

# Forward

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## **Introduction**

The current issue of Jadal discusses current Israeli policies toward the Palestinians in Israel: between continuity and change.

This issue comes following escalation of current government policies toward the Palestinians in Israel at the level of incitement discourse. A discourse that is no longer periodic, rather, it is a daily occurrence, whether in legal legislation and law proposals that try to harm the status of Palestinians, or in actual political prosecutions on the ground. This has culminated in the prohibition of the Islamic Movement and the escalation of political persecution by calling for the interrogation of political activists, arrests, demolitions and other policies that not only target the citizenship and rights of Palestinians, but also their very existence.

In light of these practices, the current issue attempts to understand these policies in a broader political and historical context, through knowledge frameworks, to understand the changes if found, in Israeli policies. These changes may be a precursor to a new phase in dealing with the Palestinians in Israel, or may be a renewal or escalation of the existing tools that characterize the colonial settlement project in Palestine.

The current issue includes seven intellectual and political articles, six of which deal with the central topic of the issue, and an article deviating from the main theme dealing with the idea of cultural autonomy. The magazine also contains a special report on Mada al-Carmel's study day in Nazareth on Israeli policies toward the Palestinians, in which a group of Palestinian politicians and academics participated.

The issue opens with an article by researcher Ahmad Qadi, monitoring Israeli policies hostile to the Palestinians in Israel, starting with Israeli legal legislation, to constricting the geographical space and demolishing homes. Qadi states that these practices fall within a long path of systematic colonial practices toward the Palestinians inside Israel. This unequivocally proves that these behaviors are not a matter of emergency, but are at the heart of the Zionist ideology and practice that sees the Palestinians as a disturbance to Jewish racial purity. Thus, they should be restricted as much as possible at all levels, including confining them to the minimum possible amount of land. This is only the beginning; Israel will continue its colonialist behavior toward the Palestinians as long as it defines itself and its various institutions as Jewish.

In her article, researcher Himmat Zoabi addresses the changes in Israeli policies toward the Palestinians in Israel, through a historic juxtaposition between two periods, the military rule and the period following the Jerusalem and Al Aqsa Intifada in October 2000. Zoabi notes that the changes in Israel's internal relations with the Palestinians since its establishment, confirm its colonialist settlement nature, which sees the eradication of the indigenous people as an organized principle. This was reflected in the obliteration and expulsion policies during the Nakba in 1948, then obliteration and annihilation in the first phase of the military rule period; exploitation of labor in the second phase of the military rule, to attempts to integrate individuals and erase the

Palestinian identity at a later phase. At the end of her article, Zoabi stresses the importance of dismantling the equation of what is fixed and what changes in the Zionist project in order to deepen understanding of the challenges of the stage, and to increase the possibility of resisting them.

In her article, MK Haneen Zoabi addresses the dynamics of action and reaction by the Palestinians in Israel to Israeli policies in general, and particularly in recent years. The article includes a critical reading of Palestinian politics and resolve in Israel, and its dealings with Israeli practices. Haneen Zoabi addresses the experience of the Joint List in particular, and its role in the current stage. She concludes, the most important summary of the first experience of the Joint List, (we want the List to continue, but not in the same line it is now), indicates our failure to create a clear and consistent political reference based on the achievements of the previous phase. This leaves the decision to adhere to the program of the Joint List (which reflected the gains of the 'optimism of will' stage; a stage considered to be advanced in degrees, compared to the current political performance), to the subjective convictions of the List's components. Not only that, but this lack of reference has led to an apparent volatility, even to contradictions clear to any objective observer.

In his article, Dr. Emtanes Shehadeh discusses the changes in Israeli policy toward the Palestinians in Israel, focusing on the nature of the Israeli regime and its colonial structure. He stresses that the changes in political practices are taking place under the aegis of the colonial structure of the regime, and that Palestinian political action and thinking must be within the framework of the conflict with this colonialist settlement system. Any proposed solution must guarantee the natural and historical rights of the Palestinian people in all their places of residence, including the status of the Palestinians inside Israel. Thereby not leaving this group alone to face Zionist colonialism, nor marginalizing any Israeli or those who have accepted the Palestinian national project. He adds that the necessary condition for changing the status quo is the dismantling of the colonial situation.

In the article by Khaled Anabtawi, the researcher analyzes the transformations of the Zionist colonial settlement project. This project is defined as a continuous State project that has not concluded ... it bears the characteristics of religious Messianism. Furthermore, it imposed citizenship on a segment of the Palestinian people who become a minority within their homeland. Anabtawi argues that talking about a shift in the rules and equation of the relationship of the Israeli regime with the Palestinians inside Israel, does not presume to cancel the constant in this relationship. Which is to consider the indigenous as an existential threat to its colonialist project, who must be obliterated, distorted or their existence controlled and regulated.

Anabtawi argues that Israel is moving from the stage of managing the conflict to resolving it. He points out in this context: When talking about a resolution or closure of the internal Palestinian case, we can refer to understanding the resolution attempts at two central layers of the relationship: Identity (which includes self and cultural identity, and political practice of the Arabs within Israel), and the layer of analysis, which is related to land and space. In this perspective, these are the two central layers of conflict between Palestinian society and the Israeli regime, which seek to subjugate these layers to what suits its limits.

The researcher Mariam Hawari addresses the Israeli reproductive policies toward the Palestinians in Israel, and discusses in her article, these policies within the colonialist settlement framework. The article also analyzes the laws and policies related to abortion and polygamy, in particular the

recent statements made by Israeli Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked and Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit. She points out, the prohibition of abortion and polygamy are practices that control reproduction. These policies are of great importance to people in conflict. In ethnic conflicts, women contribute to their societies by increasing the offspring, i.e., they use their biological roles to maintain the demographic balance. She adds that the problem, in her opinion, is not in the prohibition of polygamy, as Palestinian feminist movements are working on this issue, raising the community's awareness and working toward social change. The problem lies in Israel's new policy being a policy based on Israeli superiority over Palestinian society. This policy cannot be separated from Israel's policies relating to women's wombs. As there is a close relationship between the prohibition of abortion directed –even if at the discourse level– at Jewish women, and the prohibition of polygamy (because it is a source of the increase of Palestinian offspring).

In his article that deviates from the central theme, Dr. Ayman Agbaria, lecturer at Haifa University, presents a theoretical contribution to the debate on the subject of cultural autonomy for the Palestinians in Israel. His article is a development of the discussion on the approach presented by Dr. Azmi Bishara in his writings, on the idea of cultural autonomy. Agbaria reviews this idea and widens the debate and the critical and theoretical approaches thereto. Agbaria argues in his article that there is a need to present the idea of democratic culture within the political project of cultural autonomy. He emphasizes the importance of supplementing the two ideas presented by Bishara (State of its citizens and cultural autonomy) with the idea of 'Democratic Culture.' Building a democratic culture that is a political project waiting to be adopted and translated seriously. We are required to uphold the State of equal citizenship of the citizens, with cultural autonomy in its various forms, at least for the Palestinians and Jews, and for a democratic culture that will consolidate the values and principles that will enable the two groups to live and share in peace, freedom, equality and justice between and within them.