



# **Surrounded: Palestinian Soldiers in the Israeli Military (Stanford Studies in Middle Eastern and I)**

*Rhoda Kanaaneh*

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An estimated 3,000 Palestinian citizens of Israel currently volunteer to serve in the Israeli military, a force fighting other Palestinians just miles away in occupied territories. *Surrounded* takes a close look at this controversial group of soldiers, examining the complex reasons these people join the army and the wider implications of their decisions in terms of security and citizenship.

Most observers perceive a clear and powerful divide in the political tensions and open hostilities between the State of Israel and the Palestinian people, but often fail to notice those who straddle this divide—Palestinian citizens of Israel. These soldiers comprise no more than half a percent of this population, but their stories provide a powerful vantage point from which to consider a question faced by all Palestinians in Israel: to what extent are they, in fact, Israeli?

*Surrounded* contains over seventy interviews with soldiers, and provides a unique glimpse of their conflicting experiences of acceptance, integration, and marginalization within the Israeli military. Concluding with comparisons to similar situations around the world, the book upends nationalist understandings of how wars and those who fight in them work. A key to a more complex understanding of ethnic conflict, this gripping and revealing look at a select group of soldiers will immensely alter ideas about the reasons why people choose to fight, particularly on "the wrong side" of a war.

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