

Middle-East New-Media • A Weekly Coverage • Editor: Orit Perlov

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Egypt

The Presidential Race: A Circus



Ahmed Ezzat

Egypt’s democratic gala



"Every stage of Egypt's supposedly democratic transition has been hailed as part of a bigger democratic gala; from the referendum on constitutional amendments and parliamentary elections, all the way to the announcement of the presidential election and the election of the Constituent Assembly" [....] " we should be well aware that ***the elite controlling Egypt's wealth and positions of power will not allow for the implementation of this type of democracy willingly*** *because it will strip them of the privileged positions they have attained"*

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The Majalla

The Circus Continues: Egypt Unwrapped



"Under the terms of the new constitutional assembly, no MPs will be involved in the drafting process – effectively emasculating the Muslim Brotherhood, whose members control nearly half of parliament. This has provided some comfort to the secularists who fear Brotherhood's influence. But given how rapidly political fortunes have changed over the past two weeks, ***nobody can be sure what surprises this election campaign will continue to throw up****"*

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Jess Hill

Voting with no confidence in Egypt

"I'm sorry, but I don't want members of the parliament who can barely read and write to be part of the constitution."[...]"There's little indication of how this impasse will end, and the Egyptian street continues to boil*. At the height of Cairo's peak hour on Thursday night, a group calling itself The Second Revolution of Rage blocked one of the city's main bridges over the Nile, calling for an end to military rule"*

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Alaa Al-Aswany

Four Steps to Save the Egyptian Revolution

"Everything occurring in Egypt confirms that the SCAF is pushing toward a pre-arranged scenario that can lead to one of two possibilities: ***Either the presidency is won by a SCAF-supported candidate and he is tasked with reviving Mubarak's regime with military officers behind the scenes, or, if their approved candidate cannot be imposed, ensuing problems and general chaos will prevent the elections from taking place****, leaving the military in power indefinitely. The Egyptian revolution is passing through the most difficult phase of its history. The danger that threatens it resembles a great fire engulfing a populated building"*

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Tarek Shalaby

Elections in Revolutionary Times

"The regime's attempt of survival at the expense of the revolution will continue, but it's losing legitimacy and credibility by the minute. SCAF's biggest bet's on shooting us down and letting disappointed get the better of us. But we know better, because ***the revolution's just getting started, and it's not going to end anytime soon****"*

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The Final Four: Moussa, Futuh, Morsi & Shafiq



The Majalla



Profiles Amr Moussa, The Compromise Candidate: Big promises for change in Egypt from Mubarak era survivor

"With the announcement that 10 candidates have been barred the presidential elections in Egypt, more attention is bound to focus on those remaining in the race. One of these is Amr Moussa, a former head of the Arab League and Egyptian Foreign Minister, who launched his campaign for the presidency in April"

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Hatem Rushdy

Aboul Fotouh, the Man Egypt Needs for President

"But there is one more thing. Egyptians deify their leaders. We put them up on a pedestal and idolize them. We follow in their footsteps and monkey their mannerisms. Under president Gamal Abdel Nasser, we were all proud pan-Arabists; under Sadat, we all became pragmatist nationalists and under Mubarak, stagnation, and then corruption took over our daily lives. Of all the hopefuls, Aboul Fotouh is the one I would like to see us copy. If we could all mimic him and become as steadfast, principled, hard-working, honest, strong-willed and sincere as he, Egypt has hope yet"

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Mostafa El-Hoshy

My Take on the Shafiq Candidacy Debate: He will be eligible to run

"Regarding whether Shafiq will be eligible to run for president needs to take into account a number of key parameters including the passing of the disenfranchisement bill by parliament, ratification by SCAF, SPEC approval, constitutional court consideration and (most importantly) the deadline for the final candidate list"

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Freedom & Justice Party

Dr. Morsi's Electoral Program – General Features of Nahda (Renaissance) Project: Translation of the main feature

"Translation of the main features of the Brotherhood and the FJP's presidential candidate Dr. Morsi's electoral program: the Nahda Project"

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#April20 - The determination Friday

Zeinobia

A Blog Post on: **Too many Stages, Too many Goals, too many hopes and Fears**

"This is considered the first Friday since September 2011 to include both Islamist and Non Islamist forces. Some people are really putting high hopes that this protest will close the gap between the different political parties and powers in the country [....] "Nearly 40 parties and powers declared their participation already in the big Tahrir Protest with so many names as usual. ***The Muslim brotherhood called it "The determination Friday" while Revolution Youth Coalition and Maserna called it "No for constitution under the military rule"***

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#April20 protest in Video and Photos

For More Videos and Photos

Islamist black flags





After Years of Neglect, What's Next for Sinai?

The Majalla

Egyptian Presidential Candidates Discover Sinai

"According to writer Masaad Abu-Fajr, what the people of Sinai want from Egypt's forthcoming president is something altogether different. Numbering over half a million, they only have one representative in parliament. Mubarak treated them as traitors or agents, and did not even acknowledge many of them as Egyptian. In all his years in power, all Mubarak did for Sinai was divide it administratively from one governorate into two. ***The next president, says Abu Fajr, must firmly re-establish the sense of Egyptian identity for those living in Sinai****"*

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Zeinobia

Youth of North Sinai movement

Happy Sinai Liberation Day 2012



"I believe the sovereignty is determined by the will of the people before the government. Yes we got a lot of issues in Sinai that needed to be resolved but we will not let this to be a barrier between celebrating how Sinai was returned back to Egypt after bitter years of occupation regardless what"

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Nervana Mahmoud

What's next for Egypt, Israel and the elusive peace treaty?

In theory, Egypt may not lose much by adopting a stalemate approach, while Israel may gain some sympathy as result of it. However, both sides should calculate their next move carefully. In the current unpredictable climate, and the continuous deterioration of security in Sinai, tension can easily flare up with unimaginable consequences. Sadat's peace has gone, and the war-free era may soon come to an end. Though a 1967 moment is unlikely, a modified new version is not far-fetched.

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The Salafi Star at the Pyramids

"The extraordinary events unfolding in Egypt may benefit Salafis — despite their divisions — far more than any other Islamist groups. They are the black horse in the current poisonous political arena" [....] "They are still politically novices, and would almost certainly struggle to reconcile their monochromatic views with the tricky nature of Egyptian politics. Can they survive as politicians? Will they resort to violence if they fail to achieve their goals? Only the future will tell"

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Women Rights in the Arab World - Pandora Box was Opened



Mona Eltahawy



Debating the War on Women

"In the May/June issue of Foreign Policy, Mona Eltahawy argues that the real war on women is in the Middle East. FP (Foreign Policy) asked six smart observers to weigh in on Eltahawy's claim that many of the men of the Arab world hate women -- and the controversial cover image that accompanied it"

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Rana B. Baker



On Mona Eltahawy's "Why Do They Hate Us?"

"Eltahawy's argument that the reason behind Middle Eastern and North African oppression of women is "hatred" is a simplistic one that ignores the social, cultural and political contexts in which these women live. But not only that. Eltahawy went as far as to say that it is the Islamic philosophy that enables men to "hate" and hence "oppress" and "sexually harass" women"

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Dima Khatib

Love, Not Hatred, Dear Mona!

"My name is Dima Khatib. I am an Arab, Muslim woman, proud of my identity and culture. I lived half my life in the Arab world and the other half between four continents: Europe, Asia, North America and South America. I got to know cultures much freer than ours, when it comes to women, politics and society. I learned and watched and noted...and wished that many things which do not exist in our societies and exist in other societies would come true for Arab women, although I also noted aspects of suffering and negativity in the life of non-Arab women"

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Jonathan Moremi

My reply to Dima Khatib - New post - **Words & Swords: Men Do Hate Women, Dear Dima**!

"Unfortunately Dima, I - as a man - have to tell you that the 'hate' you all get so heated up about and don't want to believe exists is very much inherent in many men around the globe. While you all naturally would love to see us men in a good light so as not to rob you of hope it has to be noted that very many men in the world - not only in MENA - are not only afraid of women but truly hate them. Why?"

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Jadaliyya

Let's Talk About Sex

"Is it liberalism then that will fight off the misogyny of authoritarianism? Is the much-feared Islamist summer the real enemy here? And if so, how do we explain that it is women just as much as men, who have gone to the ballot box and voted Islamists into power?" *[.....] "The battle against misogyny does not follow a "men hate women" formula. It cannot be reduced to a generic battle of the sexes spiced with a dose of Islam and culture. It cannot be extracted from the political and economic threads that, together with patriarchy, produce the uneven terrain that men and women together navigate"*

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Fatma Emam
On the Why do you hate us debate

"This article made some "unexpected" voices respond back, and by unexpected I mean voices which is not interested or raising women rights issue in the "normal" case. It created a situation of antagonist-ion . That it created a space of attention the international media. So the Ikhwanweb talked about their program on women rights, in English by their AUC educated Sondous Asem. And a socialist diva who has always denied any relation to her gender on her activism and always defined herself as a socialist and that's it without any related identities. I felt that many showed "genuine" care about women rights. They never ever showed before. It was all for the exportation, not for the local market"

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Dalia Abd El-Hameed
Get an Arab Woman to Say it for You

"People were wondering why Azza Elgarf- the female MP from the Muslim Brotherhood affiliated Freedom and Justice Party- is the fiercest parliamentarian in attacking women's rights. The answer is simple. For the right wing conservatives it is better to get a woman to attack women; "get yourself a woman to say it for you". I would argue the same for neo-orientalists who would get an Arab woman to say it for them. And between the Western - saving rhetoric and fundamentalism, the feminist struggle in the Middle East will always try to find its own space between a rock and a hard place"

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Ayesha Kazmi
American Pakistani blogger Ayesha Kazmi **criticizes Eltahawy's problematic, over simplified article: *Oh, Mona!***

"I repeatedly attempted to engage Mona on twitter last night, with no success. I wanted to tell her how offended I was as a Pakistani woman that she has hijacked the war against women and has claimed the Middle East as the chief battle ground. Then, as if to prove my entire point about the dangers of her article, I received a tweet from an Arab woman attempting to qualify my voice in this debate: "Why are you even talking about this? Are you Egyptian? Arab? I don't see you presenting any countering facts. If so, guide me."

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The Muslim Brotherhood: "A Paper Tiger"



Arabist

The Brothers Numbers

"The role in which the Brothers are most likely to find themselves in the next few years is of a parliamentary majority clamoring against an military-backed president, the voice of the majority with moral authority but no real authority, criticizing policy without being held accountable for policies of their own. This is the same role they have played for much of the last two decades and, if given a chance, I suspect they will settle into it comfortably"

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Ashraf Khalil

The Brothers Grim

"Without executive power, it wouldn't matter what the [Brotherhood-controlled] parliament did. They just won't implement the law," said Muhammed Aql, a 27 year-old accountant in a pinstriped Oxford shirt. ***"To ask the Brotherhood to protect the revolution in those circumstances would be like tying a man's hands together and ordering him to start swimming.****"*

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Salama Moussa

Nahda and Its Ills

"Let it not be said that the MB did not make its intentions clear. Rida's vision is currently on full display in Saudi Arabia, and to a lesser extent Pakistan and Afghanistan. ***Nahda is a one way ticket to a failed state****"*

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The Economy: Heading Towards Bankruptcy & Financial Turmoil?



Assem Memon

6 Critical Questions on Egypt's Economy

"With ***the country exponentially inching everyday towards bankruptcy and***



***financial turmoil**, not a single politician or candidate is discussing the real issues facing Egypt. No one is discussing the structural challenges that have resulted in us lagging in Economic growth and societal stability. These challenges can be summed up into: **Education and health expenditure, subsidies, deficit and debt, wages and local governance**"*

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Jane Kinninmont

'Bread, Dignity and Social Justice': The Political Economy of Egypt's Transition

"The Islamist parties which between them won a majority in the 2011–12 parliamentary election appear to favour the continuation of a broadly pro-market policy, although, like all parties, they have emphasized the need for greater 'social justice' and less corruption. Leftist groups and trade unions remain largely unrepresented in parliament and tensions may be brewing between labour and Islamist forces over economic policy"

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Hadear Kandil

May be stating obvious here but w/ IMF loan, election bullshit & failing economy, I pray that the real revolution is on its way.

Saudi-Egypt- Financial Aid in exchange for Strategic Depth

Strange Bedfellows: Egypt and the Saudis Should Join Forces

*"Saudi Arabia plans to give Egypt financial aid by the end of the month. No one really expected the two countries to form a healthy relationship, but then again, the Arab Spring has produced some unlikely scenarios. **Abd-al-Halim Mahjoub outlines three scenarios for the Saudi-Egyptian relationship, and argues that cooperation is key**"*

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Israel-Egypt – Gas Deal is Canceled

Egypt terminates deal to supply Israel with natural gas

"Cancellation of the commercial deal between private Egyptian and Israeli entities has more to do with Egypt's own internal confrontation with

corporate governance and transparency than with the peace treaty with Israel"

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The New Voices: Free Press & Communities' Empowerment



Mahmoud Salem

A new Post by Mahmoud Salem: "**Anecdote, platitude, inspirational quotes, etc"** On the State of Free Press in Egypt

"Until this day, this still holds true: No one has identified the problem or tried to solve it in any real way, given that all the players have seemingly decided that credibility no longer matters, as long as the content is controversial and sells issues. So, yeah, after an entire year of this, ***I am not entirely sure that the free press truly supports democracy in our case. However, it does get people talking, so if silence truly kills democracy, I guess our press is doing its job protecting it****"*

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Karim Shafei

Fighting Wind Mills

*"We are spending too much effort trying to fit everyone within the square when in fact the dimensions of the square were set by us (and - by the way - I don't know if it should even be a square). We're being forced to choose from a list of options that is only limited by the creativity (or lack thereof) of a group of old and decaying bastards"[.....] "****Our real battle is not with a healthy constitution or a good president, our real battle is to empower communities. Make them aware of their rights and more importantly their dreams and their capabilities****"*

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Bahrain



Royal Family vs. Activists - The PR War

Bahrain Politics Blog

A new post on: **"Not the Formula One PR Bahrain was Hoping For"**

"If you search Google News for "Bahrain Formula One," you find that the ratio of negative (political) to positive (race-related) news articles is about 4,082 to 232, or about 17.5 : 1. ***With coverage like this, Bahrain's leaders may be rethinking their cost-benefit analysis****"*

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SPIEGEL English

Interview with Bahraini Opposition Activist: Regime Using Formula One Race to 'Trick the World'

*"**Al-Khawaja:** If someone is calling for democracy, he is calling for an end of a dictatorship and if this is the will of the people, this could also mean overthrowing the regime"*

For The Full Interview

Chan'ad Bahrain

Welcome to the Bahrain You're Not Meant to See...

"With the return of the Formula 1 Grand Prix to Bahrain, the government is now desperate to show the international community that things are back to normal and it has learned from its "mistakes." However, despite the facade of normality, none of the underlying problems have been resolved. Hundreds of political prisoners remain behind bars, reports of torture continue, and security forces still carry out abuses with near total impunity"

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Spiegel English

Interview with Bahrain's Prime Minster: The Opposition 'Are Terrorizing the Rest of This Country'

In one of the first interviews he has given to the Western media in years, Bahraini Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa defends his government's course of action against the country's opposition. He tells SPIEGEL ONLINE that he will not tolerate Western interference and accuses protesters of seeking to turn Bahrain into a "second Iran."

For The Full Interview



Syria

Nasrallah: From Love to Hatred



♕ The 47th ♕

98% of Syrians were hardcore Nasrallah supporters just a year ago. Now the same percentage is of people who seriously despise him



Noor Turaif

Good thing, this period revealed a lot. Even people we thought were genuinely principled turned out just dirty politicians.



Ammar Abdulhamid

Planning for Syria's "Day After" - Security, Rule of Law & Democracy

Read the Full Doc

Is Syria Slipping into a War between Two Armies: Free Syrian Army vs. Syrian Army?



David Jenders

Rare inside view of Syria's rebels finds a force vowing to fight on

*"**The story of the Katiba Farouq, or the Farouq Brigade**, has been eclipsed over the past year by news coverage that's remained focused on the Syrian government's shelling of urban neighborhoods. But in the months since they took up arms in August, Farouq fighters have discovered the Syrian military's weaknesses, and despite some reversals, still appear capable of inflicting heavy casualties whenever the Syrian army attempts to enter rebel-held areas"*

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Tunisia

Inner Debate: Moderate Islam vs. Radical Islam

Sada Journal

A Balancing Act: Ennahda's Struggle with Salafis



"The controversy over sharia is but one area where large numbers of Ennahda's members have dissented from the party's official line. As the party gears up toward next year's elections, these internal debates may intensify, particularly as Ennahda meets over the summer to decide its official platform. The next few months will be critical for Ghannouchi to gauge whether the moderate stance of the group's leaders will continue to hold sway over its rank and file—particularly as those in the Constituent Assembly look more and more at their re-election prospects"

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Lebanon

Is It Also the Last days of Nasrallah?



Hanin Ghaddar



Hassan Nasrallah, you are not divine

"No matter how long it lasts, the Syrian revolution will get rid of Assad and his regime, and you will not be able to stay in denial. **The government you formed in Lebanon is fragile. Your supporters are already terrified of the future. Your political allies are going to be marginalized"** [....] "The only thing you will have left is your weapons. The question is: Are you going to use them to buy your ticket back into Lebanon's political scene and help stabilize the country, or will you use them against everyone and cause both Lebanon's and your own demise?"

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Iran

The Battle over the Social Networks: Full Force



Tehran Bureau

More Signs of Walls Closing In on Iranians' Internet Access



"The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps last month announced that it had established a new, sealed-off communications network for its commanders called Basir (Perspective). According to an article in a Guard periodical, "The armed forces had no trust in the telecommunication equipment produced by other countries. So, an indigenous multilayer nationwide system was designed and built."

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Iran parades its internet fears with military precision

Tehran's anxieties all too evident during army parade featuring placards proclaiming 'damages of the Facebook internet site'

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Jordan

Government vs. Islamists & Jordan's Role as Jerusalem Savior



Osama Al Sharif

Elections law under Attack

"These are difficult times for Jordan, both domestically and regionally. The anger over the new elections law may reignite public protests and stymie the internal political process. Economic pressures will not go away anytime soon and the government has failed to present a roadmap for recovery for the near future" [.....] "Shunned from active participation in a new political deal, ***the Islamists are expected to resume their protests. That could lead to confrontation and to an unexpected political dead end****"*

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Is it late to save East Jerusalem?

"Jerusalem is an Arab and Islamic city and the task of saving it must lie with the Arab and Muslim worlds. Israel is so close to achieving its sinister goals and unless an international campaign is launched now its fate will be sealed within few years"

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Yemen

A Union: Possibility or a Dream?

Yemen after the Elections: A Fragile Agreement and a Complex Situation

"Saleh tried repeatedly to depict the Yemeni revolution as a simple disagreement that degenerated into a conflict between the former ruling party and the opposition, and it is on this premise that his regime dealt with

both, the revolution and its revolutionaries. In his view, the latter are no more than a base for the opposition parties and, in the best-case scenario, an independent force that the opposition uses to channel its objectives"

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Al-Monitor

Is a Unified Yemen Possible? by Dr. Abdel Malek Ahmad Al Darhi

*Today, Yemenis dream of a unified, safe and prosperous land. Without reforming what was corrupted, and without returning the looted lands of the southern and western governorates to their owners, this will be hard to achieve. It is also important that corrupt officials return the money they robbed to the government. Next, it is crucial that legislation enforcing equality, social justice and equal citizenship be passed" [.....] "**The way to meet the political, economic and social aspirations of Yemenis will only be through a comprehensive dialog based on openness and honesty— one that takes into consideration the supreme national interests of Yemen.**"*

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Palestinian

The Hunger Games: Is It the Final Countdown



Occupied Palestine
Israel is holding captive nearly 4,700 detainees in 17 prisons #PalHunger

The current number of Administrative Detainees by #Israel (Illegal by#law) is approximately 320. #PalHunger

Palestinians hunger

In less than an hour the 3000 Palestinian prisoners will enter their 8 day of Open Hunger Strike, which started at 17-4-2012 #PalHunger

Report On the Palestinian Political Prisoners

"Marking Palestinian Prisoners Day, the Palestinian Central Census Bureau and the Palestinian Ministry of Detainees issued a joint release revealing that 201 Palestinians have died in Israeli prisons since 1967 due to torture, medical negligence, and by use of live ammunition. More than a third of this

number have died in Israeli prisons since late 2000. 4,700 Palestinians are currently held in Israeli prisons"

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Thameena Husary

Victory or Death. Palestinian prisoners on their 10th day of Hunger strike #PalHunger

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"48 Arabs"



Abir Kopty

The double siege facing Palestinians in Israel

*"I am from Nazareth. I'm Palestinian, one of the 1.3 million Palestinians known to many as "**'48 Arabs**". I belong to the forgotten part of the Palestinian nation, who fought for decades to keep our "identity" (haweyyi) and our baqaa —call it our "right to remain" [....] "I believe it is about time to break the siege that Arab regimes and their media imposed on us. We call on our peers, the generation of Arab youth, to help us break down the walls that have been separating us. **We are not traitors and not spies**, "we are alive, conscious and active part of the Palestinian Arab people". **We are proud Arabs, exactly like you, and thanks to you!**"*

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