12 The Claim of Citizen's Rights: "I Came Here to Live Among Jews"

This chapter deals with the presentation of IB. Above all, I will look at how the interviewees establish a notion of the Yisra'el Beitenu party as the political power that speaks plainly with respect to the "real problems" of Israeli society and is able to offer an alternative political path. In this context, the Yisra'el Beitenu party is presented as being in line with the Zionist discourse. Besides, I will analyse how the interviewees present the party's political leader, Lieberman, and other people important to them. They do so constantly referring to the public discourse, and thus actively reproducing and modifying that discourse. Negative images are consequently replaced with positive counter-images and justified with special knowledge which is based on an alleged insider perspective. However, the interviewees hardly discuss the party's ideological programme. When they do so, they refer to slogans which have circulated in Israeli public discourse, above all the party's recent election campaign slogans that have already been described in the respective chapters about *contribution* and *loyalty*.

12.1 ANALYSIS OF DISCURSIVE PRACTICE IX: "ZIONIST VALUES"

Zionism is a common frame in the narratives, but not all the interviewees place their understanding of citizenship explicitly in this context. Vicky's example is one of how motivation to serve is linked in the narratives with a

particular interpretation of *Israeli citizenship* and the role *Zionism* as a particular form of nationalism plays in it:

"I became more interested in what is really going on with regard to politics during adolescence because I was in a youth movement called the ‚Zionist youth movement', ehm, there I more considered Zionism and actions that need to be undertaken, and afterwards also in the army, ehm, I became more interested in why actually we fight so many (...) wars and what leads to what." (Vicky, p. 16)

In narratives where civic engagement is linked to citizenship in a causal nexus, Zionism is presented as one of the main pillars of Israeli citizenship. In this context, it is striking that its content is hardly elaborated but is presented as shared knowledge and thus does not require any further explanation. Another way of reading this argument is that the interviewees simply do not know how to fill the term; it is used to cover and to explain everything and nothing. The most "detailed" definition of what Zionism comes from Max, one of the members of the Knesset the Yisra'el Beitenu party had at the time of the interview with him. Max makes the statement in the context of describing the Yisra'el Beitenu party as a "Zionist party" and states that "[Zionism] consists of three basic principles: 'repatriation, love of the land of Israel, security'" (Max, p. 10). This view is very much in line with the state ideology.

However, in most cases the interviewees struggle to explain how they understand it. Ilan, for example, tries to explain what Zionism is when talking about why young people vote IB and only refers to official party slogans:

"In Israel [...] young people are generally more conservative, more Zionist, and the older ones vote rather for Avoda [the Labour party], Meretz, like, more liberal– [...]. Again, like, the young generation, which is the generation that serves in the military or has to go to the military or is just after the military or is in reserve duty, ok, they know exactly what is going on in the country, like, they live this every day, they are at the university, they see what's going on in the media, they, they are more active, like, older people who work, no idea, at the work place or pensioners, or people from the older generation that usually vote Avoda and so on—no idea, maybe they see the things a little different, like, it's their right, I get it, simply, the young generation, like, those who are in reserve duty—ehm, again, those who—no idea, are more involved

in social life, (pause), ehm, they see the situation in Israel as—(pause) in a way similar or the same as the party [Yisra'el Beitenu] simply says, like, and it speaks to them more likely, in my opinion at least, and it's not only the party, you also have to talk about the [party] leader, Avigdor Lieberman, right—we talked about this, the Zionism of the party, the nationalism of the party, the patriotism, all these things." (Ilan, p. 24-5)

Ilan's statement can be taken as a template for what the interviewees understand by Zionism, i.e. the version that the Yisra'el Beitenu party presents in its programme: "patriotism" or "love the country" (Max), and "nationalism" or the presentation of the State of Israel as a *Jewish State* in line with the ethno-nationalist discourse.

12.2 ANALYSIS OF POWER RESOURCES III: AN IDEOLOGICAL MATCH

An important aspect of the interviewees' notion of the political party is what can be called a socialisation into the party, i.e. the process of adopting a political ideology with time spent. Katya describes an ideological match of her own world view and the party's official ideology, in particular with regard to foreign affairs, and experiences a similar process of socialisation into the party the longer she works with them so closely.

However, one can also find attempts to emphasise that one is still a self-reflexive and critical individual being, despite being employed by the party's Knesset faction. Katya claims to maintain a distance with regard to ideology, stating that she keeps her "real convictions" to herself because they are private, and they must not interfere with her work. At the same time, it should be of no interest to her employers what her personal convictions are as long as "my opinions should not interfere with my work" (Katya, p. 16f, p. 40), "I am not obliged to accept the ideologies, [...] I am not a representative" (Katya, p. 40). To stress her independent thinking, she emphasises the strategic reasons for her involvement with the party and implies her perception of a need for justification. This is reinforced by her main argument that she first and foremost wants to help people in need—against which ideological background this is done is of secondary interest:

"[Y]ou can actually change something—the moment I say that I am calling from an MK's office [...], [a]nd that is why I chose, right for now, to accept that [being engaged with the Yisra'el Beitenu party], because I also want to learn the rules of the game." (Katya, p. 8)

Accordingly, she stresses that she also works according to her profession as a lawyer, but against the background of actually having the power to change things: "I simply want to go into a law and check where, where it is possible to change it the way I want it to work" (Katya, p. 3). From a backward perspective, the argument of "learning the rules" can be read as a post-hoc justification to herself and others for staying in her current position: once she gets the opportunity to "actually change something" through her political engagement, her engagement with the Yisra'el Beitenu party is justified. To underline this interpretation, Katya claims she had no prior interest in current politics: "I didn't know the MK [members of the Knesset] at all, not according to their name, neither to their faces, only, ehm, only the basic(s) [differences] between them" (Katya, p. 2). In this context, Katya is also downplaying the importance of an ideological match between her own political convictions and the party's ideological programme: "Yachimovich from Avoda [the Israeli Labour Party] is too socialist [..], although she is a very smart woman" (Katya, p. 6-7).

The importance of a commonly shared cultural capital, however, is a minor issue and Katya is one of the few who, alongside with Ilan, makes it an issue. But she also mentions regarding a single, in her eyes funny incident when all members of a Knesset committee realised they could switch to the Russian language because they were all "Russians". Above all, she makes it an issue in order to explain that she does not get along with her colleague, an Israeli-born: "maybe, again, maybe simply because we were not, (..), we did not come from that cultural background" (Katya, p. 21).

In contrast, Ilan speaks about the fear of losing the asset of cultural capital. Interestingly, he is the only one of the participants who talks entirely from a personal angle. He clearly chooses his ambitions to start a political career as the main topic of his narrative.

Key story: "The fortune teller"

Ilan starts by telling me about his dream of "becoming someone big":

"Ehm, when I was four, really little, a fortune teller came, do you know what a fortune teller is, like, however, enters the hairdresser's, ok, where my mother was working, there were some other twenty people, and she entered, passed all of them, everyone, everyone, everyone, approached of all people some—she was a gipsy, a gipsy, like that, gipsy, like, some authentic, she came to my mother and said, like, 'I want to, I want, like, to read, like, your hand, tell you the future about everything.' Ehm, like, for free, for nothing, simply wanted to read her hand. (Pause) all right, (pause), ehm, my mother said 'alright, gladly, what, like, great', and she [the fortune teller] started to tell her, like, 'you are three souls in the family' (..) which is right, 'you have a child', she said, right, 'the child is sick at the moment', like, I was four, I had something, bronchitis, no idea what, I was sick, she was right, she said 'you won't live in this flat any longer', [...] 'you won't live in this flat, and afterwards you won't live in this country', which was, like, long before the borders opened and everything, this was something very, like, unrealistic, weird, it's, like, she said some other things, too, of which everything was right or came true, like, that's it, and, like, there was one sentence, I don't know, that she said, like, about when I will be grown up, then, I don't know, my mother, my father behaved toward me apparently then accordingly, I don't know, my grandfather, my grandmother, doesn't matter, like, I am the only child, [...] she [the fortune teller] said that 'your son will become a great man', she said, (pause) that's it, from that moment on I grew up in the way that my mother always believed that I (pause) will become a great man." (Ilan, p. 17-8)

Ilan's mother was foretold two decisive moments in their family's life: emigration and the chosenness of their son. While the first event is rather concrete ("you won't live in this flat, and afterwards you won't live in this country"), the second, the one which concerns their son's far future ("I was four"), is rather blurry. The story has without doubt been retold in the family many times and in Ilan's interview the "prophecy" carries a mystic element. As the only child of the family, Ilan may have been treated "accordingly", in terms of expectations of his parents toward him, which were above his own toward himself. Ilan presents himself as ambitious; yet him creating this impression can as well be read as a way to cover the stress connected to those high expectations to "become a great man", to succeed and not to fail. Ilan's aspiration for a successful political career can be read in the light of

Bourdieu's concept of habitus the embodied belief in his fate is inscribed into how he presents his expectations for the future:

"I am a very ambitious person, (pause) a maximalist, I am not sure whether this is the right word, but ambitious, that's for sure! Everything I do, I want to do it in the—(pause) everything, what I do, I want to reach (pause) and to tend to reach the first place, like, [...] so to speak, with regard to the highest achievement, so, you can imagine, what is the first place from the political point of view, where I incline to, and what from the point of view of economics, like—I am simply afraid to speak out things that will sound—, like, it is a little childish from my point of view to say it now, because the Lord knows what will be." (Ilan, p. 12)

Ilan presents himself as someone who knows exactly what it takes to achieve a certain goal, in his case: to make a political career; in particular, he presents gaining (high) education as a chance to be better off than his parents and to make the prophecy come true. Again, Ilan demonstrates his ambitions: he tells me that in the eighth grade, he changed his local public high school for a prestigious boarding school "for gifted children" (Ilan, p. 2); he takes a special bus to get there every day.[1] In contrast to the expectations Ilan has about his future, he admits that he has entered the political field by chance and that he has not got a clear strategy how to do that; he gives a post-hoc rationalisation for his interest in politics instead:

"[...] [T]he ability to have influence on your life, on the life of the people who are close to you, on, ehm, on life and on, (pause) the state in general, to design it (..) the way you think (..) that it is more right, your 'I believe', like, that's how I at least personally—maybe it's too pretentious, I believe that I know how to do it in a much better way, like, I don't know if the best way, but much better than it is today for sure, there are many things to improve, like, basically the power you have, like —I want power, power to change things to the better, ok, to the better for my friends, for my friends, for everyone, ok, like, this is very simple that there are two central powers in the world, and in Israel in particular, this is politics and economics, ok, which in my

1 The school's website says (in its Russian version) that immigrants of the "Great Aliyah" revitalised the system of special schools' villages in Israel, and with this also the school at hand. Either way, they stress that one of the school's goals is to support pupils who really want to learn.

opinion—like, now to start a business I didn't have any priority or any preference what do first or how to do what, nor did I have a built plan that I do a), afterwards b), afterwards c), I do, like, no—I know more or less the direction, ehm, it's like a car, like you drive a car, ok, and you have headlamps, and you know you that you want to go from A to B, (pause) they light you 100 meters, and so you drive 100 meters, and then you see, like, something new, another turn, another crossing, and when I get there I see, like, what is more right, I look, like, really, like how it l—logical, I can arrange something." (Ilan, p. 11-2)

Ilan is insecure about how to behave correctly in a new and unfamiliar field, and moreover a field of activity he did not explicitly choose, but which opened a door to him "by chance". However, he presents his attempt to be successful in the field as if it was his destiny, and yet he lacks the necessary resources. Ilan's story must be read against the background of his parents' process of adaptation in Israel. Ilan's family arrived in Israel in 1992, at the beginning of the "Great Aliyah" from Ukraine. He only tells me two things about his parents: first, that his parents "were without high education" (Ilan, p. 1), and second, because they lacked high education "it was difficult for them to integrate in terms of work" (Ilan, p. 1):

"My parents live in [a development town in the south], (..) ehm, (..), my parents are—, ehm, (...), that's just it, without high education, OK, they are not, not—usually people who arrived from Russia were physicians, engineers, (.), people with a high status that came to Israel, and for them it was, that's how it is, the absorption was difficult with regard to work, and everything, so my parents, like, for them (..) the absorption was relatively difficult, but, like, my parents, they—like, my father was a plumber over there, and my mother was a hairdresser, and they started to do manual work." (Ilan, p. 1)

In contrast to Ilan, none of the other interviewees even mention their parents' education. Ilan might be embarrassed by his parents' lack of secondary education who in his eyes differ from the "people who came from Russia [who] were physicians, engineers, people with very high status", (cf. also Glöckner 2011). This goes along with him repeating that his parents cannot advise him because they lack appropriate education. Let alone the circumstances of choosing that school, which cannot be reconstructed in the interview, to achieve (higher) education has an important function for Ilan:

it allows him to distinguish himself from his parents, to prove that he is part of the "Great Aliyah" and thus *belongs*.

On the other hand, Ilan presents himself as experiencing disadvantages because of his migration background for strategic reasons. First of all, he applies the definition of the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) of who an immigrant is, a very technical definition which he emphasises does not fit: "I am not an immigrant, who is? The IOM says 'people who have lived for five years in the country'" (Ilan, p. 20). Ilan speaks of difficulties to enter certain circles of power because the "ruling elite is not your elite" (Ilan, p. 23); he considers himself as part of an elite, yet the interesting and tricky question is: part of which elite. Consequently, Ilan presents the Yisra'el Beitenu party as a "niche for Russian-speaking political newcomers like me [to learn the business of politics]" (Ilan, p. 14). However, he admits that it is not the common way to start a political career right at the top but at the local level, e.g. in "student cells of parties who form the future elite" (Ilan, p. 22). Yet Ilan concedes: "only you don't have connections" (Ilan, p. 22).

However, he presents his engagement with the Yisra'el Beitenu party as a decision based on an ideological match and he emphasises that the decisive ideological component for him is the party's pursuit of "Zionism". To emphasise the importance of the issue to him even more, he tells me about his previous engagement:

"Ehm, I am a research associate at the Institute for Zionist Strategies, (..) ehm, who provide position papers on all kinds of issues, things, meet at some forums with judges of the Supreme Court, with politicians and these things." (Ilan 9)

Summarising the story about his engagement with the party, Ilan thinks aloud about whether he could also have become engaged with another political party and states that his engagement with the Yisra'el Beitenu party is very much related to his recruitment by a party representative he had met by chance on another occasion:

"It depends, like, maybe Likud yes, Meretz, I don't—, I believe that not, yes, a party (..)—again, Zionism, like, in my understanding, ehm, (..)—I couldn't fit, simply, for example, I exaggerate, into a party, no idea, an Arab party or again Meretz, no idea, but Likud, Kadima, no idea, like, there is a little difference, but I believe it also

depends, and it's, like, let's say, since I have been with the party, so, I undergo such a kind of socialisation, and the longer I am with the party, that's how it is, my opinions get more in line with the line of the party, like, either that I know better the basis of [the] party, and so I—basically the more I identify with it, by and by, I think, for now this is fine, if I would co—like, but generally, like, to the very party, relatively, I'd say, that I have come to it by chance (.), like, I don't know." (Ilan, p. 9-10)

In contrast to Ilan, who presents himself as marginalised, most interviewees perceive their own position as quite close to the political centre, both in terms of ideology and power. This is mirrored by them referring to public discourse as a confirmation, as Igal does: "many think that way" (Igal, p. 3). Accordingly, they aim at proving the political party they are engaged with is—against claims in public discourse—in line with Israeli political culture. IB is presented not only as in line with the Zionist discourse by the interviewees, but also as the natural political choice of young Israelis, as Ilan explains:

"In Israel [...] young people are generally more conservative, more Zionist, and the older ones vote rather for Avoda [the Labour party], Meretz, like, more liberal [...] Again, like, the young generation, which is the generation that serves in the military or has to go to the military or is just after the military or is in reserve duty, ok, they know exactly what is going on in the country, like, they live this every day, they are at the university, they see what's going on in the media, they, they are more active, like, older people who work, no idea, at the work place or pensioners, or people from the older generation that usually vote Avoda and so on—no idea, maybe they see the things a little different, like, it's their right, I get it." (Ilan, p. 24)

Accordingly, Ilan is confused when I tell him I understood—maybe wanted to understand in the context of the study— "extremist" (קצוני) instead of "conservative" (שמרוני) and categorically denies this. Instead, he regards this "conservati[sm]" as absolutely in line with what is publicly wanted and allowed.

12.3 ANALYSIS OF DISCURSIVE PRACTICE X: CATCHY SLOGANS

As it is with *Zionism*, so it is with IB's ideological programme: though the interviewees talk at length about their engagement with the party, they hardly talk about the party's political programme or concrete political acts. By and large, the interviewees know the technical procedures of political activity much better than the party's ideology, in general the interviewees only know the electoral slogans about *service* and *loyalty*. However, there is a difference in the notion of and reference to the ideology of the Yisra'el Beitenu party, depending on the position of the interviewee regarding the party's "ideological centre". Interviewees at the periphery (e.g. Avi, Katya) are more reflective than those who are closer to core party figures (e.g. Igal) or are one themselves (Max). Particularly the narratives of those at the "periphery" mirror an inner dispute about these official ideological slogans, namely on two occasions: on the one hand when the interviewees talk about concrete experiences that they feel made or currently make them reflect their political viewpoint, on the other hand when they are directly asked in the interview situation to justify a certain ideological position.

Katya's narrative shall serve as an example for a certain indecision between claiming an ideological match and hesitating. While talking about foreign affairs, Katya first states "I agree with the party's ideology very much". At the same time, she feels the need to explain to me—here as a person not residing in Israel permanently and thus assumingly not knowing the conditions of everyday life in Israel—why she agrees with those "extremist" and "nationalist" (Katya, p. 27) views and refers to the "current reality" as the context of her argument in order to justify it. She tells me the story of a close friend she used to date and who sent her a text message from his mobile phone while he was on the way to the Northern border:

"[We need] to demonstrate to outside that we are not wimps, and not, not, not, not only peace talks, in the end, which means, yes, yes, one does need to show muscles sometimes, peace talks are very important, right, but, ehm, (4), but not only, there is, there is sth. that I don't really, ehm, love, but, ehm, (..), friends, ehm, friends simply, ehm, many tell me: 'what is possible to achieve with a good word and a pistol is much more than only with a good word', it's, there is, it's simply a translation from English, yes, something like that, so yes, a good word, and also (...), and also, not only a good

word, and also, and also you can't ignore that, because the moment you see your friends go, ehm, go, ehm, to fight, im—, there in the North or the South, and you don't know whether they'll return, and you don't know what's going on there, and you receive SMS messages, ehm, 'I am going to be not available [on the phone], ehm, I don't know, I don't know for how long, so don't miss me, and don't think that I, like, I am simply not available', what am I supposed to feel, what, am I supposed to feel love for the people who are on the other side of, of, of the border, really not, really not, so, because of this it's very easy for me to connect to that [part of the party's ideology], with regard to internal affairs I don't know, I don't know, internal affairs, that's already, ehm, there are already many aspects." (Katya, p. 7)

Katya is more sceptical about the methods employed by the party to gain votes, especially of younger voters and returns to speaking of a "brainwash" (Katya, p. 27) when turning to young people, and misusing fact that "young people [still] learn to evaluate". Against the background of family memory, she hesitates to employ those methods:

"I simply remember myself in school, I, I, I know that going into details (..), we were not up to it at all, (..) young people get the slogans, yes, now, to what extent this is right, to what extent this is right with regard to—from the point of view of the party it surely is right, because it brings her a new electorate, to what extent this is right with regard to, ehm (..), how is it called, ehm, to what extent this is wanted that the party does it, I don't know, (4) it depends, again, we talk about the state level, if, ehm, if the country, country—the country needs to raise a new generation, the country needs to raise a new generation, it needs to prepare them already from a young age, so if this is, if this is to speak about youth organisations, ehm, they talk in slogans, so yes [...], again, I can't tell you to what extent this is wanted because we live in that reality (...) and every country does this at the end of the day (laughing), it's not that only we do that [...], obviously, obviously it is wanted by the state, because it has to continue its—it has to continue its erection [...], because if it doesn't raise a new generation, it obviously will not go on to exist, so obviously it is right, [...] to what extent it is right to raise them [the new generation]? (5) I don't know, also? don't know, don't know, it's very hard for me to come to a certain opinion (2), maybe, maybe it's right, maybe it's not right, ehm, I simply, I simply remember how, ehm, how, ehm, my grandmother was at her time brainwashed, that? (4) my grandfather especially, he (2), he believed in Stalin so much, it's simply unbelievable, (2) my

grandmother also believed in him, that is simply, that is simply, that is the way that I think it is not wanted." (Katya, p. 27-9).

One can even feel her hesitation when one reads the quote through the marks for pauses in her speech. Katya becomes hesitant when thinking about IB's methods to catch (young) voters through slogans:

"Because of that [i.e. young people's inclination to extremism] our party can also allow itself to play with young people than with? because it's very easy to carry [them] away with extremist opinions, extremist opinions are generally more–, "sexier", more attractive." (Katya, p. 27).

Yet I argue, against the background of her employment with "our party", Katya feels she needs to add two important qualifications: first, she refers to "other countries" to emphasise that Israel is not special in this regard, but quite "normal". Second, she adds that there are moral boundaries concerning the extent to which the slogans to educate or "brainwash" adolescents are used and refers to family memories to express her doubts in the method:

"The question is to what extent we use it, if we use it in order to raise them [the new generation], in order to develop them—yes, but, ehm, if they go afterwards and—(..), disgrace a mosque or a synagoge, or draw, ehm, (..) all kinds of things that are not wanted on the walls, or (..)—it's not, and there is no need to do that either, [...] to what extent it is right to raise them [the new generation]—(5) I don't know, also—don't know, don't know—, it's very hard for me to come to a certain opinion (2), maybe, maybe it's right, maybe it's not right, ehm, I simply , I simply remember how, ehm, how, ehm, my grandmother was at her time brainwashed, that—(4) my grandfather especially, he (2), he believed in Stalin so much, it's simply unbelievable, (2) my grandmother also believed in him, that is simply, that is simply, that is the way that I think it is not wanted." (Katya, p. 28-9).

As argued above, at the same time she stresses her loyalty to her employer, refusing to talk about her doubts about the party's means to reach political goals, stating "my political opinions should not interfere with my work". Yet at the same time she does not want to openly condemn the party; she wraps this uneasiness into the trust in the adolescents' moral development instead. This is the easiest way out: to ignore one's personal doubts. In order to stress

her loyalty, she also emphasises there are particular situations which allow to ignore those "moral boundaries", and directly refers to the "current reality" as the context of the need to use simple slogans in order to catch votes and gain political power.

12.4 ANALYSIS OF DISCURSIVE PRACTICE XI: "PAPA LIEBERMAN"

The interviewees speak at large about the party's founder and current leader, Lieber- man—partly because they are asked how they see him by the interviewer, but mainly because some of the interviewees claim to have a personal relationship with him. As will be shown, this claim can be interpreted as serving the goal of constructing a counter-image of Lieberman's to the one which is perceived by the interviewees as dominant in the public discourse. However, there are other people in the party, too, presented as important persons to the interviewees, depending on their individual experiences with IB.

Three main images of Lieberman can be analytically derived from the narratives: Lieberman as a non-fascist, Lieberman as a political leader, and Lieberman as "papa". The interviewees present these images in contrast to the public discourse about the Yisra'el Beitenu party in their narratives—Gutwein[2] (2009) for example describes the Yisra'el Beitenu party as right-wing populist and compares it to—at that time still a new phenomenon—"hate parties" of European style like Haider's FPÖ , Le Pen's Front National or Wilder's Partij voor de Vrijheid—and actively contribute to the construction of a counter-image. Personal encounters matter, and usually those encounters are much more important than ideological agreement (cf. Smith/ Zipp 1983); people vote IB because they know the candidates personally, ideology is of minor importance.

The discursive image of the Yisra'el Beitenu party and its political leader, Lieberman, the interviewees construct in their narratives, is very much impacted by their personal encounters. In this context, Lieberman as a

2 Daniel Gutwein. How the left elevated Lieberman. Haaretz (English Edition), 2009. Retrieved from: http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/features/how-the-left-elevated-lieberman-1.269990

person is often described as friendly, attentive or charismatic, showing leader qualities.

Katya's argument shall serve as an example.Katya speaks about Lieberman when speaking about her agreement with the party's ideology on issues of foreign affairs. In this context, she gives the following answer to the interviewer's question about whether Lieberman is a "fascist":

"He wants to show that he is an extremist, maybe because of that [people say he is a fascist], but (2), I don't know, (2) fascist? He is extremist, but fascist? He is not, I know him personally! Ok, this is because I am now a part of his party, although (..) also, as an equivalent, I don't, don't see a fascist in him, I also—, now I also know, I got to know him personally from personal talking, he is far from that [being a fascist]." (Katya, p. 29)

She realises that her first, and very emotional response to this image is "because I am now a part of his party"; in this context, she is personally involved and feels attacked. Upon, second thoughts, however, Katya thinks about the meaning of fascism and finally justifies Lieberman's political views and actions: "rather people misunderstand him, he loves his country very much" (Katya, p. 30).

In many of the narratives a blurred or distorted notion of Lieberman appears, very much impacted by personal flattery:

"I also, now I also know, I got to know him personally from personal talking, he is far from that [being a fascist], there are things that I don't connect with, but his way of talking, his way of behaving is, it is very clear to me, it is very, ehm, (..) it's very natural for me." (Katya, p. 29)

As Katya finally states: "he talks to us" (Katya, p. 30), acknowledging that Lieberman, disregarding party-internal hierarchies, treats everyone equally. Igal also claims to know him personally from kitchen talks at home and even refers to Lieberman as "papa" (Igal, p. 11). In a similar vein, he states Lieberman's trustworthiness:

"He [Lieberman] talks the naked truth, he plans big things, I convinced many of my friends to vote for him, now they come and complain, saying 'Igal, he hasn't achieved

anything of what he promised', so I tell them 'it's not his fault, he is bound to a coalition, it's the state of the political system in Israel'." (Igal, p. 11)

12.5 ANALYSIS OF DISCURSIVE PRACTICE XII: "IT WAS CHEMISTRY"

Key story: Hamad the Druze

As mentioned above, Ilan presents his narrative based on his need for recognition of his attempts at being successful. This need for recognition is also reflected in Ilan's story about his current involvement with the Yisra'el Beitenu party. Ilan tells me about the "very good work relations" with the MK he is working for, Hamad Am'ar, a Druze. He makes an effort to illustrate their relationship as special and very close, he shows his loyalty and gratitude. This quote might be understood better as part of the stories about Ilan's disappointment with his status within and his treatment by "the party". Working for Am'ar, he is still a bit of an outsider, but the Druze Am'ar is, too, and he, Am'ar, "knows to appraise your work" (Ilan, p. 15). Ilan's relationship with the party is rather hierarchic, while that with his boss is characterised by co-operation and (mutual) recognition. In this regard, Ilan presents their relationship as a process of fraternisation and solidarity among ethnic minorities, here Druze and Russian-speaking Israelis, against the "ruling elite" (see above: key story "the fortune teller").[3] Ilan expresses solidarity with people in a similar marginal position but he does so rather for strategic reasons since it allows him to stress the of the fact that he himself feels being marginalised (see above: fortune teller). Ilan defends a Druze MK among the IB people as if there had been an internal argument about Am'ar's right to represent Druze Israelis in the name of IB: "it's like—, (...) he is more Yisra'el Beitenu than other people [who are with] the Yisra'el Beitenu party, ok?!" (Ilan, p. 7). To strengthen his argument, Ilan lists Am'ar's contributions to his own (Druze) community and thus to the Israeli society in general:

3 In the context of this statement, the "ruling elite" includes IB's inner circle people, too.

"He is a disabled veteran, served in the army, was injured, contributes to the state (pause), founded a youth movement, he leads the Druze youth movement, 8—, approximately, 12,000 people, kids, he helps them very much, in every regard [...] he contributes 'mountains' to the state, and I think very few people, like, at all, in the Knesset and so (pause) did so much for the sake of, I don't know, for the sake of the people, for the sake of the rest of the State, this is what I think." (Ilan 14)

Still, Ilan may have his difficulties with this solidarity: to describe how marginal Druze people in the Israeli society are in his view, he tells me the story about how he drove to his job interview in Am'ar's home town and that it was so far north that he was afraid his GPS would not find the place (Ilan, p. 8), while he literally puts himself and his own hometown, Ashdod, into the country's centre.

12.6 ANALYSIS OF DISCURSIVE PRACTICE XIII: "SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS"

In contrast to the two dimensions conditioning Israeli citizenship in the eyes of the interviewees—*contribution* and *loyalty*—, the interviewees leave the issue of *citizen's rights* out almost entirely. Yet, as was shown in the previous chapters, the interviewees construct their reading of Israeli citizenship completely against the background of an ethno-nationalist discourse of *belonging* to the *Jewish collective* and apply the presentation of Palestinians as the *other* as a discursive strategy: the Palestinians again serve as the *others* against which the interviewees discursively construct their notion of good citizens. On grounds of an ethno-nationalist discourse, the interviewees present the argument of conditional *citizen's rights* as if it had a rational and "very logical" (Ilan, p. 13) basis—even more so since neither the Yisra'el Beitenu party nor the interviewees directly attack a particular social group but claim all Israeli citizens to be equal: those who do not fulfil their *obligations* as citizens, do not earn *citizen's rights*. In order to stress this argument, the interviewees frequently disturb the non-Jewish minorities in Israel and their different statutes with regard to *citizen's duties*. Having in mind that Druze and Bedouin citizens do serve in the IDF and besides are relatively silent and the legal option of doing national service for those who

do not serve for whatever reasons, the interviewees can claim equal *duties* for all citizens.

However, a closer look shows that the interviewees argue against the background of adopting a particular reading of Israeli citizenship: the ethno-nationalist reading of the State of Israel as a *Jewish state*. Non-Jewish minorities who contribute and show loyalty to the *Jewish state*, i.e. remain silent, are tolerated. I further argue that Jewish segments who do not contribute or are not loyal in the eyes of the interviewees, in turn, are tolerated because of their *belonging* to the Jewish people. This way they are able to present Palestinian citizens as the only part of Israeli society which does not contribute and is not loyal and in addition imposes an existential threat upon that society. The rational consequence in the interviewees' opinion is to deprive those segments of Israeli society who do not contribute of their basic *citizen's rights*. The interviewees do not openly express this conclusion, but there are hints between the lines of what they say. The interviewees connect the perception of threat with the discourse of loyalty as an argumentative basis to legitimise their questioning of the right of citizenship for Palestinian Israelis. *Loyalty*, in the interviewees' interpretation, here becomes a means to define who is worthy of *citizen's rights*, but also who must earn them and how. Jewish citizens are supposed to meet at least one condition of citizenship by being Jewish and are thus considered worthy of *citizen's rights*. Non-Jewish citizens still have to earn their *rights* through *service* and *loyalty*. In this context, Ilan gives examples that individuals representing other national minorities, apart from Palestinians, do earn their *citizen's rights* through their actions. Ilan, for instance, repeats how much the Druze MK he works for is in line with IB ideology and states:

"The core of IB['s ideology] is very simple, (..) ehm, it's like, love of the state of Israel. I understand it, like, (.) at the core, ehm (.)—you have the right to get as much as you give, that is to say as much as you give to the state, as much you get, like, (.) to me that sounds very logical, right? If you are a citizen who fulfils his obligations, you are entitled to full *rights*, and if you don't [fulfil your obligations], like, you are not [entitled to full *rights*] but part of them. If you don't give anything to the state—why should I who pays taxes, who serves in the army, who does everything (.)—and someone else [who does not give anything] gets discrimination fees (.), *rights*, pension, convalescence [fees] and all those things on my account? It doesn't sound

logical to me, like, (...) [Hamad, the Druze MK] is army veteran, served in the army, got wounded, *served the country*, (.) founded a youth movement, is the head of that youth movement of 12,000 members, children (..), he helps them a lot, a lot, like, from every point of view, like, helps them, like, [...], [Hamad] *serves the country* a lot." (Ilan, p. 13)

This reading of Israeli citizenship means two things: while Druze or Bedouin citizens are able to earn their *citizen's rights*, it has become almost impossible for Palestinian citizens to do so.