouin and Colonialism

New perspectives

Edited by

**Mansour Nasasra, Sophie Richter-Devroe,
Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder and
Richard Ratcliffe**

First published 2015 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2015 Mansour Nasasra, Sophie Richter-Devroe, Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder and Richard Ratcliffe

The right of the editors to be identified as the authors of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Naqab Bedouin and colonialism : new perspectives / edited by Mansour Nasasra, Richard Ratcliffe, Sarab Abu Rabia-Queder and Sophie Richter-Devroe.

pages cm. – (Routledge studies on the Arab-Israeli conflict)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Bedouins–Israel–Negev. 2. Bedouins–Israel–Negev–Social conditions. 3. Women, Bedouin–Israel–Negev–Social conditions. 4. Negev (Israel)–Social conditions. I. Nasasra, Mansour, author, editor of compilation. II. Ratcliffe, Richard, editor of compilation. III. Rabia-Queder, Sarab abu, author, editor of compilation. IV. Richter-Devroe, Sophie, editor of compilation.

DS113.75.N37 2014

305.892'72056949–dc23

2014000802

ISBN: 978-0-415-63845-6 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-76646-1 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Cenveo Publisher Services



Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

The Naqab Bedouin and Colonialism

The Naqab Bedouin and Colonialism brings together new scholarship to challenge perceived paradigms, often dominated by Orientalist, modernist or developmentalist assumptions on the Naqab Bedouin.

The past decade has witnessed a change in both the wider knowledge production on, and political profile of, the Naqab Bedouin. This book addresses this change by, firstly, endeavouring to overcome the historic isolation of Naqab Bedouin studies from the rest of Palestine studies by situating, studying and analysing their predicaments firmly within the contemporary context of Israeli settler-colonial policies. Secondly, it strives to decolonize research and advocacy on the Naqab Bedouin, by, for example, reclaiming 'indigenous' knowledge and terminology.

Not only offering a nuanced description and analysis of Naqab Bedouin agency and activism, but also trying to draw broader conclusions as to the functioning of settler-colonial power structures as well as to the politics of research in such a context, this book is essential reading for students and researchers with an interest in Postcolonial Studies, Development Studies, Israel/Palestine Studies and the contemporary Middle East more broadly.

Mansour Nasasra is a scholar of Middle East Politics and International Relations, teaching Middle East Politics, International Relations and Conflict Resolution in the Middle East at the Department of Politics, University of Exeter. He is currently a research fellow in the Council of British Research in the Levant (Kenyon Institute, Jerusalem).

Sophie Richter-Devroe is a senior lecturer in Gender and Middle East Studies at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, Exeter University, with a broad research interest in gender theory and women's activism in the Middle East. Her book manuscript entitled 'How Women Do Politics: Peacebuilding, Resistance and Survival in Palestine' (forthcoming, 2015) won the 2012 National Women's Studies Association/Illinois Press First Book Prize. She has published translations and reviews of Arabic literary works, as well as several journal articles on Palestinian and Iranian women's activism. Her work also includes research on Palestinian refugees, Palestinian cultural production and the Naqab Bedouin.

Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder is senior lecturer at the Bona Terra Department of Man in the Desert at the Jacob Blaustein Institute of Desert Studies, Ben-Gurion University, where she holds the Koshland Family Career Development Chair in Desert Studies. She is author of *Excluded and Loved: Educated Bedouin Women's Life Stories* (2008), co-author with Weiner Naomi of *Palestinian Women in Israel: Identity, Power Relations and Coping* (2010) (both in Hebrew), and co-editor with Pnina Motzafi-Haller of a special issue of *Hagar* (2009) on 'The Politics of Gendered Development'.

Richard Ratcliffe is an anthropologist whose DPhil. thesis at St Antony's College, Oxford is on the politics of NGOs among the Naqab Bedouin. His recent articles include (with D. Mills) (2012) 'After Method? Ethnography in the Knowledge Economy', *Qualitative Research* 12 (2) (2012): pp. 147–64 and 'The Battle for Recognition: Civil Society, Citizenship and the Political Rise of the Negev Bedouin' in Elisabeth Marteu (ed.), *Civil Organizations and Protest Movements in Israel: Mobilization around the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict* (2009).

Routledge Studies on the Arab–Israeli Conflict

Edited by Mick Dumper

University of Exeter, UK

The Arab–Israeli conflict continues to be the centre of academic and popular attention. This series brings together the best of the cutting edge work now being undertaken by predominantly new and young scholars. Although largely falling within the field of political science the series also includes interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary contributions.

International Assistance to the Palestinians after Oslo

Political guilt, wasted money

Anne Le More

Palestinian Political Prisoners

Identity and community

Esmail Nashif

Understanding the Middle East Peace Process

Israeli academia and the struggle for identity

Asima A. Ghazi-Bouillon

Palestinian Civil Society

Foreign donors and the power to promote and exclude

Benoît Challand

The Jewish-Arab City

Spatio-politics in a mixed community

Haim Yacobi

Zionist Israel and Apartheid South Africa

Civil society and peace building in ethnic-national states

Amneh Daoud Badran

The Political Right in Israel

Different faces of Jewish populism

Dani Filc

Reparations to Palestinian Refugees

A comparative perspective

Shahira Samy

Palestinian Refugees

Identity, space and place in the Levant

Are Knudsen and Sari Hanafi

The Rise and Fall of Arab Jerusalem

Palestinian politics and the city since 1967

Hillel Cohen

Trans-Colonial Urban Space in Palestine

Politics and development

Maha Samman

Zionism and Land Tenure in Mandate Palestine

Aida Asim Essaid

Women, Reconciliation and the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict

The road not yet taken

Giulia Daniele

UNRWA and Palestinian Refugees

From relief and works to human development

Sari Hanafi, Leila Hilal and Lex Takkenberg

The Naqab Bedouin and Colonialism

New perspectives

Edited by Mansour Nasasra, Sophie Richter-Devroe, Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder and Richard Ratcliffe

Contributors

Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder is a senior lecturer at the Bona Terra Department of Man in the Desert at the Jacob Blaustein Institute of Desert Studies, Ben-Gurion University, where she holds the Koshland Family Career Development Chair in Desert Studies. Her research focuses on socio-economic and cultural transitions in Arab-Bedouin society in Israel. She is the winner of several awards and citations, including a Rich Foundation Award for Advancement of Women in Academia (2009) and an MAOF-funded postdoctoral (2009–12) grant for Arab faculty. Currently she is working on two studies funded by the Israeli Ministry of Science and Technology (informal economy among women in unrecognized Bedouin villages) and by the Rothschild–Casera Fund (integration of educated Bedouin women into the Israeli labour market). She is the author of *Excluded and Loved: Educated Bedouin Women's Life Stories* (2008), co-author with Weiner Naomi of *Palestinian Women in Israel: Identity, Power Relations and Coping* (2010) (both in Hebrew), and co-editor with Pnina Motzafi-Haller of a special issue of *Hagar* (2009) on 'The Politics of Gendered Development'.

Safa Aburabia is a historical anthropologist of culture, gender and space. Her Ph.D. dissertation, "'Out of History": Hidden Voices within Gender Spaces; Bedouin Arab Women tell the Nakba', documented the 1948 voices of Naqab men and women and how the loss of their land reshaped their identity. She is a faculty member at the Negev Mandel Centre for Leadership, and a social activist.

Ahmad Amara is a Ph.D. candidate in history and Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University. Before pursuing his doctorate, he served for three years as a clinical instructor and global advocacy fellow with Harvard Law School's Human Rights Program. His work at Harvard focused on social, cultural and economic rights in the Middle East and on the Law of Occupation, and he has published a number of reports and articles in this area. Amara holds an LLB and LLM from Tel Aviv University (where he was also a teaching assistant and a coordinator of the Street Law Clinic Program at the Faculty of Law), and is a member of the Israeli Bar. He completed a second master's degree in international human rights law at

Essex University in the UK in 2005, and in the same year co-founded a human rights organization, *Karama* (Arabic for 'dignity'), in Nazareth, where he was a senior staff attorney. His current research focuses on the legal history of property law in Palestine, including Ottoman, British and Israeli legislation.

Yuval Karplus has a Ph.D. in geography from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel. Since 2004 he has conducted research among the Naqab Bedouin, and has been involved in Bedouin settlement planning and in developing special education and social services programmes for the community. His research interests include spatial rights, comparative indigenous geographies and local human–environment relations. He has taught indigenous studies courses and published in the area of human geography, with particular reference to the Naqab Bedouin.

Elisabeth Marteu has a Ph.D. from the Institute for Political Studies in Paris (Sciences Po) in cooperation with Ben-Gurion University, and specializes in Palestinian civil organizations, women's activism and transnational mobilizations in the Middle East. She is the author of 'Some Reflections on How Bedouin Women Relate to Politics', *Bulletin du CRFJ* (2005) and editor of *Civil Organizations and Protest Movements in Israel* (2009).

Avinoam Meir is a professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Development at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel. He has been engaged in research on nomadic indigenous peoples and the Negev Bedouin for more than three decades, focusing on social and cultural spatial production processes following urbanization, land rights, democratization in planning and relationships with the state. He has published widely, and teaches various courses on these themes.

Mansour Nasasra is a scholar of Middle East Politics and International Relations, teaching Middle East Politics, International Relations and Conflict Resolution in the Middle East at the Department of Politics, University of Exeter. His research focuses on how the dynamics of power and state-building influence the ways in which minorities in the Middle East interact with the state. His doctoral research focused on relations of the Israeli state with the Arab minority in Israel, particularly the indigenous Bedouin of the Negev (1948–67), and during the Ottoman period and the British Mandate in Palestine (1900–48). He is currently a research fellow in the Council of British Research in the Levant (Kenyon Institute, Jerusalem).

Ilan Pappé is director of the Centre for Palestine Studies and co-director of the Exeter Centre for Ethno-Political Studies at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter. He has written extensively on the 1948 Nakba and is regarded as one of Israel's new historians who have challenged the official Zionist version of events. His research fields are the

history of the Palestine question, Middle Eastern history, nationalism, multiculturalism and ethnic studies, theories of historiographies, power and knowledge, and cultural studies. His publications include *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples* (2003), *The Modern Middle East* (Routledge, 2005), *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (2006) and *The Forgotten Palestinians: A History of the Palestinian Minority in Israel* (2011).

Richard Ratcliffe is an anthropologist whose D.Phil. thesis at St Antony's College, Oxford is on the politics of non-governmental organizations among the Naqab Bedouin. For more than six years he has lived in and conducted fieldwork among different Palestinian communities inside Israel, and has published on the politics of academia in the UK. His recent articles include (with D. Mills) 'After Method? Ethnography in the Knowledge Economy', *Qualitative Research* 12 (2) (2012): pp. 147–64 'The Battle for Recognition: Civil Society, Citizenship and the Political Rise of the Negev Bedouin', in Elisabeth Marteu (ed.), *Civil Organizations and Protest Movements in Israel: Mobilization around the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict* (2009).

Sophie Richter-Devroe is a senior lecturer in Gender and Middle East Studies at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, Exeter University, with a broad research interest in gender theory and women's activism in the Middle East. Her book manuscript entitled 'How Women Do Politics: Peacebuilding, Resistance and Survival in Palestine' (forthcoming, 2015) won the 2012 National Women's Studies Association/Illinois Press First Book Prize. She has published translations and reviews of Arabic literary works, as well as several journal articles on Palestinian and Iranian women's activism. Her work also includes research on Palestinian refugees, Palestinian cultural production and the Naqab Bedouin.

Acknowledgements

This volume stems from a two-day international conference on the Naqab Bedouin, held at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies (European Centre for Palestine Studies) and the Department of Politics at the University of Exeter in February 2010. The conference brought together scholars of different disciplines and backgrounds united through their research interest in Palestine and the Naqab Bedouin. This meeting constituted the first international conference dedicated specifically to the Naqab Bedouin. We remember it as a very engaging and inspiring event and would like to thank all participants for their contributions.

The chapters in this edited volume do not fully reflect the conference participation and we would like to extend specific thanks to those presenters whose papers do not appear in this volume: Dr Ferial Abu Nadi, Prof. Ismael Abu-Saad, Rola Hamed Abu Zeid, Dr Morad Al-Sane, Rawia Abu-Rabia, Dr Aida Es-Said, Dr Shifra Kisch, Dr Noa Kram, Dr Isis Nuseir, Dr Henri Rueff and Prof. Oren Yiftachel. Additionally we would like to thank Dr Ghada Ageel, Prof. Michael Dumper, Dr Daniel Neep, Dr Larbi Sadiki, Dr Ruba Salih and Prof. Gareth Stansfield for introducing and chairing panels during the conference, and for their constructive participation in the overall discussions and reflections. The conference would not have been such a success without all its participants' contributions.

Our thanks are also due to the Department of Politics and the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter for supporting the planning of the conference, to Dr Kathrin Koeller and Professor Bruce Stanley for their roles in the original design of the conference and funding application, as well as the various people who helped us with the organization of the event: Dr Aida Es-Said, Dr Dima Mahmoud, Fiona Raffael and many others. Funding for the conference was provided by the British Academy and the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies. We are very grateful for this financial support.

The process of moving from the conference to this edited volume has been a lengthy and not always easy one. We are grateful to all contributors for their patience and for responding to our multiple requests for revisions and resubmissions on time. We would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers at

Routledge for their very constructive feedback and suggestions on how to rework the manuscript, as well as the team at Routledge for their guidance throughout the editing process. Lindy Ayubi managed the unmanageable, and proofread, edited and assembled the complete manuscript in a very short time frame – thank you!

Finally, we would like specifically to thank Dr Larbi Sadiki for assisting us in our conference grant application to the British Academy, Dr. Sandy Kedar for providing very valuable feedback to the introduction, Prof. Michael Dumper for guiding us through the process of drafting the book proposal and, last but not least, Prof. Ilan Pappé for supporting us on this project from beginning to end. His contributions to the conference and the book (including his expert review of the complete manuscript) provided the impetus, guidance and encouragement necessary for this book to see the light of day.

Mansour Nasasra, Exeter
Sophie Richter-Devroe, Exeter
Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder, Bi'r as-Saba'
Richard Ratcliffe, London
July 2014

Contents

	<i>Notes on contributors</i>	ix
	<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xii
1	Introduction RICHARD RATCLIFFE, MANSOUR NASASRA, SARAB ABU-RABIA-QUEDER AND SOPHIE RICHTER-DEVROE	1
 PART I		
	Changing paradigms: new research and perspectives on the Naqab Bedouin post-2000	33
2	Bedouin tribes in the Middle East and the Naqab: changing dynamics and the new state MANSOUR NASASRA	35
3	The forgotten victims of the Palestine ethnic cleansing ILAN PAPPÉ	57
4	Past and present in the discourse of Naqab/Negev Bedouin geography and space: a critical review YUVAL KARPLUS AND AVINOAM MEIR	68
5	Land, identity and history: new discourse on the Nakba of Bedouin Arabs in the Naqab SAFA ABURABIA	90

PART II

Naqab Bedouin activism and agency 121

- 6 The politics of non-cooperation and lobbying: the Naqab Bedouin and Israeli military rule, 1948–67 123

MANSOUR NASASRA

- 7 Bedouin women's organizations in the Naqab: social activism for women's empowerment? 145

ELISABETH MARTEU

- 8 Colonialism, cause advocacy and the Naqab case 162

AHMAD AMARA

PART III

The politics of research in Naqab Bedouin Studies 189

- 9 Shifting discourses: unlocking representations of educated Bedouin women's identities 191

SARAB ABU-RABIA-QUEDER

Index 214

1 Introduction

*Richard Ratcliffe, Mansour Nasasra,
Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder and
Sophie Richter-Devroe*

Introduction

Over the past century the Bedouin of the Naqab have been much studied. They were first studied by European travellers and colonial administrators. They have also served as a zone of theory for Israeli social science, where a particularly rich body of ethnographic scholarship has developed. However, the past decade has witnessed a change in the wider knowledge production, as well as the political profile, of the Naqab Bedouin. This has potentially repositioned the study of them more widely within Palestine studies, within studies of indigenous peoples, and within a variety of other new approaches.

The aim of this edited volume is to bring together new scholarship from an increasingly multi-disciplinary field of Naqab Bedouin studies, and to reflect upon its changing dynamics in light of the altered position and politics of academic research in contemporary Israel/Palestine and beyond. Its focus is on the post- and anti-colonial dynamics of knowledge production and reception.

We argue that the close association between a colonial project and academia is starting to be unpicked. By colonial knowledge, we mean that understanding the Bedouin was part of a project that aimed to advance external state control over them. More recently, however, academia has started to take on new roles; it is no longer primarily the voice of the establishment. Now it has other associations, and is implicated in other networks of governance and control, particularly with the international development/non-governmental organization (NGO) sector and its discourses and doctrines. This volume is an attempt to reflect on the impact of these dynamics on the study of the Naqab Bedouin.

To introduce this reflection, this chapter has four parts. It begins with a brief contextual reflection on the politics of academia, followed by a short historical overview of the changing patterns of knowledge and academic scholarship that have been produced on the Naqab Bedouin. This history highlights some of the distinct concerns of Israeli, European, Bedouin and other Palestinian scholars, and also situates their shifting concerns in terms of changes in governance in the Naqab over the past century.

The third part, identifies three major themes that define the relationship between research and governance: (1) *paradigms* of research, (2) *structures* of this knowledge production, and (3) the *voices* producing it. Finally, we conclude by introducing the three themes of the book, and identifying some of the implications they have for the future directions of research in and on the Naqab and more widely on Palestine. We contend that there is great value in attempting to review the collective dynamics between academia and politics.

Politics of academia

Academia in the United Kingdom and beyond is under increasing pressure to demonstrate its 'impact' and 'results' in order to highlight the demonstrable utility of research within all fields including Middle Eastern Studies. The pressures of the knowledge economy, or 'knowing capitalism' (Thrift 2005), and various new attempts to equate the value of academic research with its material impact have transformed the politics of academia. This context is challenging: Middle Eastern Studies have been subject to strident criticism for being irrelevant to contemporary politics in and on the Middle East (Beinin 2006), and, in Kramer's (2002) polemic, for being ivory towers built on sand, irrelevant as well as pro-Arab. Given the sense of academia's marginality in influencing a bleak daily situation, impacting on politics in the Palestinian context is a challenging demand.

This book (based largely on the workshop that preceded it¹) critically reinvestigates the impact of 'Naqab Bedouin studies', and the relationship between 'Bedouin studies' and structures of governance over the Naqab Bedouin, by asking: what is, has been and could be the socio-political role of academia in the Naqab or in Israel/Palestine?

The answer is complicated and controversial. There is an extensive literature on the relationship between academia and politics in Palestine and the Middle East. Its relevance to the colonial project in particular has long been discussed by, for example, Talal Asad (1973, 1975), Edward Said (1978), Lila Abu-Lughod (1989), Ahmad Sa'di (1997), Toine Van Teeffelen (1977) and Tim Mitchell (2002). While some of these discussions deal predominantly with the influence of academia (Said 1978), others focus on colonial uses of knowledge and its 'rule of experts' (Mitchell 2002); on binary encounters in the construction of social science (Asad 1973; Mitchell 2002); and on the role of modernization theory in Israeli social science in conceptualizing Jewish-Arab relations (Sa'di 1997), where the conflict is represented as one between tradition and modernity. These debates have also, in part, been taken up in studies about the Naqab Bedouin. There have been various discussions on the representations of the Bedouin (Dinero 1996; Abu-Saad 2010). The university as a site for articulating national projects has been less explicitly discussed in the Naqab context.

More broadly, there is an extensive literature on power/knowledge, which highlights the relationship between social research and the efforts of the modern state to make society legible, guided by positivist ideas of society both as an object of knowledge and as a project to develop; the organized production of social knowledge is symbiotic with the rise of the modern state. Yet knowledge is not a progressive maturing, but rather operates in paradigms. Foucault (1980) argues that changing patterns of knowledge can be related to changing patterns of governance and that shifting paradigms in social science reflect different eras of government, promoting different regimes of truth – in line with Said's critical analysis in *Orientalism* (1978).

Perhaps this regime is changing. Recently, there has been a second wave of sociology of knowledge, analysing a shifting structure in knowledge production, growth of mode 2 research, and a 'para-academia' of thinktanks and advocacy research (Gibbons *et al.* 1994). These transformations include a changing political role of academia: the break-up of academia's canonical status as a producer of authoritative knowledge in the face of competition from mode 2 providers, and the shifting role of academia and para-academia within lobbies influencing policy and public discourse, and presenting partisan perspectives within objective forms. Mearsheimer and Walt (2007) reveal how academia is a formative part of lobbies on Israel (see also Lockman 2005). Potentially the dynamic also marks a shifting kind of legibility away from the panoptic state of Foucauldian (Foucault 1976) analysis, towards a kind of 'self-legibilization'. It marks the rise of new kinds of political institutions articulating 'local' perspectives in ways quite different from earlier regimes of truth.

In more concrete terms, the politics of knowledge is being questioned more broadly in Israel/Palestine, and academia has become something of a battleground. There have been attempts to decolonize the academy through varieties of subaltern studies and revisions of the canon. Reciprocally there are tensions within Israeli academia over its being insufficiently Israeli, and McCarthyite processes that affirm the institutional presence of the university in various collaborations, policing what is written, and placing expulsive pressures on the most critical scholars.

What do these debates have to do with the Naqab? We begin with history.

Historical review of Naqab Bedouin studies

The Naqab Bedouin currently constitute 200,000 Palestinian-Arab citizens in Israel (Abu-Saad 2010). Today the majority of them live in the metropolitan Bi'r as-Saba' area, northern Naqab.² Historically, they have been administratively segregated from the rest of the Arab population in Israel (Marx 1967; Parizot 2001), and until recently, were a peripheral minority within the Israeli and Palestinian political landscapes, being romantically thought of as socially and culturally distinctive.