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ISRAEL/PALESTINE CENTER FOR RESEARCH
AND INFORMATION

Creating a Culture of Peace

Edited by Gershon Baskin, Ph.D. and Zakaria al Qaq, Ph.D.

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CREATING A CULTURE OF PEACE

INTRODUCTION

CREATING A CULTURE OF PEACE

was born shortly after the signing of the Oslo Agreement in September 1993, during a period when there was great hope and optimism. We all shared a belief that, in fact, we were entering into an era of peace. The ideological or philosophical concept was that each people, in facing each other, would need to deal with the ideological and philosophical ethos of their own societies in order to come to full recognition and reconciliation, not only with the other society, but within their own society as well.

For so many years we were bred on a philosophy and a belief in the conflict that existed between us. We developed mechanisms within our societies to justify our own position in the conflict vis-a-vis the other side. These internal philosophical embodiments of who we are as societies, we believed would also, in an era of peace, begin to lead to divisions and internal conflicts within each society while trying to cope with the other society.

As the Oslo process became more and more difficult and things seemed to be breaking down, we noticed there was less and less willingness on the part of Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals to come together and talk about subjects that seemed in the light of the pressing political issues to be quite irrelevant. Even now these subjects might seem quite distant from the reality that surrounds us.

Yet we thought an institution like IPCRI believes that we have to not only be responsive to political and social psychological dynamics in our

societies, but we also have to try to shape those in a way that we think is possible, is feasible and is necessary.

This is part of an on-going process, it is necessary to continue to challenge each other, both looking at the other side's society and looking inward at our own society. We must continue to deal with some of the more difficult questions involved in what it takes to create a culture of peace at a time when peace does not yet exist, when the streets are filled with violence, when the challenge of the conflict still exists, when we are still, perhaps not officially but in reality, enemies. The two societies are fighting each other for existential national symbols, and in some sense even over life and death.

It is quite a considerable challenge to ask how do we influence, mold, create, lead our own societies to create a culture where our children, the next generation of Israelis and Palestinians, will really be able to live in peace. How can we play a role in paving that road so the challenges that will face the next generation will be smoother and easier than the ones we face today.

To start in the Israeli and Palestinian societies a process of reflection on how peace between our two nations is going to affect the way we view ourselves, the other side, and our relationship: from mutual denial through recognition to reconciliation.

To foster among both peoples values and habits of tolerance, listening, empathy, and an openness to reassess our own assumptions.

This includes:

reassessing the conflict's conflicting history or histories;

reassessing the "enemy image" as broadcast through the media, education, etc.;

reassessing the continued structural Israeli-Palestinian inequality (in military power, economic resources, technological base, degree of international linkaging, etc.) and structural violence, which may provoke a renewal of violent national/community conflict in future.

Through sustained creative effort to develop and disseminate common visions, values and ideals: in the short run, these should help prevent a relapse in violent conflict; in the medium term, they can form a basis for peaceful coexistence; and in the long run, they may inspire further-reaching integration between both nations.

The basic premiss of the project is that *peacemaking is ultimately a collective psychotherapy*. The Israeli-Palestinian peace process can start with political agreements between the political leaderships, and it must be underpinned by economic links and interests. Real peace can only be made and consolidated by a transformation on the cultural-ideological level, through a *people-to-people* change of heart: from trauma, fear, and anger - to healing, forgiveness and reciprocal acceptance.

It should be noted that the opinions expressed in this book are those of the authors and speakers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions and positions of IPCRI. We do encourage dialogue and debate amongst people with differing opinions and we tried to give expression to that within this book as well.

**ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS:
TRAUMA, IDENTITY AND NATIONALISM**
Kalman Yaron

Palestinian independence standing just outside our doors is a proper time for a historical balance sheet. We shall therefore focus here on the dynamics of the collective identities of the Israelis and the Palestinians, which have evolved over a hundred years of confrontation, and on the prospects of reconciliation that will ensue between the two entities.

Ethnicity, Identity and Nationalism

Ethnicity is a genuine phenomenon, although its origins are often obscure (compare the biblical narrative about the transformation of the ancient Hebrew tribes into a nation and the Palestinian narrative about their Canaanite roots). Ethnicity refers to a large aggregate of people affiliated by a common ancestry, a shared history, culture, religion and language, dwelling in a common territory (or claiming such a territory). Political scholars agree that those holding at least some of the above traits and conceiving themselves as a nation must be accepted as such. This applies for both the Israelis and the Palestinians, who assert claims on the same piece of land.

Aspiration for political sovereignty in a given state and joint efforts for attaining the collective aims transform ethnicity into nationalism. However no nation exists from time immemorial; it emerges at a specific stage of history. Furthermore, collective identity is an unstable feature subject to change through manipulation, political realities and the nature of minority-majority interaction. Idealization of the past, belief in a shared fate, common enemies, vested interests and collective myths are the building blocks of a nation.

Although both Jews and Arabs possess distinguishing cultural traits, neither group has viewed itself in the past as a territory-based nation in the modern sense of the term. As a result of nearly two thousand years of dispersion, the Jews have ceased to be a homogenous group, having assimilated in various degrees into the foreign surroundings. The Arabs of Palestine, albeit sharing a language, religion and culture, have never conceived themselves in the past as a nation apart from the Arab world, and were not conceived as such. The crystallization of both nations is a later phenomenon, produced by traumatic experiences. While Zionism was caused by anti-Semitism - culminating in the Holocaust (Shoah) - Palestinian nationalism was an aftermath of the Palestinian disaster (*Nakba*) - the uprooting from their land.

Whereas the Arabs of Palestine were united through Zionist provocation and their endeavor to demolish the Jewish State, the question of the banner to float on the walls of the soon-to-be-liberated Jerusalem - whether that of Allah or that of Palestine - divides them. Conversely, the Jews are united by their wish to have their own independent state, but are separated by a struggle over the nature of that state: a democratic Israeli State or a Jewish State.

Zionism and History

Jewish existence over the centuries was determined by the following factors: (1) The destruction of the Second Temple in 70 BC and the expulsion of the Jewish people from their homeland did not lead to the decline of Judaism. (2) The crystallization of the Halakha, (Jewish law that regulates the Jewish way of life) (3) Expectation of a messianic redemption: (4) anti-Semitism and persecution. (5) The three main pillars: Torah, People, Land (religion, ethnicity and nationhood), that had become the basis of Jewish identity. The wandering Jew could preserve his identity in the Diaspora by carrying with him his homeland: his prayer book and the *Torah*

- the body of wisdom and law rooted in the Hebrew Bible and in the Talmud (Oral Law, the basis of the Halakha).

One can hardly imagine Jewish survival without the Torah, whose understanding encompasses much more than religion alone but seeks to regulate every moment of Jewish life, from cradle until death. Being the only source of authority, nothing human is beyond its scope of concern. Unlike the modern belief, traditional Jews do not separate the different domains of being (and foremost between religion and state), as the whole world is included in the Torah.

It was this withdrawal from the modern world and the embracing of the Torah that enabled the survival of Judaism. Over the centuries, Jews were a unique religious and ethnic group guided by the Torah. However, since the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century the Jews, challenged by emancipation and modernity, began to leave not only their Ghettos but Judaism as well.

The attachment to Zion - the Jewish spiritual center - still remained in the hearts of many Jews, including those who abandoned the Torah. Since the Jewish dream of returning to the Land of Israel could not be attained physically, it was expressed through prayer for the peace of Jerusalem, pilgrimage to the Holy Land and messianic anticipation. Pious Jews who could not reach Palestine during their lifetime strove at least to be buried here.

(1812-1875

Jerusalem for the Jewish people. The herald of religious Zionism was Rabbi Zvi Kalischer (1795-1874), predicting that Jewish farming in the Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel) would be a spur to the ultimate divine redemption. His contemporary, Shlomo Alkalai (1798-1878) called for Jewish return to Zion

without waiting for the coming of the Messiah. Yet both represented a religious vision rather than a realistic political blueprint.

Political Zionism was at the same time an agent of modernization, a nation-building device and a catalyst of Jewish solidarity. It emerged in the event that the Jews in Western Europe gained political rights, but failed to be embraced by their non-Jewish hosts, thus starting to adjust to modern Europe by religious reformation generating assimilation. At the same time the Jewish masses in Eastern Europe were still unreservedly oppressed. In due course a great number of both Eastern and Western Jews left for America while a small portion emigrated to the East eager to rebuild the Land of Israel and anticipating to be rejuvenated in it.

The forerunner of political Zionism was Leon Pinsker (1821-1891). He handled the dilemma of Jewish emancipation stipulated upon assimilation - which he regarded as collective suicide. The linkage between emancipation and assimilation was manifested in the resolution of the 1789 French

1871, followed by a wave of pogroms in Russia in the years 1881-1882, Pinsker realized that the Jews were in fact foreigners in European society. He

society offered to the Jews in exchange for assimilation, Pinsker came to believe that the only solution for his people was auto-emancipation - to be attained by self-assertion and struggle for a territorial basis.

Jewish reaction to Judaophobia was the foundation in Russia of the *Hovevei Zion* 19th century, led by Pinsker. Its members laid the Zionist foundation, by enhancing Jewish self-awareness and promoting the building of Jewish colonies in Palestine. During the years 1882-1903 roughly 30,000 Jews, driven both by persecution and love for Zion, reached the shores of the Promised Land.

Seeking their roots in the land of their forefathers, the Zionist harbingers gained their bread by the sweat of their brow, tilling the soil of the Holy Land.

Inasmuch as Pinsker was the legislator of classical Zionism, Theodor Herzl (1860-1904) was its ambassador. The reactionary wave overflowing France which negated the ideals of the French Revolution, unveiled by the Dreyfus Affair (1894-95)¹, turned Herzl into a convicted Zionist. Witnessing the incurable disease of anti-Semitism, the assimilated Viennese Jew considered two alternatives for resolving the Jewish question: assimilation into their milieu, or creation of an independent Jewish state. Inasmuch as the first choice was disgraceful, if at all possible, Herzl opted for the second alternative.

1896, became the blueprint of the first Zionist Congress, held in Basel in 1897. The Zionist doctrine was based on three premises: (1) The Jews are a nation and not just a religious congregation. (2) Anti-Semitism is an endemic affliction, threatening Jewish existence. (3) The creation of a Jewish state is indispensable for Jewish existence.

d to the
some part of the globe large enough to agree with the rightful requisites of

Unlike the pious Jews from Eastern Europe who kept
Zion. Consequently he and his cosmopolitan colleagues from the West endorsed a British blueprint for constituting a Jewish homeland in Uganda.

After a stormy discussion in the 1904 Seventh Zionist Congress between upper hand, concluding that Zion is the only place that could serve as a Jewish homeland.

Asher Ginzberg, known by his pseudonym Ahad Haam (1856-1927),

homelessness was the critical issue for the Jewish people and could thus be resolved only through a territorial settlement, Ahad Haam maintained that the Jewish dilemma resulted from a spiritual emergency. Seeing the miserable life of the Eastern European Jews and the worthless existence of

Ahad Haam suggested designating Palestine as a cultural center, confident that the revival of Jewish collective experience would reanimate the Jewish spirit. While Ahad

- lacking Jewish ethos - brought about the establishment of the Jewish State.

personal charisma paved his way to ruling European leaders. Among his negotiation partners were the Turkish Sultan, the Russian Kaiser and the Pope. His careful preparation of the ideological, economic and organizational infrastructure paved the way to the establishment of the

2, 1917, in a letter issued by the British foreign secretary James Balfour and confirmed by the British government. The declaration assured that the Britain would facilitate

being understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil

early death (in 1904), with the emergence of the State of Israel. Suitable

historical circumstances, the diplomatic and financial efforts of the dynamic Zionist movement, and the Jewish drive for survival were the means by which a realist, one must believe

The emergence of the State of the Jews in Palestine was spurred by unexpected political events that neither Herzl nor anyone else could anticipate: World War I; the breakdown of the four hundred year old Ottoman Empire; the 1917 British occupation of Palestine, and its placing under British mandate (1921). The Zionist enterprise was legitimized by the rise of European nationalism, affirmation of colonialism and after World War II the feelings facing the Holocaust. Yet, the Zionist venture could never have been carried through without the unconditional devotion and sacrifice of the Zionist pioneers.

The Zionist movement that arose out of anti-Semitism and persecution was influenced by the ideals of the French revolution, Socialism and the message of the Hebrew prophets. Zionism was carried mainly by the younger generation, trying to open a new chapter in Jewish life. The Zionist rebellions rejected both the traditional Jewish way of life rooted in the Halakha, and the illusion of the assimilating Jewish *petit bourgeois* of honorable entry in the European society. Whereas emphasizing the Zionist ethos of Jewish self-liberation, they espoused paradoxically the messianic perception for the Zionist cause. The undiminished confidence in the coming of the Messiah that was responsible for Jewish weakness but also for the secret of Jewish survival, proved to be the greatest obstacle on the way to Zion.

Political Zionism was preceded by a debate about Jewish continuity vis-a-vis emancipation, modernity and assimilation. Mendes-Flohr

Jewish existence was no longer assured.² The Zionist option gained yet a higher priority.

Among the Zionist harbingers was the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber (1878-1965). He advocated the creation in Palestine of a bi-national state, through a genuine alliance with the Arabs, turning the common dwelling-place into a flourishing land where the two peoples will be capable of living together in peace and harmony. (1880-1940), founder of the right-wing Zionist Revisionist trend, called for the creation of a Jewish State on both sides of the Jordan River. (1913-1992), leader of *Herut* (contemporary *Likud* party), followed in the steps of his mentor by embracing both his mannerism and his power-policy. The Zionist mainstream was represented by David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973), the architect of the Jewish state.

Negation of the Exile

The Zionist doctrine is based on four assumptions. (1) Notwithstanding their dispersion, the Jews have remained united across geographic frontiers. (2) Even after being dispossessed of their land, the Jews did not regard themselves as a homeless people but as a nation whose land was plundered by foreigners. (3) The Jews are strangers everywhere outside their own country. (4) The only place where the Jews can be at home is the Land of Israel.³

David Ben Gurion is said to have commented on the collision between messianic dreams and political reality. He said that the Jews awaited the Messiah. He did not come. God wants us to be the Messiah. The messianic dream has not vanished since the beginning of modern Zionism. The antagonism

between the two reached its peak after the Holocaust. Whereas the Zionists blamed the Orthodox for having tabooed Jewish immigration to Palestine during the Nazi epoch out of hostility against Zionism (thus abandoning them to slaughter), the latter condemned the Zionists as false Messiahs.

Rejection of Zionism due to religious considerations was widespread in Orthodox circles. Thus Israel Daiches, a spiritual leader of British Jewry, stated in 1903
ndeavor to acquire a portion of the land of our fathers, how can we be sure that our children will remain faithful sons to their people? Only if you raise your sons to Torah and wisdom, and the next generation will be perceptive, will there be a hope that

Zionism was rejected by the great wave of Jews immigrating to the USA, who preferred immigrating to the land of golden opportunities. The assimilated Jews regarded Zionism as a tribal regression menacing their acceptance into European society. It was their failure to be embraced by their non-Jewish hosts in the West that compelled part of them to lift their eyes to Zion. On the other hand, the members of the Eastern European socialistic Bund movement struggled for Yiddish-speaking autonomies in densely populated Jewish areas. The Orthodox community accused the secular Zionists of sacrilege for anticipating the coming of the Messiah. Thus, they turned their backs both to modernity and Zionism.

Jewish opposition to Zionism may be illustrated by an ironic article published in 1904
understand how an educated Jew like Dr. Herzl, horrified and disgusted by unrestrained anti-Semitic insults, could come to this strange idea [Zionism]. One can also grasp the fascination of part of the younger generation by
The Zionist dreamers, like the desperate desert generation, became filled

with new hopes facing a mirage. But this is after all just a dream, denied

4

Another voice emerged in the ultra-Orthodox camp - that of Abraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook (1865-1935), the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Palestine.

Kook idealized the agnostic Zionist visionaries, viewing them as a tool in the hands of the Almighty - unknowingly paving the road for the
nning of the growth of the

sanctification of the secular. He trusted that the worldly pioneers would ultimately return to their authentic sources.

Inspired by Rabbi Abraham K
Rabbi Yitzhak Reines (1839-1915) became the founder of the religious Zionist Mizrahi movement (later merging with the liberal Poel-Hamizrahi

religious Kibbutz, which adopted the tenets of Torah and Labor. Their greatest enemy was Agudat-Israel (Israel Association) - an anti-Zionist

Zionist skeptics. Thus the Jews became divided into three parties: Zionist

orthodoxy).

The Zionist credo was based on the negation of Jewish Exile and of the Jewish way of life as dictated by the Torah. The Zionist founders conceived Jewish existence in exile as doomed to vanish through assimilation, anti-Semitism and persecution. Even if the Jews would survive as individuals, their existence would be worthless. They employed the Shoah as an irrefutable testimony of the Zionist prediction, and the creation of the State of Israel as proof of their ideology.

The Zionist conditioning of Jewish existence upon a territorial basis was denied by the Jewish periphery, which offered cultural alternatives. American Jews, like those who preferred to resettle in post-World-War II Europe regard Jewish presence in the Diaspora as a permanent and legitimate phenomenon, and the Holocaust as an accidental event. Regardless of the great contribution of Israel to Jewish self-esteem, the Jewish periphery does not accept Israel as a cultural center or as a condition of Jewish continuity.

In the final analysis, the main goal of Zionism - the creation of a *secure* homeland for the Jewish people - has not been realized. Israel has proven to be the least secure place for a Jew. On the other hand, increasing assimilation of the Jewish periphery attests to the truth of the Zionist prediction. The insecurity of Jewish life in Israel and the assimilation of the Diaspora Jewry have thus become existential challenges for Jewish continuity.

The Zionist Doctrine and its Followers

Zionism was basically a revolutionary movement aiming to revise Jewish history. The Zionists desired to wipe out traditional Jewish traits, in order to normalize the Jews and cause anti-Semitism to fade away. They made every effort to limit the dominance of the Orthodox rabbis, who restricted Jewish life to the periphery of the Torah and the Synagogue. They did not regard the future homeland only as a shelter for the oppressed Jews, confident that Jewish homecoming would generate a new Jew relieved from Ghetto symptoms

The Zionist assumption was that Jewish integrity was distorted by the anomalous existence in the Exile, and that only the return to their historical land could cure the Jews from their complexes. While the pious

eir own land, speaking

their own language, masters of their own destiny. All were united by the wish to shake off the yoke of the gentiles.

The Zionist remedy for righting the overturned Jewish occupational pyramid was physical labor. Whereas the Marxist Dov Borocho (1881-1917) emphasized the necessity for Jewish productivity, A.D. Gordon (1856-1922) was the author of the Religion of Labor. Believing that farming brings

makes up the sum of life. We must perform all that makes up the total sum of life, from the least strenuous, cleanest and most sophisticated to the dirtiest and most difficult. Then shall we have a culture of our own, then and only then, shall we have a life of our

The idealization of labor went along with the mystification of the land. Joseph Chaim Brenner (killed in 1919) means not just soil (agriculture) and not only a country (a political state) but much more. The land is the key to all realms of existence, the basis of

The idea of the redeeming forces of the soil brings to mind, surprisingly enough, the German *Blut und Boden* mythos. The glorification of physical labor resulted from the circumstances of Jewish life: They were prevented from farming and restricted from most handicrafts. Physical labor, and first and foremost farming, was seen as a must for normalization.

The agnostic Zionists opened a new chapter in Jewish history, but could not disregard the common ground of Judaism, that was the basis of Zionism. They therefore secularized and nationalized selections from the Bible and other traditional Jewish sources, as well as ancient myths and symbols supporting the Zionist credo. Yet, the exclusion of the legal part of the Torah (Halakha) from the Zionist codex became the watershed that

the Hebrew Bible has served as a source of inspiration; for the religious Jews, the commandments of the Torah (*Mitzvot*) were the binding-force of

Judaism. While for the pious Jews the Synagogue served as a communal center, the Zionist skeptics worshipped the religion of labor.

Among the remarkable opponents of traditional Judaism was Micha Joseph Berdyscewsky (1865-1921). Believing that genuine Jewish life was stifled by over-spirituality, he called his brethren to detach themselves from the lofty Jewish ethos and become a normal people, rather than a sacrificial

of our ancient heritage is intolerable and its yoke unbearable. All that, befalls in our heart and in the melancholy of our mind does not allow us a liv legacy and his awareness of its responsibility for Jewish suffering. Looking at the black-dressed bearded Ghetto Jews shortly before the Holocaust, he

Jewish self-negation found its classical articulation in the story by Hayim Hazaz (1898-1953

no heroes or conquerors, no rulers and masters of their destiny. They are a collection of wounded, hunted, groaning and walking wretches, always begging for mercy. I would simply forbid teaching our children Jewish history. Why the devil teach them about th

The Zionist revolution was inaugurated by the members of the second immigration to Palestine during the years 1904-1914 and 1919-1923. These convinced Zionists were the backbone of the Jewish peasantry and working class supported by the Labor movement. They were highly motivated, having left their homes, the Jewish tradition and the popular Yiddish language, to come and settle in hostile surroundings. On the one hand, they caused a major crisis in Jewish life by abandoning the long-

cherished Jewish legacy; on the other hand, they generated a cultural renewal that was vital for nation-building.

The life of the Zionist pioneers was guided by the principles of self-sacrifice and asceticism. Their greatest achievement was the creation of the unique Kibbutz movement - an extended family-like, agriculture-based

have emerged without the Kibbutzim, which proved to be the invincible strongholds of the State of Israel.

Although taking a revolutionary course, these atheistic idealists were nevertheless permeated with religiosity embedded in a worldly religion. Insofar as the Hebrew Bible agreed with the Zionist credo and the Socialist doctrine, it became the guidebook of the Kibbutz movement. In due time they transformed the Halakha into a civil religion, and substituted the traditional rabbis with their own clergy (such as Berl Katzenelson, the ideological leader of the Labor). They turned the Jewish holidays into seasonal feasts and replaced the Torah with a worldly utopia.

The conquest of the desert (making the wilderness bloom) became a sacred commandment that evolved into a religion of labor. The thrill of the ascetic Zionists facing their life work evoked Hasidic ecstasy such as the

Zionist dreamers were revealed by their attachment to Jewish sources (e.g., equating the Zionist victims of Arab terrorism to the *binding of Isaac* account the sacred symbol of Jewish martyrdom).

The history of Kibbutz Degania, founded in summer 1911 near the Sea of Galilee, serves as a tragic testimony of the fate of the Zionist idealists. Its members, mostly intellectuals, suffered from hard labor, difficult climate, tropical diseases and isolation, in addition to Arab animosity. The narrative of Degania is engraved on the tombstones in the

local cemetery, testifying to the fact that these utopians only seldom ended their lives in a natural way. They were shot by their Bedouin neighbors, died of malaria and terminated their lives by suicide.

The New Hebrew

The archetype of the Zionist founding fathers was the native-born Jew nicknamed Sabra (after a tropical cactus), representing the classical Left Zionist. The Sabra was portrayed as the epitome of physical wholeness and bodily health, implanted in his land and free of Ghetto

with a shovel in his hand and a gun on his shoulder; a courageous fighter and a tough farmer. He was close to nature and engaged in archaeological excavations, seeking the roots of the Hebrews.

In mentality and physical appearance, the Sabra was the diametrical opposite of the fragile and passive Ghetto Jew. He was distinguished by his firm devotion to his people and his readiness to sacrifice his life for the Zionist cause. The Sabra was shabbily dressed, tongue-tied, satisfied with little, lacking outer mannerisms and withdrawn. Serving in the Jewish illegal

defense organization), the Sabras suffered the greatest percentage of casualties in the 1948 War.

The features of the Sabra were summarized in the opening sentence
fell during the 1948 Tel-Aviv
Moshe Dayan, Yigal Alon and Yitzhak Rabin, national leaders and fighters,
describes Yitzhak Rabin as the mythological Sabra:

humble and modest, a person whose lips and heart were in harmony, preferring action upon statements. A champion who combined the might of Israeli armored forces with the wisdom of a statesman; a hero making his

The attitude of the Sabra to the Exile Jews was ambivalent. He referred to Shoah survivors with empathy associated with a patronizing

Auschwitz prove with certainty the Zionist prediction that Jewish life in

1958), the classical Hebrew writer S.

of all that smells of Jewishness: Jewish history with its troubles and miseries; the slaughter knife; Jewish wails; Yiddish accent and Ghetto mentality. We refuse to take part in anything that has to do with Jewishness - tradition, Jewish liturgy; Jewish fish-dishes and funeral

While revolutions strive to create a New World upon the ruins of the past, the Zionist revolutionaries yearned for normality. The inner-contradiction of Zionism resulted from the fact that though revolting against the Jewish past, they nevertheless strove for a revival of the classical Jewish values. This paradox was settled by wiping out the troubled exile era, while yearning to return to the golden biblical age of the free Hebrews.

New Hebrews

the miserable Jewish history in exile by reaching back in their ancestry to the stormy Hebrew conquerors of Canaan. The contrast between Hebrews

Those coming from the Jewish exile are not Hebrews. The Jew and the Hebrew can never be identical. One who is a Hebrew cannot be a Jew, and he who is a Jew can

faithful Jews who refused to assimilate in the foreign society, now wished to integrate in the Orient, denying their Jewish parents.

The New Hebrews, led by the poet Jonathan Ratosh (1909-1973), were the creators of an innovative Hebrew literary genre affected by Canaanite mythology. Their ideology may be summarized in four points: (1) creation of a secular Hebrew state in the Orient; (2) revival of the authentic Hebrew culture; (3) disassociation from the Diaspora; (4) adoption of Arab cultural features, and alteration of exile names into Hebrew ones - many of Canaanite origin (Tamuz, Anat, Moab, Ephron, Ornan, Efrat, etc.).

After the Shoah, the attitude toward the submissive Ghetto Jew was completely reversed. The traditional Jewish way of life and the Yiddish language, previously humiliated, now became favored. This is evident in the yearning for the lost Eastern European Shtetl (the old Jewish towns), which turned into a site of pilgrimage for world Jewry.

After the destruction of Jewish life in Europe, the miserable Jewish life in the Diaspora became idealized in the Israeli educational systems, in

Henceforth, those denouncing Jewish history in the Diaspora were accused of decadence.

A Society in the Making

The Israeli population numbers today (January 1999) over six million people, speaking Hebrew or/and Arabic, in addition to a large variety of languages and dialects. Around 79% of the Israeli citizens are Jews, and 21% non-Jews, primarily Arabs (15% Muslims, 2.2% Christians; 1.6%

Druze, and 2.2% others), living in a territory of less than 23,000 square kilometers. An additional 2.5 million Arabs live in an area of less than 4,000 square kilometers allotted for a self-ruled Palestinian state, with amongst the highest birth rate in the world.

Almost all Jews living in Israel are refugees or second and third generation to refugee parents, representing different cultures and mentalities. More than half of them were already born in Israel or received their primary education here. The influx of about a million newcomers from the former USSR and Ethiopia has enriched the social mosaic, but has also enhanced disintegration of the Israeli society.⁶

The euphoria following the Israeli victory over the Arabs in the 1967 Six-Day war spurred the atomization of the Israeli society. The belief that

^s
raised their banner against the Ashkenazis (Western Jews) in order to gain a greater piece of the national pie. The religious Zionists battle for a Greater Israel; the ultra-Orthodox increased their battle for a Halakha state, and the Israeli Arabs extended their demand for full equality. As Israel is thoroughly politicized and lacks a common civil culture, only a national crisis can bring about Israeli solidarity.⁶ The murder of Yitzhak Rabin at the hands of a religious fanatic opposing the Oslo peace accord, revealed the abyss inherent in the Israeli society, which contains religious, national and ethnic traits.

The political spectrum displayed by the outcome of the 1996 Knesset (the Israeli parliament) elections proved to be more complicated than earlier predicted. Kimmerling⁷ uncovered no less than seven political sub-cultures: (1) liberal-universal, supported by the Left and center (2) Right and extreme-Right (3) religious-Zionist, ethnocentric (4) ultra-Orthodox Judeo-centric (5) immigrant lobby (6) an Oriental protest party (7) alliance of Arab parties.

Israel may also be compared to a pyramid: the Euro-American Ashkenazis at the top, next the Oriental proletariat, then the Russians and the Ethiopian newcomers, and the Arabs at the bottom - all struggling for their place in the hierarchy. Only the Orthodox believe that they hold the

The renowned Hebrew writer Amos Oz defines the Israeli in the accumulation of arguments expressed by six million people - all of them on the Israeli spirituality but in social atomization.

been the builders immigrants, the enraged Orientals, the Old Haredis and the Post-Zionists, author Yoram Kaniuk, submits the frustration of the disappointed Zionists: Shtetl in the Middle East; but all leads to it. So let us separate and take

The Old Jew and the New Israeli

After the defeat of the Labor in the 1996 Knesset elections, Shimon

The two cities Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem reflect the contrasting faces of Israel. On the one hand - the boisterous cosmopolite metropolis Tel-Aviv, the established liberal Ashkenazis sitting in their coffee houses. Only sixty kilometers from there - the e of a Jewish Shtetl, brimming with black-clad God-fearing Jews and fanatic patriots of Eretz-Israel; a city packed with Synagogues, Yeshivas and holy sites.

Religious and secular Jews, those totally lacking in Jewish background and even non-Jews (married to Jewish partners), have come to Israel for a variety of reasons. Some came here for pragmatic considerations, others to attain Jewish self-fulfillment. Most came after they were driven out from their homes by their non-Jewish hosts; only a few came out of pure Zionism.

Reflecting upon Jewish identity, the known Israeli novelist A. B. Jewish, I would suggest the metaphor of androgynous. Androgynous comprises both the male and the female. The Jews are a people embracing traits of both a nation and a religion; yet they are neither a nation nor a may be illustrated b existence, its members have already changed six times the definition of

The obscurity of being a Jew occupies Gentiles and Jews alike. recognized by the Orthodox rabbinate. Liberal, non-observant or assimilated Jews - like Herzl, Buber and Kafka - belong to this category. The two faces of Judaism, religion and nationhood, serving both as a bridge and a rift, perplex Jewish existence. While religion and nationhood are associated in Judaism, nationalism ruled by religion disagree with democratic integrity.

The two appellations of the country - the State of Israel, and *The Jewish State* - indicate the different approaches to it. Non-religious Jews favor the first designation, standing for a democratic state. The Orthodox Jews favor the religious features of the Holy Land expressed in the term *Jewish State* (or *Eretz Israel* - the Land of Israel in its biblical boundaries), political *State of the Jews* and the religious *Jewish State*. The secular Jews present themselves as religious Jews, who accent their Jewish identity.

A survey of religious trends among Israeli Jews, held in 1994, found that 20% represented themselves as Orthodox (religious) or Haredi (ultra-Orthodox); 29% labeled themselves traditional (partly observant), and 51% claimed to be secular Jews (non-religious). Yet the Orthodox community is constantly growing, occupying in the present Knesset about one fifth of its 120 seats. Most Israeli Jews keep at least some Jewish ceremonies such as circumcision, Bar-Mitzva, marriage, divorce and burial rites, and observance of dietary laws (mainly avoiding pork), lighting of Sabbath candles and observance of the central Jewish holidays (mainly Pessah and Yom Kippur).

Yahadut
the Orthodoxy to replace the biblical term *People of Israel*. It was used for Zionism by claiming that the Torah will endure without Zionism, but the secular State of Israel will not persevere without the Torah. The aphorism used by the ultra-Orthodoxy during the 1996 Knesset elections, inherent discord between *Jew and Israeli*

It was not only the political polemic but also the Israeli-Jewish

Orthodox as the leader of the Israeli Left - the enemies of the Torah Jews. Religious coercion, restriction of human rights and cultural censorship amplified the secular--religious discord. The clash between holiness and secularity, religion and state; the sacred language and modern Hebrew; the dichotomy between Jewishness and Israeliness.

Who is a Jew? *Jewishness* is an ambiguous term. The question whether the Jews are a religious community, a tribal aggregation, a nation or a mixture of some of the above, is critical in the Israeli case. The

in fact a Jewish mother? And who is the authority on conversion to both Conservative and Reform conversion, thus undermining Jewish solidarity. Embarrassment grows when an Israeli soldier is killed in service, but is denied Jewish burial for being a son of a Jewish father and a Christian mother, not having converted to Judaism.

Jew is one who perceives himself as such and is considered as such by religious congregation bound by rabbinical law, then the vast majority is excluded from it. If Jewish lineage is cited as a criterion, one must specify who belongs to it, since the Jews are obviously not a homogenous entity. Definition by nationality or by civil criteria excludes the Diaspora Jews. Classifying a Jew as one converted to Judaism is inadequate, as only Orthodox conversion is recognized in Israel, whereas most Diaspora Jews belong to the Reform or the Conservative congregations.

In contrast to these categories, quite a number of non-Jewish immigrants married to Jewish partners (mostly from the former USSR) enjoy the special privileges granted to Jews by the Israeli Law of Return⁵. Further, the Jewishness of the Ethiopian immigrants is challenged. The same applies for quite a number of immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Jewishness is supposedly the unifying factor in Israel, which is per definition a Jewish State. However, the questions, Who is a Jew? What is a Jewish State? What are Jewish obligations?, are under constant discussion.

Being a Jew in Israel is not merely a theological issue but also a pragmatic matter. Jews immigrating to Israel are granted special privileges

citizenship upon entering the Jewish State. There are as well material benefits to support the absorption in the country. Conversely a non-Jew is granted none of the above, and achieves citizenship by naturalization. The question was raised of an offspring of a Jewish mother who had converted

dilemma was settled by a contestable decision of the Supreme Court that denied the Jewishness of a Jew converted to another religion (though, negating the Halakha).

An article written by the Haredi deputy-minister of health Shlomo
nflit between

secular Zionists pav

According to the Proclamation of Independence, Israel is both a
of fact

Orthodox reading - nor is it a liberal democracy according to the common definition of the term. This dilemma results from the symbiosis of religion and state in the Israeli political system. For the sake of unity, Ben-Gurion agreed to a *status quo* between state and religion, marking the guidelines of the involvement of religion in the civil system.

The original status quo arrangement contained four points: (1) Enforcement of the Sabbath and Jewish holidays as national rest days (2) Ensuring Kosher food in public institutions (3) Allowing a separate religious school-system under the auspices of the Ministry of Education (4) Delivery of the matrimony laws to the Orthodox Rabbinate (5) Exemption from military service of Yeshiva (Talmud college) scholars (400 at that time), in order to insure continuity of Jewish traditional life-long learning that was interrupted by the Shoah. Accused of surrendering to the religious lobby, Ben Gurion is clai

The assumption at that time was that the *status quo* is only a provisional agreement. However, the growing Orthodox community has gained an unproportionate impact on Israeli politics. Inasmuch as their vote are crucial for the formation of a government, both Likud and Labor (the central political parties) have become dependent on their support. This situation leads to political and religious blackmail.

Haredis and Religious Zionists

The rapidly growing Ashkenazi, Yiddish-speaking ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) community, is divided among a number of rabbinical courts. In their eyes, the State of Israel is meaningless, as it is not rooted on the Halakha and did not result from a messianic phenomenon. The Haredis, isolated in their Ghettos and their separate educational system, and

discernable by their dress and customs, are engaged in life-long learning of the Torah.

Offering a cultural alternative to Zionism, the Haredis refrain from the prayer customary in Israeli synagogue service for the well-being of the State of Israel. They do not respect the Israeli flag or sing the national anthem, and refuse to serve in the Israeli army. Beset by material difficulties, they have decided after long hesitation to become part of the Knesset and the government, thereby accepting the non-Kosher state as an inevitable evil. Participation in the government grants them a good slice of the national pie needed for their maintenance, thus enabling them to enjoy both worlds. Only one ultra-Orthodox section, the Neturei Karta (City Guardians), keeps entirely apart from the Israeli establishment.

The exemption of some 30,000 Yeshiva students from military service (compared with some 400 exempted by Ben Gurion in 1948), and their continued subsidization by the Israeli taxpayers, deviates from all objective standards. Some 60 product. Being engaged full-time in Talmud studies and the fathers of families mak assistance.

As they are vital to government formation by either the Labor or the anti-measure to increasing pressure to join the Israeli military, the aged Haredi authority Rabbi Menachem Shach, life.

The fundamentalist religious Zionists and the anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox are united by their antagonism to the Left. While the Haredis

Kingdom, to be removed with the coming of the Messiah. While the

Haredis want to lead the Jews back to the Ghettos, subordinated to the Sanhedrin (a Talmudic assembly, serving as a religious Supreme Court and legislator), the fundamental religious Zionists endeavor to reestablish the

The Haredis prefer the Zionist rightwing respecting Jewish tradition,

with members of the National Religious Party (NRP). In spite of having walked a separate route for a long time, and having been historic partners of the Labor, the NRP cam closer to the Haredis and become more and more dependent on their Rabbis. Parallely the Haredis turned into extreme chauvinists. Both assemblages regard themselves as the exclusive custodians of Eretz Israel, and guardians of Israeli Jewishness.

As a political veto group, the Orthodox establishment has gained a monopoly over Jewish everyday life, in addition to its critical influence on Israeli foreign policy. The Orthodox Rabbinical Courts decide who is a Jew, perform marriage, divorce and burial rituals, impose dietary laws, forbid motor traffic and commerce on the Sabbath, and accord women an inferior status. They wield their power over non-submissive clients. The paradox lies in the fact that the Orthodox question the very legitimacy of the secular democracy that empowers its monopoly. Thus, the request for separation between state and religion is often raised.

Politics, Religion and Messianic Fundamentalism

Religion and politics are intertwined in the Israeli ruling system, without distinction between the heavenly and the earthly. This became evident after the decisive Israeli victory over the Arabs in the 1967 war. The ingathering of the People of Israel in the Land of Israel and even more so - the return of the land to its people, were considered the fulfillment of the Hebrew prophecies. Some messianic lunatics, hearing the footsteps of the redeemer, were convinced that the Jewish rule over the whole Land of Israel

was an irreversible reality having both a physical and a metaphysical dimension.

After the unification of Jerusalem in 1967, religious Zionism was transmuted into a Zionist religion. With the conquest of the biblical heartland (Judea and Samaria), these patriots announced that the messianic

and now. As in the time of Joshua, the earthly event had a heavenly dimension (see Joshua 10:12-13). Although employing the classical Zionist lexicon, and mainly security arguments, their point of departure of the messianic Zionists is a mystical one.

As early as 1968, Rabbi Haddaya proclaimed the sanctity of the new liberated territories from the *sitra-ahara*

belongs to the kingdom of the sacred, we are commanded never ever to interpret the political occurrences as a reflection of a heavenly phenomenon, they do

unsuccessful attempt to blow up the al-Aqsa Mosque in order to accelerate the coming of the Messiah is just an example of the disastrous potential of

dance.

the traditional sequence of the Jewish credo: Torah, People, Land. By placing the integrity of Eretz Israel before the well being of the People of Israel, they violated the categorical biblical priority of the supremacy of human life (*pikuah nefesh*).

The unification of Jerusalem with the Temple Mount in its center, the liberation of the biblical heartland, the occupation of the Sinai peninsula and the Golan Heights, were all seen as miracles. Settlement of Judea and

Samaria became a sacred task for the Gush Emunim (Faithful Bloc) idealists. The settlement comprising some 160,000 inhabitants. Kiryat Arba, an urban center near settlement has become the stronghold of the Greater Israel movement, serving as a center for religious zealots.

Gush Emunim loyalists, recognizable by their knitted skullcaps and sub-machine guns, embody a political doctrine embedded in Zionism. Their ideology includes a radical agenda expressed in messianic terms, utilizing Zionism as a medium. They differentiate between the historical sequence and the heavenly timetable, and therefore, the State of Israel is but an outer shell of the metaphysical Eretz Israel.

Not only religious eccentric Jews but also sober Israelis became affected by the dramatic political events. Even a secular writer like Aharon Megged wrote in the wake of the 1967 the land of our fathers. Not far from the present Arab City Jenin, Joseph and his brothers drove their cattle. In the vicinity of Ramallah, Jacob saw the ladder in his dream. Anatot is the birthplace of the Prophet Jeremiah,

The unexpected 1973 Yom Kippur War, existence, returned the high expectations back to realistic proportion. The retreat from the Sinai Peninsula in 1982 and from Gaza and Jericho in 1993, followed by the 1997 Israeli retreat from Hebron, changed the political realities. Religious mystics, yet, interpret calamities as pre-messianic tribulations. Gush Emunim members are convinced that the surrender of parts of Israel to the Arabs is not only forbidden by the Torah but will

The theological meaning of the 1967 War and its ramifications became a bone of contention within the Orthodox community. The

followers of the moderate religious stream (Oz ve-Shalom and Meimad) criticize the messianic notion of Gush Emunim, without abandoning their faith in the Messiah and the Halakha. They presume that the creation of the Jewish State and the victory of 1967 were political rather than messianic events. Alarmed by the dangers of a totalitarian regime, they argue that the mystification of the political arena is opposed to the universal ethos of Judaism, which calls for a peaceful coexistence with the Palestinians.

independent religious school system; a university of their own (Bar Ilan); a separate Kibbutz stream, and a network of Yeshivas (Talmud schools). The National Religious Party which stands behind the wide-spread Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, was even granted a separate unit in the Israeli military (Yeshivot Hesder), linking Talmud studies with army

Ashkenazis and Orientals and Other Categories

Cultural diversity plays an important role in Israeli politics. About half of the Israeli Jews are of Asian-African origin, called Mizrahis (Orientals), or Sephardis (a term that earlier referred to Jews of Spanish descent). Following the mass-immigration from Muslim countries, Israel became influenced by the Oriental mentality, which rejects the Western traits of the dominant Ashkenazis. The Mizrahis come from various cultural backgrounds not having undergone the industrial revolution and the enlightenment movement and luckily have also not experience the horrors of the Holocaust. The different historical settings of the two communities were inevitably associated with a cultural clash.⁸

The Wadi Salib riots in Haifa (1979
1989 exposed the intrinsic strains in the multicultural Israeli society. The uprising of the Yemenite Jews against the

Ashkenazi elite over the alleged kidnapping of their small children when they first came to the Jewish State, revealed yet another facet of the ethnic tensions. While the chaotic circumstances in the newborn Jewish State were apparently responsible for their tragedy, the Yemenites still accuse the Ashkenazis of a conspiracy.

The rigid melting-pot policy of the Zionist pioneers became a source of endless friction. Their dogmatism was a product of their own experience of leaving their homes and birthplaces and settling in a hostile surrounding. Being persuaded Zionists, they made every effort to impose their ideals on the newcomers and to pattern their children in the image of the Zionist Sabra.

Newcomers were usually considered as clay in the hands of the old

like sheep led to the slaughter. The pedantic Jews coming from Germany (Yekkes) were ridiculed by their Polish brethren. However, the immigrants from Asian and African countries, unfamiliar with Western culture, encountered the greatest difficulties. Their settlement

reception of the Mizrahis in the Jewish State.

One cannot accuse the ruling Labor party of mistreating the Oriental immigrants. In the face of the heterogeneous mass-immigration, which threatened the national cohesiveness, the need for a common denominator was inevitable. One must keep in mind that the melting-pot policy was applied equally to the Yiddish speaking Holocaust survivors as to the Mizrahis. Further, the old-timers did not demand from others what they would not do themselves, in their attempt to generate a New Jew. For the traditional family-centered Mizrahi Jews, however, the price for being accepted in the Israeli society was too high. The pressure to conform to the

prevalent modern culture of the Ashkenazis was taken as condescension,

In this context, one must remember the critical conditions of the Jewish community in the newborn state. Still licking their wounds from the bloody 1948 War of Independence, they were challenged by an unselective mass immigration. Despite insufficient resources and lack of an appropriate infrastructure, the old-timers accepted the empty-handed immigrants with open hearts. Within a short period - between mid-May 1948 and December 1951 - the Zionist forerunners, numbering not more than 600,000, absorbed about 800,000 Jewish refugees from Arab countries in addition to 687,000 displaced Jews from post-Nazi Europe. They may have patronized the new immigrants, but the old guard did everything in their power to assist in the integration of the newcomers - many of them physically and mentally broken.

Yet, the Zionist vanguard tends to deny the fact that the reception of the immigrants from Asia and Africa was not motivated by loving-kindness. In the first years of the State of Israel, the small Israeli community badly needed a Jewish population influx in order to settle the territories occupied in the 1948 war. As the anticipated wave of immigration from Western countries did not arrive, the Israelis were content with the presence of the Oriental new-comers. Nevertheless the contribution of the latter for building up the country and protecting the newborn Jewish State was not fully acknowledged.

The Rise of Shas

The introduction of a new electoral system in September 1997 (direct election of the Prime Minister) divided Israel into a mosaic whose pieces do not match. The political arena fragmented into pressure groups, cultural enclaves and political lobbies. The two major parties (Labor and Likud) lost power to new splinter groups and to the growing Shas party.

The Shas movement represented a cultural-religious revival of the Moroccan proletariat. The Sephardi uprising against the Ashkenazi supremacy was already apparent in the 1977 Knesset elections that brought four-year interval (1992-1996) of Labor domination, the Right represented by Benjamin Netanyahu

The impressive political achievement of Shas - the third largest Israeli society. Clamoring for their lost legacy, Shas accuses the Ashkenazi elite of economic and cultural discrimination, demanding material and

concentrated on Talmud studies, neglecting conceptual learning and practical instruction. Its tribal

Courted by both the Likud and the Labor, Shas was allocated substantial government funds and invest them in cultural, educational and political projects that enhance their political impact. Rabbi Ovadia Yoseph, the spiritual leader of Shas, and the clever poli have turned Shas into a highly successful movement. The recruitment of the aged Cabalist Rabbi Kadouri, highly respected among the Sephardi community for his mystical powers, illustrates the political culture of Shas. Anti-Ashkenazi rhetoric proves to be one of its most effective political weapon.

succeeded in gaining an impressive position in the Israeli society. Although they hold major national positions and control many economic syndicates, they are still obsessed with the Ashkenazi elite. The Israeli Supreme Court is the main aim of their assaults. A statement made by a

Ashkenazis are the judges and the Sephardis are the convicted reflects the

being prosecuted for criminal acts, and accuse the courts of racism.

Cultural background, level of educational, high birthrates, low income per capita, religiosity and political preference have been proven to be interdependent. The more privileged Israelis tend to vote for the Left-wing, while the disadvantaged Orientals tend to support the Right populist Likud. The 1998 elections to Israeli local councils have shown that the Mizrahis, like the Arabs, are actually tribal-oriented.

The influx of Palestinian workers after 1967, in addition to about a quarter-million foreign workers, has improved the social status of the Orientals. While no longer engaged in low status level occupations, the number of unskilled Mizrahis with large families is still high. Whereas their accomplishment in the political domain is impressive (more than half of the seats in the cabinet), their lower educational level leads to regression in other realms.

One must yet emphasize that the Sephardis, unlike the Ashkenazi Haredis, are integrated in the Israeli society. They represent the more moderate sector of traditional Judaism. In contrast to the Yiddish-speaking Haredis their language is modern Hebrew; participate in football games on the Sabbath, watch TV, take Ashkenazi secular spouses, and most serve in the Israeli Army. Still Shas fundamentalist and tribal traits threatens Israeli democracy.⁹

In addition to cultural dilemmas, Israeli is also challenged by the influx of immigration. The integration of immigrants from quite different cultures such as the Russian and Ethiopian newcomers - is

fraught with both material and psychological obstacles. Lack of housing facilities, unemployment, a language barrier, and loss of status, bring about a culture shock. Frustration grows through lack of sensitivity, xenophobia, paternalism and intolerance on the part of the old-timers, who look down upon the immigrants and stigmatize them as alcoholics, prostitutes and Russian Mafia. In addition to routine problems, quite a number of immigrants from the former USSR suffer from the legal obscurity of their Jewish status.

even greater difficulties in the Israeli labyrinth. They suffer both from prejudice against their color and foreign culture. They have a higher percentage of Aids carriers and tropical diseases, and are not immune to Western diseases. They lack the education requisite to a high-tech society.

The writer Ephraim Kishon aptly expressed the ambivalent attitude of

While migration is described by the Hebrew expression Hagirah, immigration to Israel is named Aliyah (ascension or rise), associated with elevated attributes, like the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Messianic references

sacred dimension Yet, the positive attitude to immigrants bears an instrumental overtone: the wish to keep the demographic balance in the face of the rapid growth of the Israeli Arab population.

Left and Right

Two different political cultures prevailed in Zionism: one advocating Zionist consensus, the other opposing pluralistic frameworks. The first was

party from the Zionist Organization broke the Zionist ranks. The two tendencies serve as a bone of contention in Zionism to this day. Beginning with the pre-State period, through the creation of Israel and till 1977, the Labor movement controlled almost all dominions of life and national resources, while the Right Revisionists were. Nonetheless, three aims were common to all Zionist currents: security, state-building and Jewish immigration to Palestine.

These political currents differed in two critical aspects. The Labor held a socialistic credo, and espoused a pragmatic step-by-step policy. Conversely, the Revisionists were tough nationalists, with fascistic overtones. The predominant Labor movement amenable to political compromise made every effort to restrain the Revisionist illusions of establishing a Jewish State on both sides of the Jordan river via spectacular actions. The Revisionist Etzel underground that withdrew from the Hagana (the Zionist defense organization) terrorized the Arabs as a reprisal for their hostilities, and attacked the British Mandatory forces in an effort to drive them out of the country. Henceforth, their followers (present-day Likud) take credit for the withdrawal of the British forces from Palestine. To this very day, Israel is divided along the same lines.

The transformation of the Israeli political structure followed four stages: (1) Labor hegemony from 1948 until 1977 (2) 1977-1992 the Likud, enhanced by the aftermath of the catastrophic Yom-Kippur war. (3) 1992-1996 the Revisionist Etzel underground, epitomized by the Oslo Peace Accord; (4) The 1996 elections, returning the Likud to government. The decline of the Labor party was the consequence of mass-immigration that transformed the formerly egalitarian Yishuv (the pre-Israeli community in Palestine) into two camps: the established elite and the uprooted newcomers.

As the State assumed national responsibilities, voluntarism declined and the egalitarian pathos of the Labor (asceticism, pioneering and social

justice) became obsolete. While pretending to uphold the egalitarian socialist ideology, Mapai preferred the narrow Zionist interests over solidarity with the Arab proletariat. They were in fact far removed from the classical left, representing the more established sector of the Jewish community.

1967 transformed the formerly ascetic community into a hedonistic society. Low-cost Arab labor turned the former idealists into arrogant employers. The influx of approximately 250,000 foreign workers engaged in unskilled labor, regardless to unemployment, indicates the dramatic change that had taken place in Israel.

Melting-Pot and Pluralism

Despite enclaves of alienation, the existence of an integrative Israeli society is still an irrefutable reality. Those de
listen to the Hebrew slang of the youngsters in their pubs, and observe the Israeli leisure pattern, influenced by the Oriental milieu and the global village. A reliable indicator of Israeli identity is the prevalent adoption of Hebrew names replacing the Diaspora names. The same applies for the growing number of mixed Mizrahi/Ashkenazi marriages (today 39%).

Israeli identity is the product of historical, religious, cultural and political realities. It is rooted in memories of heroism, persecution and common expectations. The greatest binding agent is the Holocaust trauma, which unites the Jewish people more than half a century after the calamitous event. Another powerful cement of the Israeli society is the Army, the national educational system and the Hebrew language.

Jewish solidarity was enhanced to a large degree throughout the generations by the image of the Goyyim (Gentiles). Jewish children learn
our

Temple; Purim - with the Persians who wanted to eradicate the Jews; Passover is linked with the liberation of Israel from Egyptian slavery; the Ninth of Av is the date of the destruction of the two Temples. Holocaust-Day marks the memory of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis, and wanted to prevent the establishment of the Jewish State.

In view of the linguistic reality of a Tower of Babel society, the renaissance of a common language was undoubtedly the greatest Zionist achievement. The revival of the ancient biblical language and its adaptation to modern conditions was certainly an unprecedented historical phenomenon. The scholar of Semitic languages, Theodor Noldege became a popular language in Palestine, has still less prospect of realization than the vision of a resorted Jewish

The transformation of the sacred Hebrew tongue (in its Sephardi pronunciation) into a modern language was an impetus for cultural renewal rather than a means for preservation of Jewish tradition. This is the reason for the H prediction concerning the renaissance of the biblical Hebrew, it has become the binding agent par excellence of the Israeli society - the vehicle of national communication from the lowest level of popular slang to the highest level of creativity.

By far the most effective originate of national cohesion is the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Almost every Jew (man and woman) enters compulsory army service at the age of eighteen. IDF offers an exceptional opportunity for group solidarity, by sharing responsibility in an extremely demanding setting. Reserve duty until the age of 45 and occasional reunions enhance group adherence. Service in IDF, with its unique jargon and codes, serves as an entrance ticket to the Israeli society. The exclusion

of the Haredis and the Arabs (except the Druze) from military service is counter-productive in this sense.

The contribution of the national education system to the making of the Israeli society cannot be overestimated. The Ulpan (framework for intensive Hebrew studies) is one of the most important institutions for the integration of adult newcomers, offering a five-month course with a living-in option for the whole family. It acquaints its partakers with the Israeli

and other Jewish books.

marginal parties: the Right Revisionists, the Sephardis and the Haredis. The Likud government uses the pretext of the modern multi-cultural theory, which stands in contrast to the melting-pot notion. The truth is, however, that in the Israeli case the trend of opposing social integration in favor of multiculturalism and pluralism stems from the disintegration of the Israeli society.

Mythology and History

To whom does the Holy Land belong? Tracing the unfolding of political ethics in the Middle- East is an exciting adventure. In the beginning was the land; the land was unsettled. In due time, it was claimed by its immediate neighbors. Later, the land was liberated from its landlords by waves of outsiders, and passed from father to son. Ultimately, divine authorities promised the Promised Land to both sons of Abraham - Isaac and Ishmael.

The Israeli-Palestinian confrontation is rooted in the land of Canaan and the contrasting versions about its history, as told by its main actors.

...ile projecting the negative characteristics upon the adversaries. In the Middle East, amnesia is preferable to memory, as memory is the friend of war. Sanity is a scare article in the Middle East, replaced by emotions. The conversion of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute into a heavenly Muslim-Jewish war endows the political conflict with a mythological dimension. The trouble is that while a political confrontation is negotiable, otherworldly disputes cannot be solved by ordinary measures.

The two sides offer incompatible accounts of the history of the biblical land, in which reality, wishful thinking and imagination are intermingled. When facts do not fit expectations, they are replaced by myths denying those of the adversary. Truth is often the first victim of historical disputes, while misinformation, erroneous statistics, and fallacious accounts are their tools.

The essence of the Hebrew myth - which every Jewish child imbibes

peo¹¹ The Zionist venture is described in the narrative of the homeless Jews returning to the deserted land after two thousand years of exile. They did not expropriate the land from the scattered Bedouin tribes, but redeemed it from its wilderness. The Zionist idealists planted trees in the wasteland, paved roads in the desert and struggled against the forces of nature, making the wilderness bloom and draining the malaria-ridden swamps. While recollecting the Zionist endeavors, they blot out of their memory the blossoming Arab olive groves and vineyards.

The Zionists healed the ecological damage caused by the Bedouin herds of goats which decimated the natural forest, causing destruction of

the ancient terraces. The fertile soil was washed down to the sea, exposing the rocky slopes of the hills, blocking the riverbeds and turning the coastal plain into a malignant swamp.

The Zionists deny the existence of two parallel national movements that inevitably led to an armed struggle. According to them, there is a faultless partner (the Jews), and a guilty one (the Arabs). The Israelis view

the same language, belonging to the same culture and following same

should leave the Jewish State and settle in one of the two dozen Arab states, where they rightly belong. The Jews are convinced that the Arabs understand only one language - that of power; that their hostility against

irrefutable power they will attempt time and again to destroy what they

Prime Minister, presented Arab-Jewish

ng the

Jewish victims).

In Jewish eyes the Arabs are not freedom fighters, as they would like to be regarded, but cruel terrorists. Gaining the upper hand, the Arabs would not only wipe out the Jewish State but massacre all the Jews; leaving no refugee problem. The Jewish-Arab conflict is reduced to bipolar idioms

of Israel with a metaphysical dimension.

The image of the Arabs varied according to different standpoints. The Zionist pioneers looked upon the Arabs with both fear and admiration. In their eyes, the Bedouins riding on their horses with gun in hand were the

model. However, in view of Palestinian atrocities, the romantic Arab turned into a demonic creature arousing nightmares. Compassionate of the defeated Arabs, the more sensitive Jews became guilt-ridden.

formation of non-verbal communication between an Israeli guard and a tongue-cut Arab, against the background of a forest planted by the Jewish National Fund on the ruins of a deserted Arab village. The story reaches its climax when the Arab sets the forest on fire under the eyes of the Jewish watchman, who does not try to hinder the disaster, thus silently cooperating with the silent Arab. The picture depicts the Jewish tendency towards self-destruction.

Palestinian Counter-Mythology

Challenged by the Zionist myth, the native Arabs have evolved a counter-mythology. They claim that they are the indigenous inhabitants of Palestine, having lived here from time immemorial, each man under his vine

and olive. Palestine became estates of bliss and well-being. The men and women who had been taken to the road from Jaffa and Haifa in 1948 had turned these sites into places of splendor, where

land, the Arab peasants do not recall their reliance on heavenly grace for rain, and their suffering from treacherous tropical diseases which were cured only with the coming of the Zionists.

A letter written by Winston Churchill in 1922 for the inauguration of an electric power-station constructed by the Jews on the Jordan river,

believe in such stories? Even in a thousand years the Arabs will not take efficient steps to irrigate and electrify Palestine. They will be content to remain a handful of people, dreaming, living in a scorched and arid land, letting the Jordan waters continue to stream without restraint to the Dead their Israeli neighbors-enemies more than from their Arab friends.

The Arabs claim that they are the direct descendants of the pre-Israeli Canaanites. Trying to fortify their Palestinian image, they also maintain that they are the offspring of the Philistines (an Occidental people that settled in biblical times in the coastal plain), whose name they have adopted¹². Palestinian homeland, built by our ancestors - the Jebusites and the Canaan in the 7th century, which was the beginning of Arab history in this land, precludes the feasibility of an uninterrupted Arab presence; while their assertion of being the descendants of the Philistines is historically absurd.

The biblical narrative about the patriarch Abraham plays a central role in both Jewish and Muslim traditions, thus turning the national conflict into a holy war. The Muslims refer to the Koran that attests that Ab

was the rightful heir of the patriarch. Furthermore, the Koran states that:

60). The Muslims deny Jewish assertions for Palestine; but even if it were so, the statute of limitations would have rendered it invalid.

The Palestinians argue that the Jews are not a genuine people but a motley crowd; that the biblical drama happened in Yemen, and that the

Ashkenazis are descendants of the Khasaries - a people of the Volga region who converted to Judaism in the 8th century. Even the Wailing Wall, a historical remnant of the Second Temple and the most cherished Jewish site, was integrated into Muslim tradition. They point to it as the site where the Prophet Mohammad ties his holy steed al-Buraq, prior his ascendance to heaven from al-Aqsa (the most distant site of the Temple Mount). Disputing Jewish history in Palestine the Arabs ignore Hebrew presence in the land of Canaan from the second millennium BC until the expulsion of the Jews by the Romans in 135 CE, after the Bar Kohba revolt (not to mention the even longer history of the Hebrews).

The Arabs draw a single-dimensional image of Israel, as a spearhead of imperialism stuck in the body of the Palestinians. They remember quite well Jewish brutalities committed upon the Arabs, but have no memory of Arab savagery afflicted upon the Jews - like the ugly massacre of the Jewish Haredi community in Hebron in 1929 (twenty years before the Palestinian refugee tragedy arose). The Arabs argue that their suffering derives from colonialism, Zionist intrigues, Christian guilt-feelings and Israeli expansionism. They deny the fact that they and not the Israelis initiated the 1948 and the 1967 wars, both resulting in the extension of

The Muslim Arabs remember the cordial brotherhood that prevailed life under the crescent was better than that under the cross. In medieval the assertions of exemplary tolerance of the Muslims toward the Jews are taken out of proportion. The Muslims regarded the Jews, like the status of a protected people (dhimmis) - preferred to the infidels on whom Islam was enforced by the sword. The dhimmis gained security and freedom in exchange for ransom and loyalty. However, they were required

to adjust to the Muslim rules of the game, and not raise their heads over the Muslims.

The Palestinians admit that the Jews suffered at the hand of the Nazis, but maintain that they are not obliged to pay the price for the iniquity of others. History tells us that the Arabs not only followed the Shoah with great satisfaction, but in fact cooperated with the Nazis in their

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Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, went so far as to mobilize Muslim troops in Bosnia to support the Nazi project of annihilation of the Jewish people.

therefore, quite absurd.

The Jews, on their part, disregard the predominant Arab presence in Palestine throughout the centuries, overlooking the Arab towns and villages spread over the country. According to British statistics, the population of Palestine in 1922 was around 750,000: 88% Muslims and Christians, and only 12% Jews. The Jews remember quite well the Palestinian atrocities inflicted upon them, but tend to forget the cruel deeds they carried out against the Arabs. The Jewish assertion of being clean-

The Israelis played a major role in the Palestinian refugee catastrophe in 1948, when some 750,000 Palestinians were displaced from their land. However, the refugee misery was also triggered by the Arab leaders, who called upon their brethren to leave Palestine until the Arab liberation of Palestine. First to escape were the Arab leadership. This flight was enhanced by atrocities committed by the Etzel (the revisionist underground organization) against the Deir Yasin villagers. Most Palestinians were, however, driven out from the country by the Israeli army during the 1948 war, and even after the war, when the Israeli policymakers were faced with

The accusation that the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homes was part of a prior Zionist master plan is, nonetheless, incorrect. This becomes evident from the fact that Israeli army commanders took no central directive. Around 160,000 Arabs (by now nearly a million) were permitted to stay in the country.¹⁴ Yet many Israelis would probably not the refugee misfortune cannot be restricted.

Most annoying is the analogy made by the Palestinians, equating the Palestinian Nakba with the Shoah. The six million Jews exterminated by the Nazis did certainly not threaten the existence of the German people, in contrast to the Arabs who launched a war of annihilation against the Jews. Despite inevitable acts of cruelty on both sides, the Jews were not trying to implement a policy of genocide against the Arabs. In contrast, the Arabs called to drive the Jews into the sea.

The misery of the Arabs in exile, escaping from their homes or forced to leave their land, painful as it unquestionably is, can in no way be weighed against the industrialized gassing and incineration of millions of Jews in the Nazi death camps. The horrifying Jewish disaster does not, however, reduce the affliction of the Palestinians, nor does it permit the Israelis to disregard the Palestinian tragedy.

The destruction of some 400 Arab villages by the Israelis; Baruch our dozen Muslim prayers in the Hebron Abraham mosque; the destruction of the Jewish quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem, and the sacrilege of the ancient Jewish cemetery on Mount Olives by the Jordanians; the merciless murder of innocent Jews on the streets of Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv, the cynical use of school children as hostages. This is but a partial list of barbarism on both sides.

Both parties do not hesitate to harness their misery in the service of propaganda: the Jews the Holocaust and the Arabs the refugee tragedy. Thus, Golda Meir not only blamed the Arabs for carrying out terror activities against the Jews, but also held them responsible for the crimes of Jews against the Palestinians (claiming that the Jews were forced to defend themselves). The Arabs are equally cynical, imposing on Israeli shoulders the entire blame for the Palestinian catastrophe, but ignoring their own contribution to the refugee disaster. They deny the fact that the Palestinian disaster initially resulted from their own failure to win the war of annihilation against the Zionists, commercializing it for propaganda purposes. Arab hypocrisy is apparent foremost in the fifty-year-old refugee misery, that could have been resolved long ago by the Arab oil sheiks.

Israeli Arabs versus Palestinian Israelis

The claim of the existence of a Palestinian nation in a stateless Levant prior the post World War I, is unacceptable. The 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement between Britain and France divided the Middle East into areas of colonial influence. The transformation of the Levant, formerly under Ottoman rule, into independent states (Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Saudia Arabia) occurred within a period of less than thirty years. Formerly, no specific cultural, ethnic, or religious features distinguished the Arabs of Palestine from the rest of the Arab World, aside from local loyalties and quarrels, like those between the inhabitants of Hebron and Nablus, or between dominating Arab families and tribes.

The lack of a perceptible Palestinian nationalism as manifested after *Palestinians*, adopted by the native Arabs, formerly included all citizens of mandatory Palestine (Muslims, Jews

shortly before the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza-Strip in 1967 (occupied by Jordan and Egypt respectively since 1948).

Palestinian national awareness would never have emerged without the establishment of the Jewish State, while Jordan and Lebanon might have been swallowed by their neighbors. It is a historic irony that the Zionist enterprise was successful to such a degree that it generated two national movements instead of one. This does not mean that the Arabs of Palestine, like those elsewhere, did not want to throw off the Ottoman yoke,

The Arab rebellion against the foreign bodies in Palestine as early as 1921 and 1929 and during the 1936-1939 (quamiyye) uprising than a national (watanniye) struggle.

Palestinian nationalism in the modern sense of the term started after the 1948 war between Israel and the Arabs, and gained momentum as a result of the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza-Strip. Palestinian patriotism reached its peak with the outbreak of the Intifada in December 1989. The uprising against Israeli occupation became the watershed of Palestinian nationalism.

Palestinian nationalism was forged from the refugee disaster and accelerated by the disgraceful reception by their Arab brethren in the 1967),

return! We will come back to our land walking there barefoot. We shall remove our shoes and sense the holiness of the soil under our feet. We will relax

revenge is even sweeter. We shall enter their lairs in Tel-Aviv and slaughter them with our axes, our fingernails and our teeth, chanting the during the wars).

After the 1948 war, some 160,000 Arabs stayed inside the borders of Israel, lacking political and intellectual leadership. Between 1949 and 1966 a harsh military rule was imposed upon the Arab inhabitants, keeping them isolated from the Israeli society. In 1967 they were formally granted civil rights in accordance with the Proclamation of Independence.

During the five decades of have undergone a radical social and cultural conversion. They became bilingual and bicultural, advancing in both the educational level and in their standard of living. Accepting the modern Israeli society as a reference-group, the Israeli Arabs have a locally trained professional and intellectual Israelis and the emotional appeal inherent in Islam.

Despite the modernization process of the Israeli Arab citizens, traditional practices are still dominant. The extended family structure (*hamulah*) is the bedrock of solidarity and identity. The Arab community is marked by the inferior status of women and the high value accorded to honor. Women suspected of desecrating family honor via extra-marital relations are often put to death. The degree of modernity varies between (1) rural, urban and Bedouin Arabs (2) Muslims, Druze and Christians and (3) the older and younger generation. The parameter of modernity corresponds to the educational level, religiosity, birthrate, and social mobility.

The vast majority of Israeli Arabs (numbering today one million) are Muslims of the Sunni branch of Islam. They include urban dwellers, villagers and Bedouins concentrated Galilee, in the Negev (Southern part of the country) and in the Triangle (a district in the center of Israel). The local Muslims have been exposed to Islamic fundamentalism, reinforced by Palestinian nationalism. The Bedouins are in a phase of transition from a nomadic to a settled lifestyle The Christians with their special culture, the

Druze with their unique faith, the non-Arab Muslim Circassians and the

The small Christian community in the Holy Land is splintered into a great number of churches. Over 80% of the Christians adhere to the eastern churches. The largest is the Greek Orthodox church, then the Latin, Greek Orthodox, Syriac, Armenian, Coptic and Ethiopian. Among the Protestant churches, the largest is the Anglican, followed by the Lutheran.

The Israeli-Arab conflict has placed the Christian Arabs between hammer and anvil. In Israel they are suspected of disloyalty, while the Muslims view them as an alien body. The Christian Arab citizens of Israel

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their future status as a minority in a Muslim Palestine.

Afraid of the growing Muslim power and repelled by Jewish xenophobia, the Christian Arabs became the heralds of Arabs nationalism.¹⁵ Being obliged to demonstrate their loyalty to the Palestinian cause, they may be found leading the most extreme terrorist organizations - like that of George Habash. As Christians, they are suitable candidates for countering the positive attitude of the post-Holocaust Church toward Israel. Under the

Jewish people to the Biblical Land and the universal contribution of the Jews to humanity - the Book of Books.¹⁰

Israeli policy divides the Arabs into sup-groups, according to the Christian Arabs, Bedouins, Druze, etc. Those serving in the Israeli military (mainly the Druze) are granted special privileges, but not sufficient for bolstering their Israeli identity.

reinforce the Israeli identity of the Arabs was hindered by the viability. The fact that the Arab minority does not differentiate between Jews, Israelis and Zionists (like the Jews who designate the non-Jews - whether Moslem, Chr identity dilemma. This paradox is expressed in the Israeli identity document, in which nationality is defined by religion.

Political realities have forced the Arab minority to search for pragmatic ways to overcome the discord resulting from two clashing identities - the intrinsic Palestinian and the pragmatic Israeli. As Israel could not be defeated, most Arabs bound their fate with the Jewish State. Their contribution to the State of Israeli cannot be overlooked, as they are represented in all realms of life: the labor market, economic projects, social services, professional occupations, the academy and Israeli political life.

The identification of the Israeli-Arabs with the Jewish State is pro

as the Arabs maintain. Thus, the collective civil rights granted to the Arabs are inferior to those of the Jewish community. As the attainment of the Zionist goals carries first priority, violations against Arab rights are not considered a breach of the basic civil rights. While discrimination against individual Arabs is often condemned as an offense, facilitation of the

The worst Israeli transgression is the confiscation of the meager reserves of Arab land, already mostly expropriated in 1948. The discrimination of the Arabs may be illustrated by the fact that almost no

no Arab group was allowed to resettle in its abandoned village. Unequal distribution of national resources and the exclusion of the Arabs from national consensus only enhance their sense of marginality and alienation.

The Israeli Arabs allegiance to Israel is questioned and their Palestinian identity is denied by the claim that the so-called Palestinians are

zhak

Rabin acknowledged the existence of a Palestinian people and its right for self-determination.

With the emergence of Israel, the local Arabs were thrown into a difficult dilemma: being Israeli citizens but supporting the Palestinian cause. They were thus compelled to reconcile their Palestinian sentiments with the demand to be loyal to their state. In view of their deprivation, their Palestinian identity takes the upper hand. They demand equal rights as Israeli citizens, yet when visiting in Arab country they present themselves since 1948 (an Israeli Arab delegation to Syria in August 1997 did just this).

The identity structure of the Israeli Arabs accommodates a number of dynamic components, resulting foremost from the Palestinian trauma: a firm Palestinian commitment, a pan-Arab identity and cultural/religious Islamic loyalty. However, the extended family (Hamula) that grants its members unconditional protection still occupies a cardinal place in the collective identity. To this must be added a pragmatic Israeli attachment, based on vested interests in the Jewish State, and the modern cultural components internalized by the Arab citizens of Israel.

The complex identity structure of the Israeli Arabs was manifested after the 1967 war that enabled them to renew contact with their families

across the frontiers. It became apparent that Palestinian loyalty gained the upper hand over Israeli allegiance. They now represent themselves in the

are exposed to change through new political realities (compare the identity transformation of the former citizens of the German Democratic Republic, after the unification of Germany).

Reconciliation between Jew and Arab is undermined not only by the tragic history of the two peoples but also by the Jewish character of Israel. The Arabs feel that insofar as Israel will remain a Jewish State they will be incapable of identifying with it. This explains the repeated demand to transpose the Jewish State into a state of all its citizens. The eradication of the Jewish traits of Israel will certainly be rejected by the Jewish majority, pointing toward the two dozen Arab states surrounding Israel, which will certainly not forfeit their Muslim and Arab nature.

agreeing with the 1948 UN partition plan, stands in contrast with their wish to delete Jewish identity marks from the State of Israel. This demand would be reasonable, if at all, only in the context of a cosmopolitan Middle-East, which is still faraway. The claim that the Jews are but a religious congregation and not a nation and thus not deserving of a state is inapplicable, in view of the totalitarian Arab states based on the *Sharia* (the Muslim law).

The history of Palestinian nationalism is at present an academic issue only, left for scholarly deliberations. While the existence of a Palestinian nation is at present an undeniable fact, the impact of Israel on Israeli-Arab identity is a much-discussed matter. One may assume that inasmuch as the Arabs will be persuaded that Israel is here to stay, and Israel on its part will grant them equal rights and opportunities, their Israeli consciousness will gain strength. The fact that many Arabs prefer Israel to Palestine is not

surprising, as a decent livelihood is at times more important than national sentiments (compare the migration of Russian Jews to post-Shoah Germany).

It is remarkable that in spite of the pressures exerted upon the Israeli Arabs from both sides, the great majority were never disloyal to Israel, despite frustration and resentments. One may predict that even after the emergence of a Palestinian state, most Arabs will choose to continue to live in the State of Israel. This attitude does not only display the affinity of the Arabs to their homes, but also their appreciation of Israeli democracy despite its shortcoming; its progressive welfare services and its quality of life. They hope that the long-awaited peace with their Palestinian people will finally allow them to partake in the Israeli dream.

While the Israeli Arabs clash at times with the authorities, interethnic clashes are quite rare. In spite of the fierce Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the lack of violence between Jewish and Arab civilians is striking. Relations between the two communities even in critical times do not depend on enforcement measures but primarily on the democratic system, channeling disputes into legal frameworks.

In the last analysis, the balance of the double loyalty of the Israeli Arab citizens will only be tested after the emergence of an independent Palestine. One may still predict that the degree of democracy, respect of the minorities and economic wellbeing of Israel will be the main factor of the identity dynamics

Post-Zionism

1967 victory, which made its future more secure, generated a Post-Zionists. Sociologists, and Middle- Eastern scholars took up the dispute. Most of them were already born after 1948, not having experienced

the trauma of the War of Independence. The declassifying of archival material at the end of the 1970s became a fertile hunting ground. Proposing a counter-narrative to the Zionist master-narrative, they caused a stormy public debate. Historian Walter Raleigh remarked that any writer of modern history who treads too closely on the heels of events might get his/her teeth knocked out.

of
Israel, by whitewashing Zionist iniquities. They maintain that the Jewish State was born in sin, dispossessing the Arabs from their homes and building a Jewish State upon the ruins. Admitting the existence of the State of Israel as a *fait-accompli*, they now call for clearing the political stage for

dominance in Palestine, should thus be the first step of post-Zionist Israel.

The New Historians argue that the misuse of the Holocaust for political extortion is one of the greatest Zionist sins. In this context they 1938, reacting to British refusal to permit immigration to Palestine of 10,000 one could rescue a Jewish children in Germany by transferring them to Britain, or only half of them by bringing them to Palestine - I would prefer the second choice, as Zionism is a political movement and not a social

The historian revisionists stereotype Zionism as an oppressive colonialist movement under the guise of a renaissance movement. Claiming that they measure Israel with the same yardstick as any other country, they

side of the stronger army. These anti-Zionist scholars accuse Israel of political intrigues and refusal to reach a fair peace settlement with the

Palestinians. The 1948 generation, remembering the War of Liberation through the scars in their flesh and the memory of their fallen comrades, accuse the revisionist scholars of historical distortion and defamation of the noble Zionist movement.¹⁸

The reliability of the New Historians became questionable by their rather than common sense. They thus placed Israel in the colonialist camp, hostile to the progressive world. Yet, one can hardly believe that the Middle East would be more enlightened without the existence of Israel.

shes, common brutalities and international terror - massacres in Algeria; atrocities in Afghanistan; tyranny in Iran; terror in Egypt and corruption in all Arab countries.

The reports of the historian revisionists of the events that had taken place between 1947 and 1952 became unreliable due to the exclusion the circumstances of those days: the trauma of the Shoah, followed by the

against civilians and their threat to drive the Jews into the sea made the conflict a war to the bitter end. In the face of the allegation of the post-Zionists that the creation of Israel was not worth the Palestinian suffering, one can only wonder whether such an argument is a splendid manifestation of

While European imperialism paved the way for Zionism, the analogy of the Zionist enterprise with colonialism is unacceptable. Zionism was basically a life-rescuing movement - seeking a shelter for the persecuted Jews. Unlike the European colonial powers or the colonialist settlers (such as the Afrikaners), the Zionists did not possess a territorial, political and military home base; nor did they pursue material benefits. Jews immigrated to Palestine because they were oppressed by their Christian hosts and ultimately murdered by the Nazis. They did not favor Palestine by virtue of

advantages such as a broad living space, great fertility, raw materials, water-resources or a pleasant climate - but despite the scarcity of all of these. Of all places on the face of the earth, the Jews chose the Land of the Bible as it was the only place that could awaken their emotions

was far from a Land of Milk and Honey. This sounds like Zionist propaganda, but it is nonetheless true. The malaria-struck Zionists earned their bread by the sweat of their brows, turned the wasteland into an oasis. They planted trees in the desert, drained the malicious swamps, raised the standard of living of all inhabitants and eradicated tropical diseases. The Post Zionists ignore the fact that in the eyes of the Arab world the insignificant Jewish community in Palestine was not a proper negotiation partner. It was not until the striking victory in 1967 that Israel became a legitimate partner in the Middle-East arena.

The results of a hypothetical Arab victory can be guessed by reading the Palestinian National Covenant, issued in November 1968 by the PLO (now null and void). Article 22

Article 20

and religious connections with Palestine are incompatible with the

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the Zionist invasion [the Balfour Declaration in 1917] will be permitted to

Jews not killed in battle or slaughtered will be driven out after an Arab victory. As necessity knows no limits, Zionism was inevitably linked with injustice. Yet, by afflicting upon the transgressed the humanistic imperative.

Israel in Times of Peace

One can hardly foretell the aftermath of an eventual Israeli-Palestinian peace treaty. We may, however, assume that a fair settlement between the two peoples will thoroughly change the prevalent economic, cultural, social and political features of the Middle East. One may also surmise that peace

Orthodox. Peace will primarily affect the nature of the relations within the Israeli society.

Starting with the Ashkenazi-Sephardi dilemma: Despite the tendency of the Mizrahis to look down upon the Arabs, they blame the Ashkenazis for demeaning their cultural legacy, which is essentially Arab. Without denying the historical contribution of Islam to civilization, it is doubtful whether the present Muslim world, ridden as it is with corruption, fundamentalism and dictatorial regimes, deserves special admiration. Idealization of the Levant is after all just a compensation to the supposedly Ashkenazi haughtiness over the Orientals.

The West/East cleft can be lessened by embracing the Mediterranean culture, which brings East and West together. This will prove that Israel does not withdraw from its Middle-East surroundings while not detaching itself from the modern Western world. The informal Mediterranean culture accommodates the impulsive characteristics of the Israelis, as well as the intimate family-oriented Jewish society. Above all, rationality, creativity, scholastic disciplines and high-tech expertise are indispensable for our post-modern society.

There are those who take New York, Paris and London as their cultural model, panic-stricken at the idea of being overrun by Arabs from the neighboring countries who will flock here as tourists and merchants,

indeed an integral part of the Middle East, or just temporary residents living

Jewish intellectual thought, as it agrees with the ideas of the Zionist

pioneers, who regarded the Jewish return to the East as a return to their historical sources.

As for as the messianic settlers: With the withdrawal of the Israeli military from the occupied territories, the following scenario may be predicted. The more pragmatic settlers will return to the pre-1967 borders. The religious hard-liners will remain in their isolated enclaves under Palestinian control, hoping for the restoration of their shattered dream. The

may attempt to enhance the eschatological process by spectacular acts of terror. Facing the overall secularity of Israel, some of the defeated settlers may return to the Haredi Ghettos, or ultimately leave Judaism altogether, searching for another Messiah.

The prospective relations between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority in Israel will be affected by the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement. A fair political solution will remove psychological barriers, dissolve stereotypes and lessen controversy; however, a peace

state, the local Arabs will be relieved from the discord between their natural solidarity with their people and the demand to be loyal of Israel. Coexistence between Jews and Arabs in Israel may, however, be impeded by far-reaching political demands, such as being recognized as a national minority.¹⁹

When peace finally comes the Israeli Arabs, who are at home in both societies may play a cardinal role by bringing Israel and the Middle East closer together. Fluent both in Hebrew and Arabic, they will serve as entrepreneurs, cultural mediators and political advisors. In the absence of a Palestinian issue, they will be capable to concentrate on their own interests:

economic undertakings tourism and cultural relations, and may bring about a regional awareness (like that of the European Community).

The Israeli Arabs, having voted in the past for Zionist parties, will eventually realize their full electoral potential and become a force to be reckoned with between the Labor and the Likud vital to the constitution of Israeli government policy. Two patterns characterized the Arab vote in the past: one utilitarian and the other ideological. While in the past most Arabs voted for Zionist candidates, they are now represented by separate parties. Counting about 20% of Israeli population, they can occupy over 20 out of the 120 Knesset seats. They will yet not be able to force an Israeli government to accept a policy negating national imperatives (e.g., the repeal of the Law of Return); yet they will be able to advance their civil rights, and gain the equality that will contribute to a stable coexistence.

having to spend the great national resources invested today in security means, Israel will not have to rely so heavily on the Jewish world, nor on the Jewish lobby in the U.S., which interferes in Israeli politics. The assimilation process of the Diaspora Jews, the Orthodox witch-hunt against the Conservative and the Reform congregations, rapprochement between Israel and the Arab world, and ultimately the passing away of the last Holocaust survivors - will decrease the one-people ideology. A wave of anti-Semitism will, of course, prevent this scenario.

In times of peace, Israeli priorities will undergo basic changes. Security considerations which today play a central role will be replaced by economic, social and cultural priorities. The current electoral system, encouraging the fragmentation of the political arena, will be modified by new political patterns (like the British or the American model), with two major parties. Following the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the secular political Right-wing and Left-wing, divided today by the Israeli-democratic culture.

The more liberal adherents of the National Religious Party may ultimately join the Zionist mainstream, while the Haredis will exit the political arena altogether. This reality may lead to the cessation of the

separation between Religion and State. The rather high birthrate of the Haredis, the increasing number of repentant and continuous Orthodox immigration may yet hinder this process.

box, and unfinished business between the liberal Israelis and the Orthodox Jews that has been swept under the carpet will rise to the surface. In times of peace, when the Israeli Arabs can no longer be suspected of being a Fifth Column, they will be included in the national consensus. With the emergence of a Palestinian state, relations between Jew and Arab will be

Five decades after the emergence of the State of Israel, the time has come to repair the unessential acts of injustice perpetrated upon the Israeli Arab citizens. (1) Cancellation of the discriminating ethnic laws; (2) encompassing the Arabs in the national consensus ensued with full rights and duties - including participation in national policy-making forums; (3) expansion of the Arab living space; (4) gestures, such as the allowance of the long-suffering Ikrit and Biram villagers to return to their villages, as officially promised time and again in the past. The Israeli Jews must remember that although Israel is a Jewish State, it also houses under its roof its Arab citizens. This house must be therefore be reconstructed or else it will eventually collapse.

Israel will face a stern challenge to preserve the delicate balance that will enable it to pursue its national aims without alienating its Arab citizens. The more openings Israel will offer its non-Jewish citizens in main domains of life, the more it will be able to test their willingness to identify with the

Jewish State. Likewise, the more the Arabs will prove their loyalty to Israel the clearer it will become to what extent Israel is ready to include its minorities in its society.

fifty-year old Jewish State, one can justly claim that Zionism has proved to be an incomparable success story. This is true in spite of all mistakes and wrongs which were made, and the obstacles still ahead. Despite deficiencies in almost all areas, Zionism has accomplished its primary aims. The small Yishuv of just 600,000 in 1948, numbering now six million people, gained the upper hand over the superior Arab armies and has become an undeniable actor in the Middle East.

Israel has become the Middle East Silicon Valley with a per capita income of \$17,000, with the largest number of scientific publications relative to its flourishing culture, science-based industries, modern agronomy and up-ities. Yet, as long as Israel does not reach peace with its neighbors, its future cannot be assured.

The resolution of the century old Jewish-Arab conflict is obviously the greatest challenge for both the Israelis and the Palestinians. Reconciliation between the two bitter foes is of course an extremely difficult task. The tragic fact that the land of the Hebrews became the home of two peoples, each with its own narrative, is a reality we all must live with. Where two existential claims contrast and cannot be resolved by force, there is no way but to reconcile between them. The bloodstained dispute can only be resettled when the Palestinians will understand the irrefutable historical bond of the Jews to the land of Israel, and the

Israelis will acknowledge the deep affinity of the Arabs for the same land, which they name Palestine. Only when the two will be ready to

relinquish part of their past embedded in the beloved country, they will insure a better future for themselves and for their neighbors.

Judaism and Democracy: Incompatible or Complementary

Judaism in the Orthodox version presents an antithesis to humanism: the earthly vs. the heavenly, eternity vs. temporarily; duties vs. rights and faith vs. skepticism. Yet Judaism and democracy are essentially compatible, as the universal Jewish ethos is rooted in liberal values. The creation of Adam in the image of the Creator raises humanity to the apex of the universe; while human ability to differentiate between good and evil makes him/her an autonomic being.

Combining Judaism with democratic principles could offer a suitable framework for the establishment of an enlightened constitution for Israel (if

adopted by the Jewish Sages, supporting the underprivileged and demanding loving kindness, accord with the liberal principals of democracy. Human affection finds its profound expression in the biblical
19:17

shal
10:18).

The humanistic teaching the Sages, based on the Talmudic version, stress that the Torah must be expounded in all its various ways. For that reason, the Talmud points out th

4:2),
Thus, the late rabbis revised the outdated commandments through creative
seventy

There are scholars who maintain that reconciling the Halakha with democracy is not only useless but problematic as well, since it may expose the Halakha to secularization. However, those committed to both the Torah and Zionism search for Halakhic ways for accommodating democracy and

) and other alternatives.

Unlike the Sages who resolved critical issues via Midrashic reading, present-day Rabbis do not update the Halakha even if it is obsolete or transgresses human rights. They neglect the teaching that the Torah was not granted in a clear-cut way, hence demanding adjustment. Gush Emunim Rabbis violate Jewish principles by manipulating the Torah in order to meet their political credo. By granting preference to the holiness of the Land of Israel over the welfare of the people of Israel, they transgress the basic Jewish imperative of the sanctity of a human life (pikuah nefesh).

The question under discussion is in fact a metaphysical one - the origin of authority: whether eternal or temporary. Although concerned with human rights, Halakhic Judaism demands absolute subjection to the heavenly yoke. Thus humanism and Judaism cannot meet, as the former is anthropocentric - based on human rights, while the latter is theocentric - based on the supremacy of the Almighty. The great Jewish scholar Yeshayahu Leibowitz claimed that the gap between Judaism and

God his beloved son, in the second case God sacrifices his own son for humanity.

The contrast between state and religion becomes apparent by the constitution. The open criticism of the religious camp against the Supreme Court, and their repeated demand to replace it with the Rabbinical Court,

continuously by-passed by the Orthodox Rabbinical Court, indicates the priorities of the latter. At each point where democratic laws negate Jewish Law, the latter is preferred. Rabbinical authorities employ pressure upon religious soldiers to refuse military orders to withdraw from Judaea and Samaria, as such commands counter the Torah.

Yitzhak Rabin, who had fought at the frontlines in five wars, lost his life at the hand of a religious fanatic because he even more bravely championed peace. This was an alarming indication of the collision between two political cultures - one based on human autonomy, the other

impassable gap separating a worldly democracy from an otherworldly dominion.

In the West, where Church and State are separate, Orthodox Jews

Orthodox Jews enjoying liberty and equality in Western democracies know quite well that they will be the first victims of a totalitarian regime. They aspire, nevertheless, for a theocracy - thus breaching the democratic principle. In Israel, the Orthodoxy restricts not only the rights of the minorities but also those of the Jewish majority.

With the passage of time, the issue of the relations between state and religion will become weightier: The question is whether Israel can adapt to a world at the threshold of the third millennium without surrendering its

citizenship be defined by civic criteria, according to liberal Western democracies, or will Jewish ethnicity continue to rule? Will the Jewish State be absorbed in the global village; will it turn into a Jewish Ghetto, or will it

deliver a universal message to humanity as bound by the Prophet Micah:

6:8).

The president of the Israeli Supreme Court Aharon Barak suggested

1) Each community would be sovereign to proclaim its belief. The religious public would not be demanded to abandon its faith that the supreme source of all normative authority resides in a divine imperative, while the secular community would not be requested to forego its concept that the source of authority is the

2) There would be a consensus based on concessions by both parties. (3) The point of departure must be freedom of religion and freedom from religion, although no freedom is absolute as it could be infringed if not compatible with the principles of the State of Israel. (4) Under certain conditions freedom of expression and freedom of movement could be curtailed in order to avoid serious harm to the sensibility of the religious or secular people

As it is doubtful whether such fair guidelines for a national consensus will find an Orthodox partner, the best solution of the Jewish/Israeli question is the separation between religion and state. A democratic Israel free from religious pressure will not lack Jewishness. It will preserve the Jewish nature by the rhythm of the Jewish calendar, its symbols and customs and through the Hebrew language accessible to the classical Jewish scriptures. It will guaranty an honorable status for Jewish scholars and rabbis, preserving Jewish legacy and revising it to suit new realities.

A Jewish and democratic state must be established on the humanistic message of the Hebrew prophets, which was purified by the lesson learned through Jewish suffering. Israel wil

9:14). It will

Let me close my thesis with the message of Martin Buber. The representative par excellence of Jewish humanism Martin Buber made a clear distinction between the geographical reality called the State of Israel, and the metaphysical concept known as Zion. In the eyes of Buber, the Jewish State is no more than a means; a narrow strip of land that offers the dispersed Jews security and a prospect for normal life. He bound the concept of Zion with the perception of the humanistic Jewish principles, as envisioned by the classica

1:27). Buber hoped that the creation of the State of Israel would be the first step on the road to Zion.

Notes

1. Alfred Dreyfus was a Jewish French Army captain unjustly convicted of treason - an affair that revealed the degree of reaction in Europe, associated with anti-Semitism.

2

History and Memory Vol. 7, No 1 Spring-Summer 1997. Tel-Aviv University.

3. The concept of Jewish nationalism and the Zionist ideology were formulated by Ben Zion Dinur, the leading Zionist historiographer.

4. The article appeared in 1904 in *Mitteilungen aus dem Verein zur Abwehr des Anti-semitismus*, Nr. 28. Reprinted in *Freiburger Rundbrief* 4/1997 pp. 319-320.

5

New Jews Old Jews. Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1997 (translation of all Hebrew texts quoted here, by K. Yaron).

6

Wistrich *Myth and Memory*. Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, Tel-Aviv, 1996

Israeli Affairs (Vol. I, No. 3), 1995.

7

, 7th June 1996 (a short time after the elections).

8

grants immigrants from German ancestry automatic citizenship.

9. The status of the Mizrahis is described by S. S

(Eds.), *Israeli Society under Stress*, Boulder, CO, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993.

10. About anti-Israeli Christian-Palestine campaign, compare *Judaism and Christianity*, Jerusalem: The Israel Historical Society, Jerusalem 1987, pp. 531-536.

11

his memoirs, already in 1854.

12. 5th century BC, referring to the southern part of Syria. It paradoxically stems from the archenemies of the biblical Israelis - the Philistines. According to Philon of Alexandria, Palestinae is synonymous with Canaan.
13. M. Zilberman offers a detailed review of the Palestinian narrative in *The Palestinian Myth of Canaanite Origin*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1993.
14. Massalha claims in *Palestinians* (Faber & Faber, 1997) that there was a deliberate Zionist policy of transferring the Palestinians from their country, is not especially convincing.
15. Compare N. Azouri, *Le reveil de la nation Arabe*, Paris 1905.
16. Quoted from the discussion in the Mapai Central Committee, 7th December 1938.
17. 10 June 1994 (Hebrew).
18. The Israeli Arabs have already gained a large extent of cultural autonomy: the recognition of Arabic as the second national language; a separate Arab school-system under the auspices of the Ministry of Education; an independent Muslim court, and other independent bodies. isolate them from the Israelei society.

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**MULTIPLICATION, FRAGMENTATION AND UNIFICATION OF THE
PALESTINIAN IDENTITY**
Dr. Bernard Sabella

Introduction

In 1997, Palestinians world-wide numbered close to eight million, according to Palestinian sources. The West Bank and Gaza Strip had together a population of over 2.5 million while the Palestinians in Israel numbered one million. Four million Palestinians were spread throughout the Middle East and the rest of the world with Jordan having the highest number of Palestinians outside of the boundaries of mandatory Palestine. After Jordan; Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia and USA have the highest number of Palestinians, respectively.

The UNRWA registered refugees make up between 39.0% to 43% of the total Palestinian population, world-wide. Of these, over one million refugees inhabit the sixty or so refugee camps which dot the map of the region; a reminder of the themselves.

Prolonged Conflict, Demography and Identity

The Palestinian experience has been one of prolonged conflict during most of the twentieth century. As a result, Palestinian demography, and subsequently identity, has been affected by dislocation, dispersal and

sizeable number of Palestinians occurred in 1948 and 1967. In 1948, only 156,000 Palestinians remained in the territory that became the State of Israel. Over three-quarter million Palestinians became overnight refugees in neighbouring Arab countries and in the geographic areas that became known as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Refugee camps were set up

and by the early fifties the topography of refugee camps and hence status of Palestinians in them, and consequently their identity, began to be moulded accordingly, whether in the West Bank and Gaza Strip or in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Those Palestinians who made it to Egypt, Iraq and other destinations were relatively low in numbers and hence their experience was freed from that of living in refugee camps.

Sources of Self-Awareness

But what made Palestinians first become aware of themselves as Palestinians and what are the sources that impacted this awareness? Rosemary Sayigh identified five such sources:

Family and Community.

Official national sources, such as literature, history books and the like.

Political parties, movements, leaders and activities.

Events on the Arab and International scene.

Experiences of marginality, discrimination and hostility.

Sayigh found out in her study of a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon that the two most important sources in forming awareness of Palestinian

had grown up in camps and had become militant had been influenced by experiences of marginality and discrimination are also important factors in the process of identity

were discriminated against as Palestinians due to displacement and loss of status.

to generation and that experience with other groups, be they the enemy or and polarity with the other group. Apparently the traumas of dispersal and uprootedness are made more impressive by models of behaviour and expression presented in the family and by the way the host group/s react and interact with the dispersed and displaced group and its members.

In 1967 the dispersal caused by the June War affected a lower number of Palestinians than that of 1948. Still, estimates place this number at between 200,000 and 400,000. Most of these refugees and displaced ended up in Jordan which, in 1991-1992, received an additional 250,000 Palestinians of Jordanian nationality who came back from the Gulf following the Gulf Crisis and War.

Palestinian identity and awareness of it is thus inextricably tied to population mobility. Again and again throughout the century, the Palestinians found themselves in a position where they were obliged to make yet another move. In those instances where they stayed put, relationships with the Israeli occupation authority or host populations affected their self definition and coloured it with the specificity of the situation.

The Dispersal of Palestinians and the Multiplication of Palestinian Identity

Clearly, the 1948 dispersal was the major dispersal which left an impact, a relatively lasting one, on the psyche and identity of Palestinians wherever they went. As a result of the differing experiences, the focal identity, if one can call it this, began to be moulded by the unique and specific experiences through which Palestinians, in their different contexts, passed. People on the move and those who experience dislocation can see in adaptation to a

new, and even hostile environment, a natural way of affirming not simply identity but also survival of family, group and culture. Modification of identity to preserve it through adaptation to a new environment is a survival strategy and not, as some perceive it, a defeatist attitude.

The Palestinians in Israel

The multiplication of Palestinian identity can be seen in the various environments in which the Palestinians found themselves post-1948. The Palestinians in Israel had to cope with military government, with their

consequently they had to pay with constraints on their movement, their political aspirations and their Palestinian Arab culture. They were to also pay by restrictions and de facto discrimination specifically in areas related to their socio-economic and institutional development. The Communist movement, in its various manifestations, helped the Palestinian Arabs in Israel to preserve their identity and link it to its roots while, at the same

citizenry in the Jewish state. Eventually, the Palestinians in Israel had to find a balancing equation whereby their pride remains rooted in their Arab and religious heritage while at the same time their instrumental relationships with the state were motivated by practical and pragmatic considerations. One can argue that the Palestinians in Israel were the first, among their compatriots, to go through a process of accommodation to the new context forced on them. This process eventually led them to the development of parties that express, on the one hand, their concern with the opportunities and possibilities, together with the limitations, afforded them as a national minority. On the other hand, the process also created a void which was filled simultaneously with the emerging political religiosity as well as with manifestations of an increasingly consumerist orientation. These developments are complementary and one can dare say interdependent at a time where there are increasing evidences that Palestinians in Israel are

learning to coopt the state and its institutions for their interests, even though they have not achieved yet neither the recognition of having a status of a national minority nor that of full-pledged equal citizens.

The Palestinians in the West and East Bank of Jordan

The Palestinians who found themselves in the West Bank and eventually the East Bank ended up with Jordanian citizenship. Jordan was the only Arab state that offered Palestinian refugees full citizenship. The differences of status among Jordanians of Palestinian origin rest on whether they are UNRWA registered or not; whether they live in refugee camps or not and whether they are of Gaza or West Bank origins.

In fact of their naturalisation, the Palestinian refugees enjoy the same rights and obligations, civil and public, like all Jordanians, including the right to vote, to be elected and to have access to public services and to military service. Some tens of thousands of Palestinians are from Gaza and they do not enjoy similar rights like other refugees even though residence and travel permits are given to them. They live in Gaza Camp. In case of prolonged absence from Jordan they risk not to be allowed to come back.

The decision to integrate Palestinians into Jordan by granting them full citizenship was done for complex reasons and considerations not the least of which was the question of balancing or co-opting Palestinian identity to the political and other interests of the Jordanian state. The sensitivity of the relationship has to do with both Palestinian demographic factor and the potential adverse effects it may have on the nature of state institutions and indigenous Jordanian identity.

The fifties and sixties witnessed intense political discourse, and periodic confrontations, between Palestinian political groups and refugees, on the one hand and the state and its police and security institutions, on the

other. The intensity of the discourse, to put it in diplomatic terms, eventually culminated in the martial confrontation of the early seventies which could be aptly described as civil war.

But Palestinians in Jordan, after all what is said, cannot be viewed in a monolithic perspective with respect to Palestinian identity awareness: Some have opted, due to their relatively long presence in the country to identify with Jordan and its political and socio-economic setup. This identification did not negate the Palestinian dimension but it did relegate it to a secondary position as those who identified as Jordanians became actively involved, or they were accorded the opportunities to get engaged in the political, economic, social and other activities and pursuits within the Jordanian context.

Other Palestinians in Jordan remained emotionally tied to Palestine, pre and post 1948, but they too have learned how to balance their emotions with practical and pragmatic considerations. The majority of Palestinians in Jordan can be said to fall in this category: while feeling Palestinian and identifying with their land and people; they, nevertheless, have become adapted to a Jordanian context that affords them opportunities whether on a personal, family, communal and sometimes even national level. There is a small minority, particularly those from Gaza and others who arrived in the aftermath of the 1967 war, who feel marginalized and whose identification is dependent on their socio-economic standing and, on the fact, that they are practically at the bottom of the socio-economic structure.

The Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip Pre and Post 1967

One conclusion of relevance is that Palestinians in Jordan have definitely had a different experience than that of Palestinians in Israel. These two groups of Palestinians differ in their experiential identity from their compatriots who reside in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestinians in the

West Bank and Gaza Strip had to cope with different experiences, pre and post 1967, which definitely left an impact on their identity.

Pre-1967

laws and regulations, together with the institutions, that governed Gaza since the mandatory time, pre-1948 the _____ in order that the Palestinian character of Gaza and its people will not disappear. This position was not peculiar to the Egyptian government but was also the position adopted by the League of Arab States which discouraged member states from undertaking activities or positions that would weaken the Palestinian identity of refugees and others who found themselves outside of Palestine following the 1948 war.

In reality, however

Gaza led to a restriction of the Gazan identity and of its cutting off, not only from its overall Palestinian context but also from the neighbouring Egyptian context. Gazans were not allowed to travel freely to Egypt and those who succeeded in reaching Egypt had to go through much red tape in order to travel or to renew their stay in the country.

Gazan identity, hence, became a unique identity; accommodating to a certain extent with no alternative but to stay put and to wait for better times to come. This Gazan identity, due to the unique geographic and administrative setup, led to a fateful acceptance of things by a majority of the population. On the other hand, however, it also provided the ideal conditions for the fermentation of organised and non-organised activity against the Israeli Zionist enemy, especially among the younger age groups in the miserable refugee camps. No wonder then that Nasser and the Egyptian government undertook to train young Fedayin who mounted anti-Israel activities from the Gaza Strip. In fact, one of the factors that led to the 1967 War was the increasing Fedayin activity against Israeli targets that originated from the Gaza Strip.

In the West Bank, the period between 1948 and 1967 saw the integration of the family, social, economic and political elite into the broader Jordanian elite. Members of the old established families from Nablus, Jerusalem, Hebron and other cities and towns of the West Bank became ministers and important functionaries whether in public or private concerns. The Palestinian rural areas were also important to Jordanian policy makers and planners as they strove to integrate them into the affairs and institutions of the state. But with all these modifying attempts, the overall tension remained between Palestinian identity, as it revolved around the loss of Palestine and the need to regain it, and the interests of the Jordanian state that basically revolved around the challenges of institutionalisation, legitimisation and sustainability of the governing system.

Palestinian identity in the West Bank, 1948-1967, remained the core focus of Palestinians even though attempts were consistently made to suppress it. The motivations for suppressing Palestinian identity were primarily internal and Jordan undertook a strong position on Palestine and in favour of the Palestinian people in the regional and international forums in which the Palestinian problem was discussed. Nevertheless, the measures undertaken by the Jordanian state did not weaken the Palestinian identity and failed in having Palestinians of the West Bank become fully identified as Jordanians. This failure, in spite of some successes and inroads here and there, led to the vacuum that existed on the eve of the 1967. Palestinians in

they were not allowed, to feel fully Palestinian. Those activists who were proactive were branded as demagogues, agitators and outside agents and they and the parties they represented were closely monitored and their activities severely curtailed by the government and its security agencies.

1967 War: A Watershed

The 1967 War was a watershed for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. With Israeli occupation, Palestinian identity became its polar opposite. In fact, one can argue that one of the effects of Israeli occupation in 1967 was the unification of Palestinian identity in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This unification did not occur overnight but was effected to check and confront Israeli occupation and its policies: the unification started emerging as various political groups, women associations, student

elaborated their networks across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The harsher the Israeli occupation became and the longer it planned to remain in the territories, the more the various Palestinian groups, associations and unions became goal-oriented in wanting to see an end to Israeli occupation. In effect, Israeli occupation mobilized Palestinians and it renewed in them a sense of Palestinianism not seen since the days of the great revolt of 1936. In one sense, Israeli occupation re-enacted the drama of intercommunal strife during mandatory Palestine: the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians gave Palestinians the will to regroup, to take pride in themselves and in their identity and to think ahead for the future of their land and people. While there were periods of relative quiet and calm, under Israeli occupation, these were rather exceptional as confrontations became more and more frequent and violence became an important component of the Israeli-Palestinian contact. It was thus natural to have the Intifada as a mass and grass root movement that aimed to end occupation and to set up relationships with Israel based on mutual recognition rather than on might and control. The Intifada would not have been possible if Palestinian identity did not posit itself as the polar antithesis to Israeli occupation and all it stood for. But while the Intifada could be seen as the culmination of the unification of identity between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the political aftermath of the Intifada, as represented by the Oslo accords, did limit and, to a great extent, frustrate the process of identity unification, contrary to expectations and anticipation. But more about this let-down later.

The Palestinians in Lebanon and Syria

In Lebanon and Syria, Palestinians did have a different experience and hence different identification issues and problems. Lebanon, in contrast to Syria, proved to be problematic and painful to the Palestinians who found refuge there. Estimated at between 400 to 500 thousand for in the mid-nineties, they include 100,000 refugees from 1967 and 1970 who are statusless and stateless and live a life of economic marginality. But Palestinians in Lebanon do not enjoy formal rights as refugees and their status is similar to that of other foreign citizens. They are not entitled to a Lebanese passport. Only in two cases can they get citizenship: When a Palestinian woman gets married to a Lebanese and asks for citizenship one year after marriage and through naturalization, which is theoretically accorded to long term residents, over five years; to husbands of Lebanese women and in cases of exceptional service rendered to Lebanon. Naturalization is not a right and does not follow a law. In the Palestinian case, it goes counter to the resolutions of the Arab League which are in

The majority of Palestinians in Lebanon are socially and economically handicapped because of the application of Lebanon and its various professional associations of the principle of reciprocity. The principle of reciprocity specifies equal reciprocal treatment in Lebanon and other countries of each other's nationals. This principle clearly does not favor Palestinians because they do not have a state or country which can reciprocate equal treatment of Palestinian nationals in Lebanon.

Palestinians in Lebanon live in a state of de facto discrimination with respect to access to jobs and remuneration. They often work in the less qualified and lowest paying jobs. Many among them, especially those not workers do not receive the meager social security benefits because of the

inapplicability of the principle of reciprocity to them. This, in spite of the fact that they are required by law to pay dues for social security.

The identity of Palestinians in Lebanon is hence affected by the low socio-economic standing and by the marginalization felt due to different laws and considerations. The Oslo accords, with the move of the PLO to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, made this marginalization even deeper as Palestinians

the fragmentation that affected their Palestinian experience in Lebanon. With their isolation in refugee camps and with UNRWA services undergoing a drop in both level and quality and with the restrictions on employment opportunities and movement, the identity of Palestinians in Lebanon is indeed one that attests to the continued fragmentation of Palestinian identity, after Oslo. As such it calls for a dramatic remedy because there can be no reunification of Palestinian identity with conditions of Palestinians in Lebanon remaining as they are at present.

Syria: Integration and Preservation of Identity

In Syria, the Palestinian experience was influenced by the enactment of the Syrian government of a series of laws in 1949 to aid the integration of Palestinians into Syrian society while, at the same time, preserving their separate identity. In September 1949 Decree number 37 opened employment in the civil service to Palestinians. Law number 260 issued in 1956 considered Palestinians as originally Syrian in all things connected to rights of employment, commerce and national service while preserving their separate identity.

Palestinians thus do not have Syrian nationality but they have been progressively accorded almost all the rights enjoyed by Syrians. They enjoy civil rights, elections and eligibility access to all institutions of education and all public and private functions. They have their military

duty performed in a special regiment where conditions appear somewhat tough.

Seventy percent of Palestinians in Syria live in Damascus specifically in the Yarmouk area which is an indistinguishable part of the city of Damascus. Conditions in Yarmouk appear to be prosperous and they have even attracted many non-Palestinians to live in the place. Yarmouk is known as a lively commercial center and among the best places to shop in Damascus. This is not the situation in the 1948 and 1967 emergency camps where conditions of housing and other basic services are dismal. Yarmouk and the camps are two different stories of integration and success or lack of them. Palestinians in Syria identify closely with the Baathist ideology but socio-economic status or standing appears important in imbuing Palestinians with an identity that spans the Palestinian experience and merges with it with the pan-Arab Baathist Syrian outlook. While stressing Palestinian identity and the obligation to preserve it Syria, with its liberal and open policy to the Palestinians living in it, has in fact made for multiplication of the Palestinian identity. In itself, this is not necessarily a negative thing but rather reflects the experiential differences of the various Palestinian populations in their countries of residence or host countries.

Policies of host countries and actual experiences of Palestinians in them are thus important components in understanding the crystallization of various

various settings with their differing experiences point to a multiplication of

identity which the different Palestinian communities started with either as they journeyed out of Palestine or as they struggled to assert their presence and ensure continuity within mandatory Palestine.

The Creation of the PLO: Towards Unification of Identity

In this context, the creation of the PLO in 1964 has to be seen as a movement towards the unification of the Palestinian identity. While the rich Diaspora communities of the Gulf provided the support and one can say some key leadership figures for the emerging organization, the masses of the refugee camps particularly in Lebanon provided the file and rank. This combination together with the pull that the PLO had on Palestinians everywhere but particularly in the West Bank and Gaza after June 1967, enabled the organization to be indeed the unifying body of all Palestinians, irrespective of country of residence or socio-economic standing. The boost received to the Palestinian identity through the creation of the PLO

It is thus not surprising that leading figures such as Yasser Arafat evolved into symbolic figures that served the function to unite Palestinians and to get them acting together to achieve their political goals.

Palestinian Identity Post Oslo: Steps for Unification

It is clear that Palestinian identity post Oslo has not been characterized by a process of unification. In fact, the Israeli designs and policies of not allowing easy and free geographical contiguity among the various Palestinian localities within the West Bank and Gaza is a significant factor for the failure of the unification process, so far. One can argue that post Oslo has seen a retreat in the unification efforts of Palestinians in the occupied territories. Separation is not only a post-Oslo characteristic of relations between Israelis and Palestinians, it also characterizes relationships and contacts between the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Accordingly, Palestinian identity given the experience and the conditions on the ground is not uniform and is affected by different sets of circumstances and conditions in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Some may even go further and argue that the experiences of a Palestinian in the northern parts of the West Bank are different from those of one in the southern parts. It follows from this that Palestinian identity cannot be

expected to be the same even within the relatively narrow confines of the West Bank.

The solution out of this apparently dismal and unpromising situation is to have a Palestinian state which would have sovereignty over its territories, ensure geographical contiguity across the two territories and undertake a sets of measures that would ensure that Palestinians living abroad would be part of this solution. Because the establishment of a Palestinian state signifies a regional political solution rather than a bilateral one, the steps suggested below are intended primarily to ensure that Palestinians, wherever they are, would eventually fall under a unifying Palestinian identity. The steps seek to nullify the effects of fragmentation and multiplication of identity and where they cannot achieve this, at least to modify these effects in order that Palestinian identity would remain unified.

The Palestinian government to offer Palestinian citizenship to all Palestinians, pending individual agreements with host countries. This would emphasize that the Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza is the state of all Palestinians wherever they are.

Regional interstate arrangements with stipulations for freedom of movement for family/humanitarian reasons and for employment purposes, among others.

Explore the possibility of introducing a system of permanent residency for Palestinians in host countries who may chose not to leave these countries. This system could ensure that Palestinians in these countries could benefit from certain basic rights while at the same time not jeopardizing their right as Palestinian citizens in the Palestinian state.

There must be a series of agreements on reciprocity between the Palestinian Authority and neighbouring states, Lebanon in specific,

in order to enhance the prospects of living and employment conditions of Palestinians.

Encourage trade activities, intellectual meetings, scientific and academic exchange as well as exchange among youth, women and other social and professional organizations across Palestinian communities in the Diaspora and in the West Bank and Gaza and inside Israel. Such activities and exchanges could provide outlets for expression of relationships with the homeland in various forms and would contribute to a unified national identity.

The importance of Palestinian community organization which has served as an important link between local refugee communities, other Diaspora and homeland populations. There is need, therefore, to secure right and freedom of Palestinians who remain in host societies to organize communally and to promote their social and communal interests. This should be considered especially when the Palestinian government signs reciprocity agreements with neighbouring governments.

Exploration with various governments, in and out of the region, of the possibilities of help in the just settlement of the refugee problem. A global settlement of the problem would mean the involvement of the international community and the recognition of this community of the historic injustice that has been inflicted on the Palestinian Arab people.

The task ahead of us as a Palestinian people is a difficult one but we cannot have a solution to our problem and peace cannot be achieved while we remain living fragmented experiences with multiple identities. It is important that we come home not simply in the physical sense but as important in the psychological and political sense. Without our coming home and without

the establishment of our state, peace cannot be achieved. We, and the whole region, will continue to suffer the consequences.

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Consensus and Divisions

In a discussion Menachem Begin held with the faculty at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1981, he was asked to explain on what does he base his assessment that Israel would be able to continue to rule over two million reluctant Palestinians for the long run. Begin reminded his listeners that in 1920 there were fewer than 100,000 Jews in Eretz Yisrael (Begin would never use the term Palestine) and comprised less than 20% of the total population, yet all Zionists maintained faith that Zionism would prevail and a J

should we give up this faith today" he asked "when close to four million Jews live in a sovereign Jewish state and the Arabs only number two

² This response was not challenged at the time. Some of the professors may have considered it futile to argue against faith, yet for many of the attendants Begin's answer probably struck a familiar chord. Faith has always been a fundamental element of the political culture, ideology and discourse of Israelis. This article intends to explore some dimensions of this "faith".

Israeli society is very heterogeneous and includes a wide range of ethnic, religious, cultural, and ideological subcultures. An attempt to fully

¹ Parts of this article are based on a Michael Harrington Lecture the author delivered in the spring of 1981 at the Faculty Center of the City University of New York.

² The quotation is from my personal notes of the speaker.

and ideologies requires more than a brief essay.³

Therefore, the parameters of this analysis will be limited to some of the dominant cultural characteristics. Within these parameters the prototype which will receive the most attention is the non-orthodox Israeli Jew who may or may not observe some religious practices and traditions but certainly identify himself as "Jewish" in cultural and historical terms.⁴

Many analysts have observed that the 1967 and 1973 wars caused the wide national consensus which prevailed during the first two decades of Israel's existence to crack.⁵ The early consensus was based primarily on the central Zionist tenet, namely on the belief that the Jews as a nation have the right for self-determination and are entitled to live in a sovereign state of their own in their ancestral homeland. The enmity of the Arabs toward the establishment of the Jewish state has unified the nation and gave security considerations precedence over all other considerations. After 1967 much of the early consensus still prevailed but a cleavage was created by the new geographic and demographic conditions created by the conquest of the remainder of Palestine. For the first time the question arose in real terms whether Israel should absorb the new territorial gains or

³ For a detailed analysis of this subject see Eva Etzioni-Halevy (with Rina Shapira), *Political Culture in Israel: Cleavage and Integration among Israeli Jews*, (New York: Praeger, 1977). More recent analyses can be found in Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *Trouble in Utopia: The Overburdened Policy of Israel*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) and Gad Wolfshild, *The Politics of Provocation: Participation and Protest in Israel*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988). For a general analysis of the current structure of Israeli society see Myron

⁴ Many Israelis who would characterize themselves as "secular" participate in traditional Jewish rituals and holidays. For a discussion of this phenomenon see Shlomo Levi, Chana Levinson, and Elihu Katz, *Beliefs, Observances, and Social Interaction among Israeli Jews*, Jerusalem: The Gutman Institute for Applied Social Research, 1993. For obvious reasons this analysis excludes the 800,000 non-Jewish citizens of Israel and also will not apply to the "Ultra-Orthodox" minority. For a discussion of these communities see Amnon Levi, *Hacharedim*, (Jerusalem: Keter Publication, 1988)

of Chicago Press, 1991), 197-204.

⁵ See Alan Arián, *Consensus in Israel*, (New York: General Learning Press, 1971).

consolidate its presence in the Middle East by withdrawing from these territories in exchange for peace. Also, some Israelis began to question whether security considerations should continue to rely exclusively on military factors, or whether political and diplomatic resources should be viewed equally as no less appropriate means of managing and resolving the conflict.

Nevertheless, some of the basic tenets underlying the Zionist enterprise survived and important assumptions continued to be taken for granted both by "expansionists" as well as by "compromisers". As we shall try to point out, in terms of the peace process, most of these tenets and assumptions tend to favor a hawkish posture. On the explicit level one could no longer speak of a national consensus, but implicitly, some common emotional and intellectual basis persisted, which often posed psychological obstacles which made it difficult for many Israelis even inside the "peace movement" to embrace far reaching peace initiatives. We shall begin with the way Israelis perceive the significance of ideas in the shaping of their own history.

The Role of Ideology

Israelis tend to perceive ideology as the cornerstone of their national existence. Ideology is conceived of both a

in order to execute the former's design. The creation of a modern Jewish society in Palestine and the establishment of the Jewish State are viewed by most Israelis not as a result of normal historical forces but as the realization of a dream transformed into reality by the power of collective human will. The Zionist idea is thus considered to be an historical in essence, working in defiance of the normal course of history. Therefore, ideology is perceived both as a guiding directive and as a decisive

mechanism which helps galvanize the will of the people to perform otherwise unimaginable tasks.

According to this interpretation the Zionist narrative begins with the small group of dreamers who outlined the Zionist enterprise in their writings a hundred years ago. Despite ridicule and animosity from the majority of European Jewry, the narrative goes on, these ideologues managed to generate some enthusiasm for their vision.⁶ When Theodore Herzl established the World Zionist Organization (WZO) in 1897, he created the political tool which launched Zionism on its path to realization. At the end of the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, Herzl wrote in his diary that he believed that within fifty years his dream of a state for the Jews would be realized, but he dared not to say this in public because people might think he was out of his mind. Prophetically, the State of Israel was indeed proclaimed fifty years after he wrote these lines but even today many consider it retroactively an impossibility which was made into a reality by the power of the dream.⁷

Thus, Zionist mythology ascribes success to the power of human will's most popular quotes which every Israeli child learns

⁸ The implication of this phrase is that Zionism was indeed a dream, a fairy tale, an historical impossibility. But human will can overcome adversity and make the dream come true despite all obstacles. In the spring of 1948, during the worst military setbacks

⁶ For a summary of Zionist ideologies see Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*, (New York: Basic Books, 1981). An annotated selection of Zionist writings can be found in Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*, (New York: Doubleday, 1959).

⁷ See Raphael Patai (ed.), *The Complete Diaries of Theodore Herzl*, (New York: The Herzl Press, 1960). See the entry for September 3, 1897.

⁸ The line appears as a motto to Herzl's book *Altneuland* (1900).

suffered by the Jews during that bloody war, David Ben-Gurion expressed

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Indeed one cannot fail to marvel at the surprising successes of the Zionist project over the last hundred years, but it will be inaccurate to suggest that this process was not shaped by objective historical forces. One must recognize the important role human will played in this story, yet factors independent of the Zionist will, such as the Holocaust, the roles played by Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union and the disunity of the Arab world at the decisive moment - were no less important causal factors which contributed to the creation of Israel. Moreover, history is replete with sagas of unfulfilled national aspirations. Human will and dreams may well be important moving factors but they can only succeed when other enabling factors are at work.

But the misconceptions created by this intentional interpretation of Zionism's success tend to discount more rational considerations of political, economic and demographic factors. Israeli political discourse often tends to dismiss or minimize objective limits of human enterprises. This utopian subjectivity tends to serve the maximalist school of thought better since it often blinds the Israeli public to circumstantial constraints. It blunts sensitivities to the objective environment within which policy decisions must be made. Those who act as if they live in utopia risk losing their sense of objective reality and its inherent shortcomings.

Hagshama

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Z. 1948, Ben Gurion Archives, Sde Boker, Speeches Files, 1948.

A corollary of the belief in the predominance of human will is the concept of "Hagshama", which can be loosely translated as "realization" or "materialization". Since Zionism is perceived as a blueprint to be realized, every true Zionist must endeavor to bring about this realization by his or her personal choices and endeavors. This consideration has become the yardstick by which actions are measured. The question of whether a certain activity is good or bad is always measured against whether it contributes to the realization of the Zionist dream. This attitude has to be appreciated in its historical context: one hundred years ago not only the State of Israel did not exist, practically no significant Jewish community could be found in the land. Almost every physical or social phenomenon, every village, school, factory, garden, institution, and paved road in what is now Israel is a product of the Zionist enterprise. The outcome of individual and collective Zionist Hagshama. Moreover, Zionism is seen as an ongoing project striving toward further realization through further Hagshama. The thought that Zionism has achieved its maximum attainable goals is foreign to most Israelis.

Israelis find it difficult to accept that the pursuit of Zionist goals beyond certain limits may prove detrimental to the welfare of the entire project. As an ongoing process seeking to attract many more Jews it seems easy to argue that Zionist fulfillment necessitates Jewish control over the entire historic Land of Israel (including Judea and Samaria). Yitzhak Shamir expressed this viewpoint in 1970

but true. Those who dared to recognize limitations on the Zionist enterprise are subject to accusations of spiritual weakness and loss of

measurement of loyalty to the project itself. From this perspective, those who doubt the validity of the maximalist interpretation of the Zionist idea are not just wrong but also subject to being accused as nonbelievers. This is the main reason why most peace groups, often made special efforts to assure the public of their loyalty to the basic ideals of Zionism. The

underlying assumption of the Zionist ethos as an incomplete project, requiring further Hagshama, created a strong bias in favor of the maximalist interpretation of that ideology.

These beliefs give also an assumed preference to action over inaction and infuses Israeli politics with an overriding sense of activism. This helps explain the dilemma which evolved after 1967

either to consider the acquisition of the new territories as yet another phase of Zionist fulfillment, or to refrain from incorporating them into the state and keep them only as bargaining assets. The decision of the Israeli government "not to decide" in the late 1960's and early 1970's did not mean "not to act". Consequently, it permitted and even promoted further acts of Zionist Hagshama in the occupied territories. Paradoxically, the concept of Hagshama, which had been a central theme in the ethos of the Labor movement was now taken up by the Likud and the more extreme messianic elements of the religious Zionists. To be sure the Labor Party too remained loyal to Zionist values and continued to advocate its own vision of Hagshama. For the veterans of the Labor Zionist movement land settlement and personal Hagshama remained holy values. This is why many leaders of the kibbutz movement, who otherwise were positioned on the left of the political spectrum, expressed admiration for the idealistic settlers of Gush Emunim. One such leader said, "I shall tell you the truth, I feel deep envy toward Gush Emunim. When I see these people I ask myself why I didn't have the grace to do these things, and why didn't our children do it?"¹⁰

This state of mind handicapped the Israeli peace movement from the outset. During the late 1960 and early 1970 it has been difficult to recommend a precise course of action which seemed to have a chance of achieving peace. It has been easier to recommend what not to do pointing to actions which might make a peace settlement more difficult to achieve in

¹⁰ Interview with Efraim Ben-Haim quoted in *Yotv Ra'anana, Gush Emunim*, (Tel Aviv: Sifrut Poalim, 1980), 213 (Hebrew).

the future. In the meantime the Israeli Right was busy creating new facts on the ground. The Settlers assumed the image of the inheritors of the Zionist pioneering spirit. Symbolically, Tehiya -- the political party which represented the settlers in the Knesset, adopted as its emblem a picture of a young pioneer holding an Israeli flag. Ironically (though unwittingly) they chose an old photo of a member of a left wing Mapam kibbutz member which was taken during the pre-statehood period.

To Hell with the Goyim

Another aspect of the Israeli psyche is its negative predisposition toward international public opinion and political pressure applied by foreign governments. On Independence Day in 1955 David Ben-Gurion coined a phrase which has become a common expression in Israeli political tant what the Goyim say, what is important is what

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military assistance, Israelis tend to minimize the significance of foreign pressures and resent attempts by foreigners to preach morality to Israel. Israelis are suspicious of them and often tend to exaggerate the threats they may pose to Jewish and Israeli interests.¹²

This "us and them" world view is a product of centuries of persecution and sufferings. To express this attitude Israelis often erroneously use the biblical expression attributed to the Biblical figure

who were threatening his kingdom on their way to the promised land. The Bible tells us that Bi

¹³ The

popular interpretation of the term "reckoning" by contemporary Israelis is that the Israelite people do not take other nations in their own reckoning

¹¹ *Davar*, April 28, 1955. The term *goyim* in traditional Hebrew means non-Jews and usually carries a negative connotation. Actually, this usage is inaccurate since in the Old Testament the term refers to all nations, including the Israelites.

¹² *New York Times Magazine*, April 18, 1971. Jay Gonen attributes this phenomenon to an inferiority complex which Jewish history is imprinted on the Jewish psyche. See his, *A Psycho-history of Zionism* (New York, Mass.: Charner, 1975), 133-48.

¹³ *Numbers*, Chapter 23, phrase 9 (as translated by the Revised Standard Version of the English Bible).

and do not give weight to their views.¹⁴ In a famous letter to Prof. Jacob Talmon, Israel Galili who was at the time Golda Meir's Minister of Information, used an argument which express the way many Israelis perceive this syndrome

justice was not broken in face of the angry preaching of some of the best of
¹⁵ This predisposition encouraged the ideological grandeur typical of right wing politics since it blinded many Israelis to the price Israel may pay for the implementation of such policies in terms of its international standing. "The entire world is always against us," the rhetorical right-wing argument goes, "so why should Israel take into consideration what the goyim say or think of what we do anyway?"¹⁶

The Legacy of the Old Testament

The political culture of every society is comprised of a set of images, myths, and symbols which help the members of the society attach meaning to their political and societal experiences. Such references also serve as sources of political socialization for the youth and new immigrants. In Israel a significant number of these images, myths, and symbols are derived from the Tanach (Old Testament).¹⁷ As Uri Avnery noticed, these

¹⁴ This is a mistaken interpretation which stems from the fact that the word "hitchshav" in modern Hebrew means 'to take into account'. It is interesting to note that when Vitzhak Rabin became prime minister in July 1992 July 28, 1992.

¹⁵ See Israel Galili, *A Continuous Struggle*, 28.

¹⁶ "Ha'olam kulso ogedenu" (The entire world is against us) is the refrain of an Israeli folk song which became popular after the Six Day War.

¹⁷ The word Tanach Ktuvim (Writings).

for Zionists, as anyone who has been to an Israeli school knows, a book for today, not just a book of religion, literature or ancient history. This is a book of intense topical interest, a book of reference, [...] in dealing with the

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Ben-Gurion, the founding father of the State of Israel, was himself a secular Jew, nevertheless his reverence for the Bible was profound. For

political and ideological struggle of the people, who fought for their hold on the land, within the political and cultural environment in which they lived during the biblical per¹⁹

knowledge of ourselves, our sources, our spirit, our destiny and our future of the holy books.²⁰

For Ben-Gurion, and most Israelis, the Tanach was the most important tool for political recruitment and national mobilization. One

roots in his complete personal identification with the history of the people of Israel²¹ This also explains the keen interest Israelis show to the study of biblical archeology,

¹⁸ Uri Avneri, *Israel without Zionism*, New York 1971, p. 81.

¹⁹ *Studies in the Tanach*, (Tel Aviv 1976), pp. 41-49 (Hebrew).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

²¹ *Ben Gurion and the Tanach - The People and their Land* (Sde Boker, 1989), 54-67 (Hebrew).

society in the 1950's and 1960 something it yearned for; a family album in which they could see the pictures of the few Israelites who arrived in the Land of Israel after years of wanderings and suffering, conquered it from the hands of foreign nations stronger and more numerous than they by virtue of their power and clever tactics, their moral superiority and their

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In their study on civil religion in Israel Charles Liebman and Eliezer Don Yehiya described the way secular Israelis apply biblical images in order

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They described how the study of the Tanach was consciously popularized Testament in schools, the encouragement of Bible study circles for adults, and the National Bible Quiz on Independence Day.²⁴

Moshe Dayan authored a book titled *Living with the Bible*. Though very few political references were made in the book, it was essentially a political statement.²⁵ Biblical memories, images and metaphors carry distinct contemporary significance.

The Bible is to a large degree the story of the acquisition of the land of Canaan by the Israelites and their struggle to maintain that possession. It tells the story of the continuous struggle against other nations living in the same area. Furthermore, in biblical times the Israelites occupied

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Zmanim, No. 42, (Summer 1992) (Hebrew).

²³ Charles Liebman and Eliezer Don Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 93.

²⁴ In twelve years of compulsory education secular Israelis devote an average of 4.5 hours a week to the study of Tanach.

²⁵ Moshe Dayan, *Living with the Bible*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1978).

specifically the lands around Samaria and Judea, those areas which are now inhabited mainly by Palestinian Arabs. When Israel occupied Samaria and Judea in 1967 it represented for many Israelis a return to the original lands of the Israelites and the home of many biblical memories. Even staunch advocates of territorial compromise such as Lova Eliav speak of part of our historical rights in the

memories do not necessarily create contemporary rights. During 1987 the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem conducted a survey on the political attitudes of Israeli youth. When asked if the Jews have historical rights over the occupied territories, 59% felt that the Jews had such rights while only 29% responded that the Palestinians have such rights. 48% maintained that the Arabs have no or only little rights in the land, while only 1% totally denied such rights to the Jews.²⁶ Obviously the extensive study Tanach among young Israeli fosters such blindness.

It is clear that the biblical attachment to the land plays into the hands of the expansionists, since if such a right does exist why then should Israel relinquish it voluntarily? And if it does not, what right does Israel have to any part of the land? Nathan Alterman's declaration at the founding of the Movement for the Greater Israel hit a sole remain loyal to the wholeness of our land. This is our obligation to our

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The concept of "Eretz Yisrael" (the Land of Israel) has an additional meaning to Israelis. Before 1967 Israelis used to refer to the area inside the

²⁶ See Dahaf Institute, *Political and Social Attitudes among Youth*, (Tel Aviv: September 1987).

²⁷ Quoted in Benjamin Oppenheimer, "Ben Gurion and the Tanach".

"green line" as Medinat Yisrael (the State of Israel). The only name that exist in the Hebrew language for the entire land west of the Jordan River, which forms a historic and geographic entity, is Eretz Yisrael. This is the name which is normally used even by those Israelis who do not attach any political significance to the fact that it means "The land of the Israelites". But once this land came under Israeli control in 1967, it became difficult to dispute the notion that this land is "ours", or at least "ours too".

In 1970 the IDF's Chief Education Officer explained the rationale behind a publication he authorized on the geography and history of Judea

the significance of Hebron in the history of the Jewish people. [...] I would not like him to feel like a stranger or conqueror in Hebron [...] like a Russian

²⁸ Indeed one soldier, a secular member of a left wing kibutz, who spoke of his exhilaration when he

promised land, the land of ²⁹ For the orthodox Jew this became the word of God which must be obeyed. But even for the secular Jew, a decision to abandon Judea and Samaria is equated with relinquishing pieces of the original Jewish homeland.

The Legacy of the Holocaust

Another pillar of Israeli consciousness is the collective memory and lessons drawn from the Holocaust. It is quite understandable that the murder of six million Jews during the Second World War, only fifty years ago would leave a deep scar on all Jews. One of the legacies of the

²⁸ , December 25, 1970.

²⁹ *The Seventh Day*, a compilation of testimonies of soldiers who served during the Six Day War, p. 75.

Holocaust is a profound suspicion Jews often feel toward the non-Jewish world. After Auschwitz Jews see genocide as something which could s taught most Jews the painful lesson that they should rely only upon themselves for survival.³⁰ This outlook was well expressed in a letter an Israeli soldier wrote to his girlfriend in which he referred to his impressions of a Holocaust museum he visited in 1963.

powerful urge to be strong is growing within me. I desire to be strong and sharp like a knife, strong and terrible. I want to know that never again will these eyes have to stare at me from behind the electrified barbed wires. We can avoid it only if I shall be strong. If we as shall be strong. Proud and strong Jews.³¹

Consequently, the margin of security which Israelis wish for themselves is rather wide. The heavy psychological baggage of the Holocaust reduces the willingness of Israelis to take risks and consequently reduces their ability and readiness to compromise.³²

³⁰ *Eivunim*, No. 11, Jerusalem, May 1981
(Hebrew). On the psychological impact of the Holocaust on Zionists see Jay Y. Goren, *A Psycho-history of Zionism*, 149-175.

³¹ *The Seventh Day*, p. 167, (Hebrew).

³² For further discussion of the moral and p
Tribune, Vol. 30, No. 117, Frankfurt, 1991, and Ofra Seliktar, *New Zionism*, 104-08. See also S.N. Herman, Y. Peres and E. Yuchtman, *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, Vol. 14, (1965), 98-119
The Jerusalem Quarterly, No. 3, 1977, 85-97.

have at times also manipulated the legacy of the Holocaust for political purposes. The language of Israeli political discourse on the Arab-Israeli conflict is saturated with allusions, symbolic catchwords, and metaphors borrowed from the collective memory of the Nazi trauma. To cite only one example, Prime Minister Begin described Yasser Arafat in Beirut in the summer of 1982 as "the man sitting in his bunker like Adolf Hitler in his last days in Berlin." Begin consciously used this language in an attempt to stem the growing disapproval of the Israeli public of the Lebanon adventure.³³

Is Peace Possible?

Another obstacle inhibiting the growth of an assertive peace movement in Israel stems from the difficulty Israelis have believing that genuine conciliation is possible. The prolonged Arab animosity through wars, terrorism, expressions of hatred, and the equivocation Arab leaders often use when they discuss the prospect of peace, fostered the belief by most Israelis that genuine peace is not achievable. This explains why peace proposals and peace advocacy are often viewed by many Israelis as little more than wishful thinking. In April 1956 Moshe Dayan gave a eulogy

the Gaza Strip who was killed by Palestinians. He expressed a keen
camps in Gaza while we inherit in front of their eyes the land and villages in

know that the only way this hope to destroy us may wane
is that we have to be armed and vigilant every day. We are a generation of

³³ Several prominent Israeli historians joined a Holocaust survivor in a hunger strike at the gates of Yad Vashem (the national Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem) in protest of the abuse of the Holocaust memories by Begin's government for political purposes. See *Ha'aretz*, August 17, 1982.

inheritance and without a steel helmet and the muzzle of a gun we shall not

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Ben-Gurion often spoke in similar terms. In a meeting of the Central Committee of his party in January 1949, a few days after the end of the 1948 war (when for a while it looked as if some of the Arab states might conclude peace agreements with Israel) he states will end and peace will be concluded it cannot change the basic situation. The dangers confronting us are historical dangers, and will persist many more years. [...] Our reality created these dangers and they will

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Two more generations of Israelis have experienced further wars, terrorism, and enmity since Ben-Gurion and Dayan spoke of the irreconcilable nature of the conflict. As a result, most of them find it difficult to conceptualize genuine peace. When Ariel Sharon takes visitors to the hills overlooking Tel Aviv from the east, he hopes this will serve as a visual demonstration as to why Israel cannot afford to allow the Arabs to return their artillery to these hills. He does not speak of peace, he can only conceive of a continuous war. Similarly, when Menachem Begin argued that giving up the West Bank could result in mortar shells being fired on the Knesset, many Israelis accepted this argument because they have little difficulty imagining a situation in which they would be the targets of artillery and mortars and have great difficulty in thinking that their enemies may one day lose their motivation to launch such attacks. A group of right-wing intellectuals voiced this skepticism when in January 1994 they

³⁴ Dayan used the term *Hittachalut* (inheritance) which was not used at the time but was borrowed from the Bible, where it was used to describe the conquest and settling of the land of Canaan in the days of Joshua. The text was translated from the quote in Moshe Dayan, *Militant as Autobiography*, (Jerusalem 1976), p. 190 (Hebrew). This eulogy was not included in the English version.

³⁵ Protocols of the proceedings of the Central Committee of Mapai, January 12, 1949. *Labor Party Archives*, Beit Berl.

published a petition against the Declaration of Principles signed by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in Washington on September 13, 1993. In describing the peace which could emerge from this process they wrote, "This peace is nothing more than a mirage. [...] We are promised peace but we shall get a Palestinian state which will create a military union which will threaten us from Teheran to Tel Aviv."³⁶

Who Are the Palestinians?

Early Zionists found it difficult to accept that their aspiration to inherit the land came at the expense and detriment of other people living in the same land. In order to reduce this cognitive dissonance they tried to disregard the existence of the Palestinians as a collective entity.³⁷ The Arabs who lived in Palestine were seen as part of the greater Arab nation, but not as a distinct national group with national aspirations of their own.³⁸ This perception was obviously wrong, and as early as 1922 Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the founder and leader of the right wing "Revisionists", recognized not only the existence of Arabs in the land but also their particular nationalism. David Ben-Gurion too admitted as early as 1925 that question of the Arab community in Palestine and calculated its moves as if the

³⁶ See the advertisement of "The Forum of National Sobriety and Strength," *Ha aretz*, January 7, 1994 (Hebrew).

³⁷ The slogan which was probably coined by Israel Zangwill at the turn of the century "A people without land found a land without people" stems from the same blindness.

³⁸ For a critique of this attitude see Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 83-114. Also by Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1978), 286-8.

country were totally unpopulated. But the age of that kind of naive

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Nevertheless, despite this recognition by Ben-Gurion, Jabotinsky, and other Zionist leader, the denial of a unique Palestinian nation continued to persist among many Israelis.⁴⁰ The recent peace process and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority diminished the force of this denial of Palestinian nationhood, but their perception in the eyes of many Israelis still hovers between disdain and contempt on the one hand, and fear and suspicion on the other. Such attitudes represent enormous psychological and emotional obstacles which hinder the pursuit of peace. If an adversary is perceived as innately treacherous and full of hate, the likelihood of reaching a peace accord with "such people" is substantially reduced.⁴¹

Jerusalem -- the Holy City

Another factor contributing to the incredibility of peace among Israelis is their wide spread attitude toward the status of Jerusalem. It is clear to most Israelis that the Arabs in particular, and Moslems in general,

³⁹ Quoted in Rafik Halabi, *The West Bank Story* (New York, 1982), 232-33. For further discussion of the Zionist attitude toward the Palestinians see Israel Kolst, "The Zionist Movement and the Arabs," in Itzhak Cohen (ed.), *Zionism and the Arab Question*, Jerusalem: Zahman Shazar Center Publications, 1979, 9-36 (Hebrew).

⁴⁰ Golda Meir's notorious refusal to recognize the existence of a Palestinian nation as late as 1973 is a part of the same syndrome.

⁴¹ A survey taken among high school students in the summer of 1990 reported that 77% of the respondents expressed negative attitudes toward the Arabs. See August 8, 1990. In 1988 the Israeli Institute for Military Studies discovered that in vocational and religious schools 74% of the students expressed hatred of Arabs. In the more traditional academic schools 39% of students hated "most Arabs" and another 32% hated "some Arabs". See O. Maysel and R. Gal, *Hatred Towards Arabs Among Israeli High School Students: A Case of Prejudice*, May 1991.

are not likely to agree to any settlement which allows exclusive Jewish control over Jerusalem. Therefore, it would appear that a final settlement cannot be achieved unless Israel is ready to make some compromise on the future status of Jerusalem. Yet it seems that a wide national agreement

of ⁴² The thought that the Palestinians may have political rights in Jerusalem is anathema in Israeli political culture, even by some groups who advocate the recognition of Palestinian self-determination. Therefore for many Israelis this contradiction serves as the ultimate proof that peace with the Palestinians is eventually impossible.

To be sure Jerusalem is holy to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and evokes strong national feelings among both Jews and Arabs. But for Jews and Zionists Jerusalem became an obsession. In the Jewish consciousness the ancient city became a metaphor for the entire land and a symbol of the entire nation. Since the first Judean exiles in the sixth century B.C. when the Jews hung their lyres on the willows of Babylon and took the solemn oath never to forget Zion, Jerusalem became the focus of Jewish yearning for return.

Even a totally secular soldier remembered his sensation when he first touched the stones of the Western Wall in the stones, I felt the warmth of those Jewish hearts which had soaked these

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Israeli could imagine the conquest of East Jerusalem in the foreseeable future, describes the image of the Arab parts of the city in the eyes of the

⁴² This is a well-known formula which all Israeli officials use almost as a religious solemn oath.

⁴³ *The Seventh Day*, p. 213.

town is empty, nobody climbs to the
This was obviously wrong since the marketplaces in the Old City always
bustled with thousands of Arabs, and the Jericho Road was used daily by
hundreds of cars, donkeys and camels as they
climbed toward Jerusalem from the East. However, the lyric referred to Jews
rather than Arabs. The poem spoke of Zion, the name from which the term
Zionism was derived, not the actual Al Quds. In Zion the Arabs do not
count.⁴⁴

Myths and Symbols

Zionist mythology and martyr-ology which has its roots in the pre-
normative socialization process. These myths tend to center around
figures and events of the heroic struggles for independence either in recent
or ancient times. Oddly, three of the most popular myths involve what
should be characterized as defeats. The first is the story of Massada, the
Herodian desert fortress which in the year 73 A.D. witnessed a thousand
Jewish zealots commit suicide rather than being captured and enslaved by
the besieging Roman legions.⁴⁵ The ancient fortress overlooking the Dead
Sea were the remains of the encampment of the Roman legions can still be
seen from the top of hill became a shrine to which every young Israeli
makes at least one pilgrimage during his high school years. In the 1960 a
famous Israeli general who was also the dean of Israeli archeology received
state funding to excavate and reconstruct Massada.⁴⁶ In the Seventies and

⁴⁴ *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Autumn
1987, 21-36.

⁴⁵ The main source for the story is Josephus Flavius, *The Wars of the Jews*, in *The Works of Josephus Flavius*, (Oxford, 1839).

⁴⁶ See Yigael Yadin, *Massada*, (New York: Random House, 1966).

Eighties Massada has become the site at which Israeli armor units swear loyalty to the state in an impressive ceremony in which they receive their rifles and a Bible. The modern Zionist interpretation of Massada is that the Jews wrenched a moral victory out of their military defeat. Their devotion to liberty led the zealots to sacrifice their lives rather than be enslaved, and this should inspire the new Israelis in the struggle to regain their liberty.

The second popular myth concerns Rabbi Akiva and Bar Kochba, the leaders of the second Jewish rebellion against the Romans which was eventually crushed by the legions of Emperor Hadrian in 133-35 A.D. Rabbi Akiva was the spiritual leader of that rebellion and is remembered as a great

traditionally viewed Rabbi Akiva as the main hero of this rebellion, while Bar Kochba's role was accorded less stature. Yet modern Zionists elevated Bar Kochba's stature to become the most prominent figure of the episode, despite the fact that his strategic miscalculations led to one of the greatest disasters in Jewish history. Jabotinsky utilized this myth and called his youth movement Betar, in remembrance of the town where Bar Kochba fought his last battle.⁴⁷

religious terms is a minor holiday, has become one of the favorite festivals in modern Israel. On this day children light bonfires and play with bows and arrows to commemorate Jewish military prowess.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ For a critique of this myth see Yehoshafat Harkabi, *The Bar Kochba Syndrome: Risk and Stability in International Politics*, (Chappaqua: Rossel Books, 1983).

⁴⁸ Orthodox Jews associate the day more with the memory of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, who according to tradition wrote the main book of Jewish mysticism (the Zohar).

mistaken by them to be veritable reality.⁵¹ This can be partially attributed to biases intrinsic to the visual media

and historically based inspirations discussed in this essay filter daily into
ming better
serves the politically uncompromising. It facilitates the socialization of
their children, while making the task more difficult for parents with more
dovish views. The latter must teach their children to read the news in a
more sophisticated way, through understanding the biases implicit in

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Theory and Society, Vol. 21, (1992), 337-81.

52 *Ibid.*, 369 and 375.

The underlying myths, assumptions and attitudes described in this brief study explain some of the difficulties the peace forces in Israel faced in their efforts to make their case among Israelis. The arguments the peace camp must use in support of its position are often complex and require a sharp departure from the ethos of classical Zionism, thereby making it the more difficult to gain mass support. In recent years some dovish intellectual began to deal head on with those biases which the Zionist ethos created and sustained for so long. The lively debate around the "New Historians" and "Post Zionism" must be understood in this context, but it's analysis would require a separate study.

DEVELOPING A COMMON VALUE OF CIVILITY AND CITIZENSHIP IN CREATING
A PEACEFUL MIDDLE EAST. OR IS TRUE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN DIALOGUE
POSSIBLE?
Discussion

KALMAN YARON: The main dilemma is what do we mean by dialogue. This term is used in various ways. Martin Buber was one of the first heralds of Arab-Jewish dialogue. Buber, in his famous study, *I and Thou*, defines the difference between dialogue and monologue. He speaks about two relationships. One is an intimate relationship between *I* and *Thou*. Something happens in this relationship. It is like love which is a secret, a happening between two people, and it is almost a miracle, if not a heavenly grace.

The second position is *I and it*. We do not have these two expressions in Hebrew and Arabic for the two different references to people. There is a reference for an intimate relationship, but in French and many other languages there is also a special term for distance, for respect.

You can say it is also the same with we and they. We are usually the sons of light. They are the sons of darkness, to use this term from the Dead Sea Scrolls. *We* are always the good guys. The *others* are the bad guys. This is the *we* and *they* relations.

You can also say the contra of dialogue is monologue. Sometimes we think we are involved in a dialogue, but there are really two monologues going on. Nothing is happening between them. People who do not have a *self* cannot understand *otherness*. I need a *self* in order to understand otherness. If I lose myself, I am not a dialogical partner. Some people are so empathetic with the other that they lose themselves. A dialogical situation must include both -- two partners, two others.

Another point is that of symmetric and asymmetric relations. A relationship between a psychiatrist and his patient is one in which the psychiatrist must understand the state of mind of the patient. When the patient understands the psychiatrist, he does not need him any longer. It is the same between a loser and a champion. This is also an asymmetric situation which changes or undermines dialogue in many situations, because the question can always be posed: what would happen if we were on the other side. From a psychological point of view, this is very difficult to achieve.

Dialogue is actually the affirmation of the *otherness* of the other. I do not enter into dialogue because you are similar to me, but because you have the right to be other and I want to affirm your otherness. The otherness has the right to exist. We all are others in different circumstances.

I was born in Germany. In my case this plays an important role. I came here as a child in 1936, to Mandatory Palestine, and my first confrontation or dialogue was that we were attacked by Arabs on the way from Haifa to Jerusalem with a convoy of British soldiers from the mountains. At that time the term Palestinians did not exist. There were Arabs and there were Jews.

I would just like to make a comment about dialogue and politics as reflected in the teachings of Martin Buber. Buber applied his inter-human philosophy not only to theology, but it was first to theology. In the context of the Cold War between East and West, Buber remarked that the crisis of humankind is bound up with a deficiency of trust in humanity and the lack of faith in God. He maintained that understanding cannot be achieved without subjecting ourselves to the unpredictable other whose life happens to intersect with ours. Martin Buber suggested that, in a true dialogue, each of the partners, even when standing in opposition to the other, heeds, affirms and confirms his opponent as an existing other. Thus conflict cannot be eliminated, but only humanly arbitrated and overcome.

One of Martin Buber's most important donations was the concept of the demarcation line. Being aware that life in our unredeemed world is inextricably bound up with injustice, regarding that sad reality, a worthy human must weigh constantly doing the least amount of wrong. He thought that in the face of the gap between the desirable and the factual, we are commanded to set a demarcation line between the categorical imperative and the relative possibility of its fulfillment. He demanded, in every hour of fateful decision, to consider how much wrong must be committed to preserve the community and to accept just so much and no more.

SARI NUSSEIBEH: Let me pick up on one of the themes in the previous presentation -- namely, the distinction between I and the other -- because that seems to be the foundation for presenting a framework for understanding dialogue. There is a question mark concerning this distinction between I and the other, and I wish to present my doubts about this distinction from a personal perspective.

People present the distinction between I and the other as a clear distinction, one which does not need much explanation. Indeed, as we just heard, what particularly does not need explanation is the understanding of the I part, the self, as if understanding the self goes without saying. The problem really comes, after understanding the self, in understanding the other or what the other is.

I, to begin with, have a problem or a question mark concerning the I. I am not sure what *I* stands for, what I stand for, but also what *I* stands for. I do not know where *I* begin and where *I* end. I do not know where *I* come from and where *I* am going. I mean this very seriously. I am not simply trying to be provocative.

I think about myself. I look upon myself as somehow a culmination of many historical processes. I see myself as a culmination of many

civilizations, and I see myself here and now as being very much a point of contact between all those different processes in the past. As I look to what is called *the other* -- my friend here, for example -- I do not actually succeed very often in making this distinction between himself and myself.

It is not always possible for me to make this distinction. I will say it about him being a German Jew who was born in Germany and came to Israel and became Israeli, and I will say it about Zakaria al Qaq who is a Moslem living in Jerusalem and I will say it about all my relatives, acquaintances, friends and associates.

In other words, identity or self-identity is not or should not be taken for granted, not for one's self as the individual -- certainly I do not take it for granted -- but also not for one's self as the collective entity. For example, the Palestinians. We just heard a reference to the fact that in the 1930's there was no such thing as Palestinians. Of course, Palestinians existed, but there was no such thing as the term *Palestinians*. The people, however, presumably were there. The people who were called Arabs existed.

Perhaps we are making or try to make too much of our affiliations and identifications and associations. Of course they are important, those associations, affiliations, traditions, values, religion and so on. But maybe we make too much of them in general. We assume them to be clearer than they are very often, whether we are talking about religious affiliations or national affiliations. Maybe they are -- or we present them to be -- more important than they really are; and at the expense of our own right for or towards the pursuit of happiness, we take them too seriously, to the point of their preventing us from being able to pursue what is a right for us as human beings -- which is what we are presumably in the first place -- that of the pursuit of happiness.

Put another way, one day I was sitting in the American Colony in the sitting room being interviewed by a journalist. The journalist was obviously fed up with the Intifada at the time, which was maybe in its first or second year. So he said to me, Mr. Nusseibeh, I have to do my job and I have to ask you questions, but after he finished he looked at me and said, Mr. Nusseibeh, I want to ask you a serious question. Apparently all the other questions were not serious. They had to be asked as part of his job.

So he asked me: Do you believe in life after the Arab-Israeli conflict? This a very important question. If one believes in life, if one has faith in the existence of life beyond the conflict, then there is room for hope. There are reasons to fight or not to fight, but everything begins to make sense. But if people do not believe, if you do not believe in life beyond the Arab-Israeli conflict, then it makes no sense whatsoever.

What I am basically saying is that the Arabs and the Israelis, the Jews strength of self-identity come from negative reasons: the fact that they were being persecuted in different places, for example -- created this solidity of strength, the strength of identity on the Jewish side. That in itself created a solidity of identity on the Palestinian side which might not have existed to this level.

In a sense, although people put it sometimes differently. They tell us that had it not been for the Israeli national movement, the Palestinian national movement in the positive sense would perhaps not have been created. But there is the negative sense too, that having been created, it has in a sense become a God -- nationalism -- on the Palestinian side, as it has to some extent on the Jewish side as well.

The question that keeps nagging at me, as I think about this and about the journalist's question about whether I believe in life after the Arab-Israeli conflict, is to what extent should one suffer here on earth, whether as an Israeli or a Palestinian. To use Martin Buber's terminology, to what extent

should one use evil deeds before one can liberate one's self altogether from this negative aspect of self-identity, whether Jewish or Palestinian, in order to allow one's self to arrive finally to that Paradise in which we finally discover that we can really live as human beings?

KALMAN YARON: The self is a dynamic self. Your self today is not the same self as yesterday. My self with the Germans is another self than my self to you. One does not have a constant self. You must also take education and political circumstances into consideration. Both the Palestinian and the Israeli identities were created by trauma. Maybe without trauma neither the Palestinian identity nor the Jewish identity would exist as they are today.

With regard to the journalist's question, the answer is that there are two alternatives. We can either find a solution for coexistence or die together by means of unconventional arms or something like that.

SALEM AWEIS: I agree about the dynamic nature of the self, but I propose that self cannot be defined or understood by itself. It needs to be defined in relation to the other. I would also place the self along a continuum. There are fluctuations up and down. The way I define myself is always in relation to the other, and the other could be German, could be Israeli, could be whoever.

GERSHON BASKIN: Is it possible to think of a time when Israelis and Palestinians can meet each other as human beings and not talk about the conflict? Is there a time conceivable when we, as human beings, can find something else to talk about naturally? Is it conceivable that we will be able to relate to each other across this divide caused by the conflict without recognizing the divide? Is the divide bridgeable?

I am disturbed that when Israelis and Palestinians meet, before they can talk about something not concerned with our existential conflict, they have to establish that you are an Israeli and I am a Palestinian or vice versa. First

we place ourselves on some kind of footing politically so we know where we stand. Is it possible for Israelis and Palestinians to meet each other on some other than a political playing field?

DAVID ROSEN: Surely it has to do with what one's interests are. People who have a love of aspects of life other than purely political life meet around other frameworks such as music, art, the lives of their children. These things are going on all the time. This is precisely the culture we are talking about here that needs to be addressed: ways and means of expanding those, precisely on all the human endeavors of cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.

In fact, that is all we can do. The political process determines our psychology and, I believe, our theology. Until those political processes change, we are caught within a particular structure, a particular modus operandi. But within that there is an enormous amount we can do when we meet on that field.

What often happens is that people whose life relates to political issues, especially academically, that consumes the totality of their lives. But it is not for me to say whether that is healthy or not. It would not be my choice. I think there is a lot more to life than politics and political issues.

I, for example, want to get involved in theological dialogue -- I love it. I get a big kick out of it personally -- within the West Bank and Gaza there is very limited interest in engaging on that because, for most people, that does not impinge directly on their life because they are consumed with the immediate struggle. Obviously, once they move out of that struggle, once political things change, there will be an opportunity for developing other things.

In the meantime, those of us who care about human relationships, Martin Buber and I and thou, enrich our lives and our children's lives, and it gives

future hope to our communities to have a whole spectrum of areas in which to get involved and promote it. It is very important that people here are involved in many endeavors of development in different areas of culture, industry, ecology, where people can come together and develop better human understanding, because all we are doing is creating more sanity for the day of reckoning.

MORDECHAI BAR-ON: I loved what you said, Sari, because personally, in my life, looking back at the 70 years I have spent on this earth, most of my preoccupation was in finding the differences between me and -- not the Palestinians, but me and my immediate friends and neighbors. This attempt to go into your special way of configuring yourself is of great value to me.

However, most people do not approach their identity in this way. You mentioned that most people look for a negative other in order to establish who they are. But even if they do not look at a negative other, they certainly look at the commonality they have with their own group. Sometimes it is a small group like the lovers of Betar Jerusalem, but more often it is your own nation or your own larger community.

This is what actually happens in reality on both sides among the Palestinians as Palestinians and the Jews as Jews. Therefore, the question of the other becomes relevant, and the question really is that identity always has a dual face. It is to be identical with somebody else, and through this to define who you are, but it is also your unique life.

In terms of long-term education, I would follow your approach. This is the best model for liberal education. We are still in this situation and you ask whether we can do things without politics. This is out of the question. As long as conflict persists, it will continue to put politics in the middle of our lives. We live politics every day. We have to live with this reality. We are

now very much political animals, and therefore must develop our common thinking for a better future coming out of that.

The question of the collective right and identity of the other, therefore, is very important in terms of the education of our own people. Perhaps the most difficult thing we face in peace education on the Israeli side today is negation. There is an other, but he is negative. He does not have rights. He is vicious. He is treacherous. If we can change that, it will be very important.

We are somewhat there in the sense that we have been living together for the last 32, 33 years in very close contact. It is true that most contact with Palestinians is through the maid, the laborer who works for us, much less than through equal friendships that have developed. But there is also that. Even so, I would not look down upon the relations between a Jewish employer of an Arab employee. Sometimes that does create warm and human feelings. Not always, but it does. Certainly the fact that we see you daily speaking on our TV has helped, but it is still far from this recognition of the other and his rights.

RON KRONISH: Some people here think true dialogue is not possible now, but only at some future time. I think the question is not so much what is dialogue, but what is true dialogue. Are we prepared to speak truth to each other and be open and honest. I think dialogue presumes some additional assumptions: that we are really going to listen to each other, and that we will care about what the other has to say.

On some formal level now, diplomats and politicians recognize the existence of the other, but that has not created a lot of dialogue. Some formal agreements have been made, but they did not lead to people getting to know one another. So the problem is, is there an assumption that now, because things seem very bad, true dialogue is impossible and we have to put it off to sometime in the future? That is what has been implied.

I often wonder about people who have been around longer and who have been through many crises, and are still here. What does that tell us? The question is are we prepared to see it in different stages? What can we do now? What is the value of getting together people-to-people now, and what might be further down the road if the peace process were to get back on track or, if the political situation improved in a radical fashion? These are two very different things.

I for one think there is an enormous value even now -- now meaning when things are rough -- in getting together and meeting each other on a human level. The greatest problem is that we are so overly politicized, so much geared to the news. Everybody lives with these kind of media images all the time. Unless we do more of this, it is not going to change people.

SAID ZEIDANI: I find myself compelled to say something about the limits of liberalism at this stage because Mr. Yaron started as a liberal and Sari ended as such. Of course, conflicts are not eternal. One day this conflict will end like any other previous conflict. The question is, what does it mean to outlive the conflict as human beings. This conflict might be over one day, but other conflicts might emerge. This kind of collective identity might be changed, but we might acquire other identities as well.

We have to take these things more tentatively. The end result of this conflict disappearing does not imply that we will come into Paradise. We will have many other conflicts -- gender conflicts, ethnic conflicts, ideological conflicts of other sorts, religious and secularists. Israelis and Palestinians might disappear, but other aspects of our identity might remain or change. We might shed some features of our identity but acquire others, so other conflicts might continue.

So even in dialogue *a la* Martin Buber we do not start as two atoms, as two individuals. We come to the dialogue with this load of identity and

affiliations and commitments and so forth. Even when we outlive this conflict, we remain with this load of identity, with self, with or without nationalism, but a lot remains in terms of identity and also in terms of conflict.

KALMAN YARON: The question you asked is an existential conflict. It is not just a conflict which can be changed. It must be either solved or it will explode. Among the Jews there are different kinds of conflict, but there are also existential conflicts. A great part of the Jewish people is catastrophic-minded. They believe that if we will not be able to defend ourselves we will be exterminated. I do not know the feeling of the Arabs, but the Jews feel a kind of paranoia. They can have a hundred atom bombs and they are still afraid that they will be exterminated. Hard to believe, but this is the fact from the point of view of many Israelis. This is also a barricade in the dialogical relationship.

SARI NUSSEIBEH: Let me say one or two things about the connections between the self and the other. One must distinguish, perhaps for clarity's sake, between the philosophic-psychological argument and the political argument.

If we are dealing with the philosophical-psychological plane, then all kinds of things can be said. But let's just focus on the political side now. The existence of collective identities in the Israeli-Palestinian framework was born of negative causes, and continues in fact to create negative life for both Israelis and Palestinians.

When I was asked the question did I believe in life after the Arab- Israeli conflict, I was not being asked to believe in a life in which I will become an atomistic individual once again in Paradise. I will still associate myself obviously, philosophically and psychologically, with others and still have likes and dislikes and associations and so on. But the question is perhaps if I can determine my associations more consciously, more rationally, and in

a more civilized or civil way than I am bound to do at the moment. Am I bound to do it as if I am a member of a mob and am being made to act in a certain way which has nothing to do with my being a human, whether I am a soldier on the Israeli side shooting around and knocking people off roofs for no obvious reason, or a Palestinian "student" attacking a car like animals, like the scenes we saw recently just outside of Ramallah.

These are identifications. You can look at the television scene -- and by the way, I brought this up on purpose because it is a thing over which people can have arguments. It is a provocative scene. Who do you identify with when you look at the car? You look at the television screen and you see a horde or a mob of fellow Palestinians -- people with whom you identify most strongly -- attacking a car in which there is an Israeli soldier with whom somebody identifies presumably very strongly. Who do you feel is attacking whom? I personally felt I was being attacked in that car, to tell you the truth. Somebody else may not have felt this. But I felt I was being attacked. And the guy who was being attacked was wearing a soldier's uniform, but I actually felt, as I looked at him, that there was something wrong with it. And I refused to identify myself with the mob that attacked and lynched this soldier in the car.

So the question that I asked about ridding one's self from the negative affiliations with collectivity is a question having to do, not only with after Oslo or after whatever. It is a thing that happens every day. What do you identify with? Right or wrong? Or does it have to be always my people, whether they are right or wrong? Whether on the Jewish side because I am -- excuse me for saying this -- God's chosen race and so I am unique and different from the rest of you, or I am Palestinian and therefore an injustice is being done to me and Clinton is coming to my airport and so I am, in a sense, special this or that. So which is it?

ROBIN TWITE: Not many Jews are sitting around thinking about beating up Palestinians or Palestinians thinking about beating up Jews. There are

some like that, but very few. Why, when most people want to be left alone and live their lives, is it so conflictual here? Of course, it is because of the baggage, bringing all this stuff that conditioned us.

What we should be asking ourselves is how to change that baggage. Israelis actually benefit very much from contact with the Arab world in terms of music, culture, food, etc. Palestinian society also benefits very much in some ways from having Israelis about. Standards of academic life and various other things are highly influenced by Israel.

We must somehow put the emphasis on the positive, not the negative relationship. It need not be conflictual. At present it is conflictual because of politics. Politics come much too large in the discussion.

We really should be thinking about people. What are the people like? How do they fulfill themselves? The self, after all, is not related to the condition of whether or not I am a Jew, but whether I am. Who am I is not a Jew or a Palestinian. We have to raise where people are looking, raise the standards so that people are looking at themselves as people, not as Palestinians or as Jews.

When I was a young man crossing the Mandelbaum Gate, I would have a taxi driver on the one side, a Moroccan Jew, and I would get into an argument with him about the fare and he would be rude and surly. Then on the other side Palestinian taxi would be waiting to take me to the Old City. And he would be rude and surly and disagreeable just the same. They were indistinguishable.

The sense of common humanity is what we are after. The question is how do we get it?

MARWAN DAWEISH: We can talk a lot about the self and a lot about the other. But the question is, is that the only state of mind in which we live all

the time? Obviously not. It is not that we live all the time in relation to the other and in comparison to the other.

Why are we so intrigued and involved in this division? Obviously it does something to the way we operate, something to the way we live, something to ourselves. I think it is even more than that. I think there is a clear threat to the self if it is not always relating or comparing itself to the other. If my self or anybody at one point -- would be able to see the common, the human aspects of life and values shared with other races or individuals, that is, in a way, a threat to your particular existence.

The example of the car and the mob is precisely the materialization of that threat. Today it is so difficult to say openly that I cannot identify with this mob. Why? Because all the time you compare yourself in relation to the other, which is the core of that problem. Crossing over to the other side seems like part of the problem.

KALMAN YARON: I think we must also consider the universal imperatives, meaning the demarcation lines. Anybody who would shoot a child, no matter where he is, is a criminal. To kill a prisoner is a universal crime. You can be a nationalist and still have categorical imperatives, and I think these imperatives demand from every ideological group to find the red lines over which you leave human society and enter another dimension.

In science you can find enemies who agree because they are dealing with certain truths. The political area is problematic, but it is legitimate as long as you keep these lines. You can never take children as hostages, for example. There can never be a liberation movement which uses power against innocent people.

SAID ZEIDANI: We agree about these universal imperatives. All of us who agree to come to this kind of meeting proves that. The question really is not, okay, to my moral sense what happened in Ramallah is repugnant, and

the shooting in other places, but there are myriads of other things. People do not feel like killing other people. We have to deal with the causes of all of that.

If you come and demolish my house, for instance, how would you expect me to react? I do not want to kill other people. I do not want to torture other people. I do not want to transgress on their property. But if you confiscate my land, destroy my village, destroy my life, destroy my house, murder my brother and sister, I think it is these practices we should deal with, because when it comes to this incident and that incident, it is clear how we feel. The question is whether we express our feelings or position in public?

DAVID ROSEN: I agree with Kalman in terms of a philosophical abstraction, but not within a corporeal reality. In a corporeal reality, every context is subjective. Who is innocent and who is not is a totally subjective matter. I am not sure there is any universal imperative in terms of subjective reality that can guide us. I have my doubts.

SARI NUSSEIBEH: I think we will never rid ourselves of various affiliations, including national and religious affiliations. The question is how do you maintain only those aspects of the affiliations which are positive and eliminate those which are negative. By consolidating those which are positive, my assumption is that dialogue -- or, if you like, harmony -- between the various collectivities becomes far more possible.

There are the negative as well as the positive aspects of affiliations, and what worries me is that, by glorifying affiliations we sometimes exaggerate to the extent that we also glorify, inadvertently or whatever, the negative aspects. And this is whether we are talking about nationalism or even religion. I keep going back to that because I want to provoke some comments. I do not do it without purpose.

MORDECHAI BAR-ON: I buy that fully. More than that, to reduce the admiration of the collectivity, and especially of the state in the Israeli internal dialogue, I am much closer to the ultra-orthodox than to the Zionist orthodox. The ultra-orthodox talk about the Jewish state as a reality they have to live with, but there is nothing holy in that. Gush Emunim thinks it is holy.

RON KRONISH: I have a problem with the over generalization of things, if you will excuse me. Talking about collectivity, we did a fascinating symposium last August in which Marwan participated. It was about identity among Israeli Arab Muslim citizens. We had a panel of four people, including Marwan. The idea was to explore diversity among Israeli Arab Muslims, the thesis being that people do not know each other in their diversity and tend to think they are all this way or that way or the other.

Marwan can correct me if I got it wrong, but he succeeded in getting almost everybody angry, particularly among the Muslim Arabs in the group, because they were very upset with some of the things he said. There was a marvelous disagreement there regarding his position.

I tell you this story because, for the Jews in the group -- there were about 30 or 40 people there -- it was almost a revelation that there was so much disagreement and so much diversity among the collective group where we tend to have these notions that are very simple.

So one of the things that I have found useful is doing exercises like we did last August to get to know people in their diversity rather than what the polls talk about.

If you go back to the individual level, everybody is really so different. Yet we seem to have these notions that this one wears a kippa so he is here, and this one does not. All these externals, and they are just wrong. We really have to get past that and understand our personal relations to the

collective group in great diversity. And that is mostly done not through sociological surveys which then put people back into categories, but in meeting people and seeing how different they are.

MOUSA BUDEIRI:

what happened in Ramallah to the soldier in the car. He implied something but did not talk about it. I am not sure what offended him. I am assuming he is not a pacifist or somebody who believes in nonviolence. If he is, then I can understand what he is saying. But assuming he is not opposed to violence of some sort or another, was it the issue of the number of people involved? Was it the fact that the soldier did not fight back? I cannot understand what the problem is with the attack on the soldier.

Also, about the fear that Jews have of annihilation -- somebody said paranoia -- I find this very tiresome actually because I hear it a lot, and I feel it is rather a heavy weight for Arabs to bear. They are not being very successful in solving their own problems, and now they have to bear the problem of solving the Jewish problem and, in a sense, giving comfort to Jews. It is not a question of giving comfort now in this particular moment, but somehow to have to bear the tradition of Jewish persecution in Holocaust, the expulsion from Spain, the Crusades or whatever. I find it a bit presumptuous of Israelis to come and burden us with this issue. Finally, a question about dialogue. I am not really sure what the object of dialogue is. Is the aim to know the other, love him, acquaint one's self with the other side's problems, fears, insecurities? I am not sure that knowing somehow bridges the gap. Husbands and wives kill each other. They know each other. Knowing does not reduce hostility. Actually, knowing might increase hostility. You might start to really discover grounds to hate the other side. Maybe it is better not to know the other side.

Was there dialogue between the Germans and the French after the First World War? Is there dialogue between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland? Was there dialogue between the Japanese and the

Americans after the Second World War? Is dialogue a basis for resolving conflict? Is conflict resolved on an individual basis between individuals in a community? Are we talking about atoms that make peace with each other and somehow, as the atoms increase, peace prevails? Peace with the other collective?

BAHIRI: Dialogue is necessary, but not sufficient to resolve problems.

NAFTALI ROTHENBERG: Assuming that dialogue is not discourse but a way of life, it is a way of contact by speaking to each other or even by living together. So the first response to your questions here will be that this must be a political answer because we are living through a developing process of polarization between the sectors, but still there is common interest between the sectors.

In order to have the values of civility and other values as common to the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, we need some kind of common interests. I am not sure that separation, for example, helps this kind of dialogue. If we know that we depend on each other -- breathe the same air, drink the same water, maybe depend economically upon each other -- then there is a basis for a kind of interest. From this you can raise yourself to the values of civility.

I think that everyone has much more work to do in his own society working on himself. We do not even need to know the other to go back to ourselves to create these kinds of values and put them into our culture. It depends on us, our families, our homes, maybe our schools and communities. We do not need any other -- not far away, not close -- to create this kind of self.

SARI NUSSEIBEH: I would like to address a couple of points as food for thought, so to speak. One relates again to the question of demarcation lines and the self. The problem of demarcating a line for the self and

working on what is within the line may be a good thing, but very often whenever I hear about people starving or people having difficulty living in various parts of the world, although I am under occupation and so on, I feel I am very much better off. I feel I cannot pretend to myself that I am living a satisfactory life while I am not doing anything for people in those conditions.

If you look across the board, very often people can draw a circle around themselves. It can be a family or a unit, a small family or a bigger family, or it can be a town or a nation or whatever. This is an additional reason why I feel that demarcating the line around the self raises questions.

About the car that Mousa Budeiri asked about. There are several images and I want to put them forward. To tell you the truth, I do not really know if I am a pacifist or not. It is a very difficult question and I have not been able myself to resolve it, to tell you quite honestly. I am not naturally inclined to violence. But rationally, sometimes I find the arguments for violence -- for example, in self-defense -- may be acceptable, although emotionally I still cannot absorb them. But when I saw those people attacking the car, there were different aspects that I disliked. One, of course, was the contradiction between the person carrying the book bag on his shoulder, the seeker of knowledge, and the big rock that he was hurling savagely towards the car. I saw that as a contradiction, and I just could not put myself in the position of the student.

On the other hand, I truly sympathized and felt sympathy for the soldier. Why did I feel sympathy for the soldier? Maybe I felt more in his place than in the place of the guy that was throwing the rock. The poor guy was just sitting there and I felt even more sympathy later when I discovered that everybody in Israel was up in arms against him. You know, the poor guy, just for being a normal human being, was attacked. He did not want to attack anyone and everybody is up in arms against him. I felt sympathy for him there, and actually even considered sending him something. Then I

said to myself, no. It might be misinterpreted and the poor guy might be worse off if I did that, so I just stopped it at that. So it is a combination of things. The savagery, if you like, and the passivity of the soldier and the human imbalance.

MUSTAFA ABU SWAY: With regard to the idea of a Palestinian student hurling a stone as contradictory, I assume that soldier must have had a chance to seek knowledge before, and this did not contradict his serving in an occupied territory. This is really what is at stake.

I have an earlier image of a car. At one point, in Ras Amud where I live next to the Jewish cemetery, an Orthodox Jewish lady came to pay respects to somebody from her family in the neighboring cemetery. As she was driving home with kids in the back seat, I saw two or three young Palestinian men starting to hurl stones at her car. They immediately broke one of the lights, and I intervened and created a human barrier of one person. I stood between them and the car and prevented them from continuing. But with the case of the soldier, I was happy that two things did not take place. First, that he did not use his gun. Second, that he did not die.

Nevertheless, I could still identify with the Palestinians. This is the way it is. There is still a state of war. The peace treaties so far have not yielded an improvement on the ground. Ultimately, an elitist notion of peace, a philosophical discussion of I and thou, does not really improve the situation on the ground. Ultimately, it will boil down to issues of justice. People have rights, and these rights have not been met so far.

KALMAN YARON: I think the problem is the use and misuse of power. There are circumstances when we have to use power. I am not a pacifist. If I am attacked, I will try to use power, but not more than necessary. This is what I call the demarcation line. I am not a Christian, and I do not say that I shall love my enemy. I do not love my enemy. I may not hate him. I may

understand him. But I will not love him. I will not love my enemy if he endangers my life or the lives of my children.

We all agree that we do not live in Paradise and that the wolf is not living in peace with the sheep. This picture does not exist. We are living in a world where we have daily conflict within the family and with our surroundings. Sometimes we have to fight and sometimes we have to do injustice. But I cannot imagine that people who are sensitive will do more injustice than necessary. This is an imperative which one can understand.

With regard to this soldier, maybe there is something in the fact that he had a uniform. But it is incidental that he had a uniform because every Israeli has a uniform somewhere. The problem was not with the uniform. The problem was he was a victim of circumstances. I think people who are weak should not be attacked. We shall attack the strong ones, not the weak ones. There are possibilities to attack real enemies, and there are inhuman people on our side and also on the other side.

If you transgress these lines, I do not justify power or violence. Violence cannot always be affirmed. There are situations where violence is brutality, and I never understand brutality which is not in the framework of survival. I do not know if I put it well, but not every use of power is understandable. Also, if I am a victim and was mistreated, that I should mistreat somebody else.

RON KRONISH: Mustafa Abu Sway is saying it does not matter if he was a nice soldier or not. Because of the uniform he has lost his human identity. We can do whatever we want to him because he is part of the occupation.

MUSTAFA ABU SWAY: I did not reduce the soldier to a non-being. I know he is a human being. That is why I am happy he did not die. But nevertheless, he was a soldier. The notion of distinguishing between a

weak soldier and a strong soldier, I am sorry, but that is not an intelligent idea. Whom should I should attack? Only Givati?

OBSTACLES FOR PEACE IN THE IDEOLOGY OF ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN SOCIETIES

GERSHON BASKIN: In this session we are going to try to confront some of the things we touched on in the first session, beginning to look inward into our own societies and how some of the ideologies, the ethos of our two societies, are perhaps obstacles to peace and reconciliation between us.

SAID ZEIDANI: I would prefer to call my remarks: Obstacles for Peace in the Experiences and Expectations of Israeli and Palestinian Societies

There are types of conflicts between states and nations and ethnic groups; and each type has its own tokens. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I believe, is a separate and distinct type, with a single token. To assert that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a separate and distinct type is not so much to deny the similarities and resemblance it exhibits to other types of conflicts between states and nations as to affirm and stress its singularity (in the strong non-trivial sense). It is those features and aspects of the conflict which make it singular (or particular) that are often neglected or overlooked. Needless to say that reflections on their political and ideological implications is worth the effort of both intellectuals and politicians concerned with creating and sustaining a culture of peace.

Those features or aspects which make the Israeli-Palestinian conflict singular (or particular) are numerous. In what follows I will briefly introduce some of them (a mere sample), by making use in each case with a pair of terms or notions.

1) The Moral Versus the Political:

The conflict is essentially, and most often is construed and presented as, a conflict of (moral) right with (moral) right: two nations or parties

advancing competing moral claims, and fighting for the same piece of land, each believing that the whole territory belongs to it by right. The two parties derive enormous power from their respective moral convictions. They also present their respective cases in moral terms. And since each party is convinced of the justice of its case, from its own perspective, the other (the rival or the enemy) is no more than an actual or potential violator or moral rights. As such he/she (the rival or enemy) deserves to be punished or, when possible, banished.

Construal of the conflict in terms of justice and (property) rights, no doubt, makes its resolution much more difficult and painful. Because to give up any part of the (home) land that is justly yours is an act either of generosity or betrayal. Since the virtue of generosity is out of the question in this context, betrayal remains the operative charge against the exponents of territorial division of the country or even territorial compromise. That is to say, any territorial concession becomes not only psychologically traumatic, but also, and more importantly, morally repugnant.

Two comments on the way the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is construed and presented are in place:

a) This moral or justice or rights competition (or rivalry) between two nations over the same piece of land has no precedent in modern history, especially if we take into account that the two nations are almost equivalent in terms of numbers or members.

b) Strangely enough, the peace process, ushered in by the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991 and later the Oslo agreement in 1993, is not explicitly predicated on the recognition of moral rights and legitimate moral claims. It does not appeal to or address the sense of justice of either party. It is an artifice of real politik. In other words, the peace process is a political edifice without the required moral support or foundations. It is more like a business deal or transaction than the prelude to or the herald of a fair compromise or historic reconciliation. As such, it is more conducive to

joint business ventures than to a culture of peace or to peaceful coexistence.

2) The Catastrophe Versus the Holocaust:

Just as the Holocaust was a traumatic and unique experience for the Jews (in Israel and elsewhere), so the Catastrophe (i.e., the Nakba of 1948) was a traumatic and unique experience for the Palestinians (wherever they reside). And just as Palestinians failed miserably to estimate or appreciate the magnitude and implications of the Holocaust, so Jews failed miserably to estimate and appreciate the magnitude and implications of the Nakba (of which they were the authors and perpetrators). In addition to the uniqueness of these two national tragedies, what is relevant to our purposes here is also the following:

For the Jews: the Holocaust justified too much in terms of obsession with security and also in terms of the means Israel used against the Palestinians (their rights, their culture, their history and even their humanity).

For the Palestinians: the Nakba of 1948 justified too much in terms of means used against Israeli and non-Israeli Jews (mainly violence against innocent civilians).

These two traumatic and unique experiences, coupled with the competition for moral superiority, are responsible, more than anything else, for the conflicting narratives or accounts about the sequence of events before, during and after May 1948. They also account for the kind of treatment each people received, and is still receiving, from its allies (Israel from the USA, Western Europe in addition to world Jewry; Palestinians from fellow Arabs and Moslems in addition to peoples of third world countries).

The moral of all of this as far as the peace process and the culture of peace is concerned can be summed up as follows: We need to reconcile

the past with the present. The past still haunts both of us (Palestinians and Israeli Jews), it colors what we see and how we feel and think. We are trapped in the past. We need to overcome, to transcend, the past in order to be able to forgive. But we cannot transcend the past unless we recognize the wrongs done, the atrocities committed and restore the rights denied. Heroic intellectual leaps are not enough to reduce injustices and suffering.

3) Internal Versus External Debates and Controversies:

Given the curious ethnic mix of Israeli Jewish society (immigrants - old and new, religious/secularists, Zionists/non-Zionists, Sephardi/Ashkenazi, etc.); given the fragmentation and dispersion of Palestinians, and their categories in terms of residence and legal status (and travel documents); given the support (moral and material) and commitment of world Jewry to the Zionist project; given the support (moral and material) and commitment of Arabs and Moslems to the Palestinian cause; given the perennial tension between Islam and the Judeo-Christian tradition and culture; and finally, given cold war politics and the experience of decolonization; the implications are clear: a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered conflict: between nations, between states, between religions, between cultures, between ideologies, and also between different levels of development and modernization. It is also clear why there is more interest in this conflict, on the part of the international community, than in India and China combined. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is singular in terms of the parties and allies involved and also in terms of the attention it attracts constantly.

It is no accident, then, that it is impossible to reach or create consensus in either camp about the conditions and requirements of a fair compromise. It is no accident also that negotiations and possible compromises between the two conflicting parties and their allies are, to a

great extent, subordinated to the internal debates, disagreements and divisions within each camp or party. It is no accident, thirdly, that any possible consensus within each party or camp is neither conducive to peace nor favorable to a fair compromise with the other (i.e., the enemy). In this kind of situation, overstepping (certain) limits is too risky. The assassination of Rabin in November 1995 is a case in point.

4) Liberal Values Versus National/Religious Values:

Liberal democrats in Israel advocate a secular, liberal, democratic, but Jewish state (Israel). This creates a host of problems for the Palestinian Arabs who are citizens of Israel (about 20% of the population in Israel), and also for those religious Jews who reject secularism in particular, and liberal values in general.

Liberal democrats in Palestine advocate a secular, liberal, democratic, but Palestinian state. This creates a host of problems for the religious Palestinians who reject secularism in particular, and liberal values in general, and also for Jews who might end up residing in areas under Palestinian jurisdiction or sovereignty.

Liberal democrats on both sides to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is evident, are in favor of separation, i.e., in favor of one variant or another of the two-state solution. If they were liberal enough, they would embrace the idea of a single liberal democratic state for both Jews and Palestinians. They are either a) not liberal enough, or b) not courageous enough, or c) not consistent. Only a small minority of Palestinians and Israeli Jews fully and sincerely embrace the idea of the liberal democratic state for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Ironically, it is the religious/nationalists on both sides (who are not committed explicitly to the values of liberalism and democracy) who

embrace and espouse the one-state solution. They are consistent and courageous, but barren as far as equality and single and uniform citizenship in the one state is concerned. In fact, what religious/nationalists advocate is some form of bi-nationalism blended with a dose of apartheid.

It should not escape our attention that this singular configuration of parties/factions and political options is to a large extent a reflection of the curious mix of Israeli and Palestinian societies respectively. But it should not escape our attention either that a solution to the conflict which involves the establishment of a full-fledged Palestinian state beside Israel increases the likelihood of a civil war inside Israel. Conversely, a solution with less than a full-fledged Palestinian state increases the likelihood of a civil war in Palestine. The spectre of civil war in either case should not be underestimated or ignored.

5) Interim Arrangements Versus Final Status:

Reaching and implementing agreements about interim arrangements, without even a tacit agreement about the destination or the general outline of the final status, is a diplomatic invention which has no precedent as far as conflicts between warring nations (as well as between occupiers and occupied, colonizers and colonized, etc.) are concerned. The absence of an agreement on final status issues accounts for the following anomaly of attitudes and interpretations: The majority of Israelis believe that a Palestinian state (or entity) will ultimately emerge if the peace process proceeds more or less smoothly. Since the rightists are against a Palestinian state, therefore they are against the peace process. And since the center-left is in favor of a Palestinian state or entity, it champions the peace process. In contrast, the majority of Palestinians (inside and outside Palestine) believe that the peace process is unlikely to lead to a Palestinian state. Palestinian opponents argue that this peace process cannot lead to the desirable goal (i.e., Palestinian state). Even supporters and architects of

the peace process on the Palestinian side are not free from skepticism. In any case, rational discourse about the merits and defects of the peace process is ill served by this anomaly of attitudes and interpretations.

Interim Arrangements: Symptoms of What?

The utter silence of the peace accords concerning the vision for final status issues (core issue in the conflict) is symptomatic of something like the following:

- a) Agreement on final status issue is impossible in the foreseeable future.
- b) The general outline of final status is already known, but Israeli governments are either unable or unwilling to be committed to the creation of a Palestinian state.
- c) Final status is already known (Palestinian entity which is less than a state), but Palestinian negotiators are either unable or unwilling to accept or admit.
- d) Final status (or destination) is not known; it will be largely determined by the kind of evolving and emerging relationships during the transitional stage (understood as a trial or testing period).

In the light of the above, interim arrangements are: at best a calculated risk; at worst a trap from which it is difficult to be released. It is no accident, then, that the peace process is extremely vulnerable and fragile. It needs more good will and more patience than either side can afford or muster. It is a second remove from the wished-for historical reconciliation. The periodic explosions of violence are evidence to this.

Two Momentous Decisions Are Required:

Two momentous decisions need to be taken by the parties to this century-old conflict. They have not been taken yet. The one is to be taken by Israel: acceptance of a Palestinian state coupled with recognition of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian refugees and displaced. The other is to be taken by Palestinians (and also Arabs): putting an end to violence and accepting peaceful coexistence with Israel. These two momentous decisions are intertwined, in the sense that you cannot ensure the one without ensuring the other. The value of interim arrangements, I think, is whether they create favorable conditions for the taking of these two decisions. I personally believe that the majority of Israelis and Palestinians are ready and ripe for that. I personally believe also that any ideological commitments or orientations which are inconsistent with these two momentous decisions are obstacles to peace and its requirements.

Finally, taking into account the singularity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the real challenge is this: can the two parties pay the already fixed price for a fair compromise while avoiding the threat or the adverse effects of a civil war? The spectre of a civil war either in Palestine or in Israel should not be taken lightly.

MORDECHAI BARON: I would like to try to analyze a number of typical expressions in current Israeli discourse. I will try to describe about half a dozen elements within the Israeli Zionist ethos which, to my mind, are not hindrances to peace, but which make the achievement of peace much more difficult and which put their weight in favor of the Israeli right and against the democracy of the Israeli peace movement.

The centrality of the Bible in the typical secular Israeli education makes it very difficult for Israelis not to think of the occupied territories as somehow belonging to them. The Holocaust is a basic element of the ethos that creates a very deep insecurity. The deep negative approach against non-Jews generally, the *goyim*. Normally people do not speak of the rest of the

world as something completely different, but the Jews do. There are the Jews and there are the *goyim*. That underlies much of the way Israelis look at others, including the Palestinian others.

In my article I mentioned a number of the typical myths. One is that of Massada. Another is Tel Hai. These are myths that every child in Israel grows up with, and they are very interesting because they are myths of defeats which were transformed into myths of total sacrifice for the sake of the nation. Perhaps the most important element is the very understanding of what happened to us in the last hundred years.

I mentioned the very famous phrase of Theodore Herzl who once said, If you will it, it is not a fairy tale. This is a sentence that every child in Israel knows by age seven. It is written everywhere in Israel. It is a very basic slogan for Israeli socialization.

But what are the implications of this sentence: If you will it, it is not a fairy tale? Zionism was not a possibility when Herzl said it sometime around the turn of the century. He meant, and justly so, it is a crazy dream. You cannot fulfill a dream and create a Jewish state and bring six million Jews here, etc. All the Jews. It is an impossibility, historically impossible. Nevertheless, human will can change history and create possibilities from impossibilities.

Now, what actually happened? Historians know it did not happen only because Jews wanted it. Of course, there was the force of mobilization in the Zionist movement. But there were other things such as the world war and colonialism. I do not have to give a lecture here on how this impossibility became a possibility. It was not only the will of the Zionists, but some other conditions that allowed this will to be fulfilled. But for Israelis, that conveys the message that if you actually want it, if the whole nation is united in its will, it can do it. It can continue the march of turning the impossible into the possible.

Therefore, the notion that a Palestinian state is an inevitability is foreign to the Israeli mind. Why inevitable? Yes, you are there, five, six, seven million Palestinians. So what? When we came to this country and started to build up Zionism, we were a tiny minority compared to the Arab world, and even to the Palestinians, but we still did it. So why can't we hold on and be strong enough? Now we even have I don't know how many hundreds or thousands of tanks and some atom bombs, so why can't we do that? We should just be strong enough to do it. And it is not only the right wing that has this feeling. Even the left wing, or at least the regular middle-of-the-road Israelis, are under the impact of this belief.

The role of ideology in itself, the importance of ideas is very central to the way Israelis think of reality and of what happens in the political field. To think that Zionism has exhausted its functionality is very difficult for an Israeli. Many Israelis who say that are considered to be either weak-hearted or a traitor.

These are some of the ideas included in the paper, but what I want to do is take a few typical expressions you could hear in the morning news. Like many Israelis, I wake up normally at 6:30, turn on the radio at 7:00 and listen to an hour of interviews. The amazing thing is that Israeli political discourse is now not only very superficial, extremely superficial, but full of falsity.

The best example is Netanyahu. It is unbelievable. The man does not say more than seven sentences one way or another. Peace with security this and that. Palestinians betray. We are ready for peace. The same seven or eight sentences are repeated all the time, sometimes even with the same words. He does not have the imagination or the poetry to modulate it. It is just the same thing all the time. But he is not the only one. All the news are full of this simplicity or superficiality and falsity.

But the question is not about false or not false. What I want to point out is how these stereotype expressions build on what I wrote in my article, and I will give just a few examples.

What Said Zeidani implied, and also the fact of our being here, creates an atmosphere as if the creation of a culture of peace is a precondition for peace. I do not believe in that. I think peace is done by agreement, by business deals as well. The world war did not end by the Germans loving the French or whatever and making peace. It ended because although both sides still hated their enemy and still thought they had justice on their side and that their moral claim was right, they were ready to give that up because the alternative of war was no longer possible. They decided to trade war for peace in spite of the fact that the other side was not right and commits great injustices. That is the way it happens most of the time. Then, if peace is successful, if the deal is successful, then over many years, slowly, reconciliation in the heart comes about.

We cannot fully accept that because we are in the middle of a very prolonged process. If we had the conditions you wish for we would make a deal and finish it, and then we could say the hell with the culture of peace. We will come to the culture of peace later. But we cannot do this because in spite of the fact that the main work of reconciliation will come after the Palestinian state is created, after that basic condition will exist, we cannot wait for that. That is why we are sitting here and doing this work. So it has to be somehow connected. I think it is important.

Coming to a few of those examples that I mentioned, the first and most apparent is that every Israeli, including Rehavam Ze'evi, wants peace. This was not always the case. There was a time when Moshe Dayan said he preferred Sharm al-Sheikh over peace. Many Israelis, at a certain time, thought peace was not the first priority. We needed territories. Zionism, until and including 1948, had this preference. 1948 was an expansionist war. Israel wanted to territory. Ben-Gurion did not think we had to have the whole country. Yigal Alon thought we did have to have the whole

country. At a certain point Ben-Gurion stopped the march of expansion, but until then, until January 1949, there was much aggression by Israelis to acquire more land. Therefore, it is very clear that, at that point, war was preferable to peace to the great majority of Israelis. Maybe not to Martin Buber, but to the great majority of Israelis at the moment.

For a long time, until 1967, not to give back territories was also the preferable position. It was difficult to make this point because the Arabs were not quite clear in their desire for peace, but there were points at which the Arab leaders said we are ready for peace if you go back to the 1947 borders, to the partition borders, and Israel said no. So it was not a common thing to speak of peace as the main priority of the moment.

But over the last few years -- certainly since Oslo, but even before that -- for an Israeli to get up and say no, I do not want peace, I want territories, has not been a common thing. In Gush Emunim you may find some. But I am speaking about the vast majority. Every leader on the right has to begin by saying of course we want peace. Peace, of course, is a great value.

But this is a clear falsity because the value of this word is nil. What do you mean by the fact that you want peace? There is a joke which says Israel wants peace, a piece of the Golan, a piece of the West Bank, a piece of this and a piece of that. It is a joke, but it is not so much of a joke because there are clear minimal parameters. For example, a Palestinian state. It is very clear that without a Palestinian state, peace will not prevail. So are you ready for a Palestinian state if you actually think peace is a priority?

Part of this still lies in the basic expansionism which was built into what Zionism was. Zionism was a desire to create a territorial base for a Jewish state. Now, how large the space has to be and limitations on this territory were debated, but the urge to assure a maximal territorial base for the Jewish state is still built into the Zionist ethos. Therefore, talk about peace only shows a certain concession that Israeli leaders -- and especially leaders on the right -- give to a sense of fatigue, the tiredness of Israelis of

war, without the Israelis being actually ready to say, all right, we are weary of war. Therefore, we have to make peace, and peace costs that and that as a minimal precondition.

Somewhat similar to this argument is the famous duality of peace and security. The last elections can be symbolized or metaphorized in the following way: Peres wanted peace with security and Netanyahu wanted security with peace. They used the same words, but the priorities were clear in the way they presented each other and themselves.

But even the word security among Israelis completely unclear. What is security? Is the security of Netzarim the security of Israel? Of course not. It would be a farce if it were not so sad, but there is a map of security requirements and there is a map of national interests, if you remember the famous debate of only half a year ago. One map belongs to Mordechai and the other belongs to Sharon, and there is a difference of 12 percent between the two.

Now, if you even look at the map of the security establishment -- certainly if you look at Sharon's map -- it is clear that the term security now relates to the security of the settlers. That is what it is now. Because it is clear -- and every Israeli general will tell you -- that there is no existential danger to Israel from a Palestinian state even if you give back all of the territories, let alone only, say 90 or 92 percent, and you safeguard a certain position which may be strategically important.

By the way, many of the arguments of the Israeli right -- primarily of Sharon -- are arguments of people whose understanding of war does not rise above the level of a brigade commander, at the most perhaps a division commander, but certainly not a strategist. So they take people to Kalkilya in the hills of Samaria and they say, Look. The sea is only 12 kilometers away. Can we afford to give this territory back? Begin used to say, Nebi Samuel is only three kilometers from the Knesset. They could put up the

simplest mortar and bomb the Knesset. This way of thinking is really that of low-level commanders of units and not of strategists.

The main point here is the question of what are the real requirements of peace -- of security. For Israelis, I would say the most important requirement for security for Israel is the neutralization of Jordan. Not demilitarization. That is out of the question. Jordan will not give up its own army. But if we can assure, by good will, that Jordan will not be invaded by other Arab armies, that is the most important strategic asset Israel can have.

In order to achieve that, we have to gain the good will of the other side. Whether there are 30,000 police people or 60,000 police people in the Palestinian state, does this make a difference to a nation of thousands of tanks and I don't know how many atom bombs? It is ridiculous to speak of security on those levels.

I want to speak of a few terms such as the image of the Palestinians in the eyes of the Israelis. Basically, the Palestinians are still considered to be untrustworthy people. But even if you say, okay, they are also human beings, Israelis still cannot conceive of the other side as a national entity that quite naturally fights for its own independence and its own rights.

One simple example is the prevailing talk here about the prisoners. This morning I heard Limor Livnat, Minister of Communications, saying, Oh, yes. I believe a national unity government can be accomplished because, after all, wouldn't the Labor party agree that we have to demand from the Palestinians to fulfill their obligations? And wouldn't you think that the Labor party would certainly agree not to release people with blood on their hands?

That is the term: blood on their hands. It would never even enter their minds to think that the people who placed the bomb in the King David

Hotel in 1946 had blood on their hands. Or worse, that those who hanged the two British sergeants had blood on their hands. Yes, it was not so nice because at the King David Hotel some civilians were killed. Some innocent people were also killed. But, you know, we tried to warn them. And anyway, in such a war, this happens.

But to concede to the Palestinians that what they have done in terms of acts of terror -- even the word terror here is the point -- it is quite impossible for almost all Israelis to think these are freedom fighters who are now prisoners of war. They are not prisoners, they are prisoners of war, and are kept here by us because they were part of that war. And now, when peace comes, they have to be released.

There is some difficulty here, to be fair to my Israeli brothers, and that is that, indeed, during the many years of the struggle of the Palestinians, there were some very ugly things that happened. The acts of terror or guerilla warfare of the Palestinians sometimes caused a lot of innocent blood to be shed. For Israelis, it is very difficult to overcome the memories of Dizengoff Street and some other quite atrocious acts, although if you go a hundred years into the future, after a hundred years of peace, one may even make peace with why it had to happen to the Palestinians that they perpetrated these atrocious acts.

However, I do not want to condone it in any way, not even with the hindsight of a hundred years from now. It is really awful things that have happened. That makes it difficult to argue. But basically, if you come to peace, these are not criminals who killed people. They were sent by a national movement. They were soldiers. If I would say this in Jerusalem I would be mobbed. It is very difficult to say this aloud in the Israeli public.

But what lies behind it is that you Palestinians are not equal to us as human beings. You are different. You are vicious. You have blood on your

hands. There is a dehumanization element within the image of Palestinians that still persists.

I will mention one or two things that happened very recently. The centrality of the Bible here has had a great impact. The day before yesterday Netanyahu went to Silwan. Actually, he did not go to Silwan. He went to Ir David, the City of David. For them it is not Silwan. It is Ir David. Then he went into the place where Jeremiah was put when he was struggling against the king, and came out and said: How could we give back that territory? How can we not have a claim on those houses where Jeremiah was arrested?

I was laughing, but most Israelis were not. Something was stirred up. Jeremiah was there. Why can't Jews buy houses there, and why does Peace Now go and fight against taking over houses in Silwan thinking it should be Arab? Why don't we have a right to be there where our culture began? So that is one more reminder.

Finally, going back to the role of ideology, very often now, after an attack of Palestinians -- especially on the settlers, and blood is shed, one or two Israelis are killed, the Israeli right says we should now give a Zionist answer to the provocation by creating a new settlement or by expanding a settlement or by whatever. The term is we need to give a Zionist response.

My ears ache when I hear that, but that is not true for most Israelis. For most Israelis, yes, there is something to that. Remember the 1936 Arab Revolt? What happened then was that the Zionist movement created more settlements, and that was correct policy from their point of view. We could not give up the dream because the Arabs revolted, so what we did was we gave a Zionist response to what which was to double our efforts to have a hold on the country and to acquire more territory, etc.

Now, today, the agenda is whether we do not have too much territory. So what is the Zionist response? This is debated amongst us, but the term Zionist response rings right for most Israelis because that was the way they always conceived of themselves and what was happening to them over the last hundred years, as a matter of fact.

Much of this is very difficult to change, and some of the strong thought of certain circles among Israeli intellectuals against Zionism -- the post-Zionist attack you might call it -- is an attempt by those people to undermine some of what I have been describing. But they are a very small minority, and I do not think they stand a great chance by saying, well, Zionism was wrong all along. That is not what will convince Israelis. To say Zionism was wrong all along is a certain denial of the very existence of what we are now. What is needed is to defuse the element of the ethos, and try to undermine that without denying the fact that Zionism succeeded and that we Jews cannot but be happy with that because that was our success and our victory.

I am not sure that is possible, but I want to end by saying that despite all the difficulties, I do not think we have another way to create a culture of peace if we do not actually go on in the process itself, which is a process of agreements and not only of education.

DAVID ROSEN: Where I might demur from some of the things that have been said is the degree to which our situation is particular. I would like to take us back to the discussion and claim that, in fact, those things that have been portrayed as particularities are really part of a universal problem and that the general response, or the general mind set that we need to place ourselves in, is similar to those of other situational contextual conflicts. The problems behind it, therefore, go back to far more basic human problems.

I would even go so far as to say, in my opinion, even the ideological issues that have been referred to, all of which I agree are problematic, are

nevertheless not inherently problematic in themselves, but rather problematic in their usage reflecting a more general problem, a broader problem.

There were many interesting comments which I thought about as my thoughts were crystallizing. I think there were a number of misconceptions, and even, for lack of better term, confused definitions. One was that Musa Budeiri defined nationalism as what I would define as chauvinism. In Hebrew there is a big distinction between *le'umiut* and *le'umanut*. For me, the question of nationalism simply means national identity. It does not refer to the way Musa presented it as essentially, whatever it is, my identity *uber alles* regardless, therefore justifying almost anything that serves its goal. That I would call chauvinism, and there I would agree if that is the definition to which he was referring.

But what emerges out of our conversation, if I understand the intention of the organizers in inviting me to speak within this particular context, is to see the way in which religion plays into this. This has also been referred to. Again, Sari Nusseibeh was suggesting that religion was somehow inherently part of the problem.

Within our identities there are positive elements and negative elements inherently. I think this is actually fallacious. He is correct in his warning about the danger of glorification of the negative, but his assumption that these are inherent components is a fallacy, and I would like to address here the way in which I understand this integration of religion and nationhood relating to concepts of identity and how these things emerge as problematic components that we encounter.

Religion, in essence, seeks to give meaning and direction to the place and purpose of existence in the world. It is thus bound up with all the circles of human interaction from the most minimal -- such as family, to the maximal -- humanity or even creation as a whole.

As Sari Nusseibeh correctly said, these circles make up our composite human identity. We are all made up of composite human identities. They make up our identity not only as individuals but also as social beings -- families, congregations, communities, ethnic groups, nations international frameworks. These are the building blocks which make up our multi-faceted identities, and we ignore these components at our peril.

This was not adequately understood. There were a couple of what I would call naive utopianists among our speakers who think we can ignore these components of human identity. Indeed, modern ethologists and popular social anthropologists have attributed much of modern disorientation and alienation to the breakdown of traditional society and these building blocks of identity, especially family and community. Alvin Toffler, for example, in his book *Human Shock*, highlights the problem of mass deracination in modern society and the serious destabilizing consequences of such rootlessness.

While the phenomenon of contemporary counterculture has substantially been a reaction against modern secular acuity, obsessive materialism and the rat race of contemporary life, Toffler and others like Robert Ardrey have explained the proliferation of sects and cults, the drug culture and other such phenomena in modern society, not only in these terms but also -- and this is the most important thing I think as far as our own discussion -- as reflecting the search for meaning and identity amidst a void resulting from the breakdown of traditional societies and a concomitant disorientation and loss of identity.

In other words, we are focused on where these elements are problematic, and we are right to focus on where they are problematic, but we should not delude ourselves into thinking that their elimination solves our human problems. On the contrary, it can create very serious alternative problems. It is important to emphasize that.

Getting back to our particular focus, in the inextricable relationship between identity and religion, religion seeks to give meaning and purpose to our understanding of who we are as part of smaller units or circles that broaden out in a spiral image in what I would describe as a healthy situation, spiralling out to embrace the wider circles until the totality of humanity or, if you like, being somewhat influenced perhaps by eastern traditions in that regard, seeking to identify with creation as a whole, or even within the Jewish Hassidic mystical tradition.

However, in affirming who we are as part of these smaller circles, identity at the same time declares who we are not. Accordingly, components of our group identities may be used not only for positive affirmation, but also for negative division and conflict, whether between families, communities, ethnic or national groups. Because religion is so inextricably bound up with the different components of our identity, where these are used negatively, religion is caught up all too often as part and parcel of such conflicts, exacerbating hostility instead of combatting it, as we see in so many parts of our world today.

In his work drawing on zoological parallels, Robert Ardrey points out paradoxically a degree of absence of security -- i.e., a threat to one's security -- is itself a most effective stimulus of a particular identity. For example, societies in times of conflict. Our case is a case in point. Whether you are looking at it in the Israeli or the Palestinian context, it is conflict that has fused and forged even a stronger identity in such conditions of threat and insecurity.

Accordingly, sociologically, religion acquires far greater prominence in times of insecurity precisely as a vehicle for nurturing the particular identity that is threatened or undermined. Religion gets caught up in essentially this self-protective, insulating and isolating process, and in such conditions of threat and insecurity -- as pointed out in the book *Violence*

and the Sacred -- societies develop the need to identify an object of blame, a scapegoat, which religion facilitates in its most special way.

Moreover, in a situation of direct conflict, the opponent is demonized in order to strengthen a sense of justification of one's identity, position and claim. Sometimes such needs even breed an astounding obsession compulsion to present the scapegoat -- or the perceived or even real threat -- as the totality of evil, demonizing, in what historian Richard Hafstader describes as the image of the perfect model of malice.

In such contexts, religion, as a vehicle of comfort and security in the face of a real or perceived threat to the particular identity concerned, is likely to be so caught up in this role that its function becomes totally and overwhelmingly introspective, reflecting the insecurity of the particular group.

Of course, religion has the power to move beyond that because religion affirms -- and I will just refer back to that when I come to my demurral, my disagreement over whether religion is inherently the problem or not -- religion affirms the broader dimensions of identity. Every single religion affirms that.

So what is it that makes religion a tool of universalization rather than that of isolation and insularity? Ardrey is suggesting it relates to the question of one's own security as part of the smaller group within the wider context. The more comfortable I feel at that moment in that element of particularity, whatever it may be -- in this case we are talking about nations -- the more comfortable a nation feels in relation to other nations around it within the broader context, the more easily it can identify with common humanity, and therefore see a sense of common identity. The more threatened it feels, the more it will cut off in a spiral process and isolate and insulate itself.

In fact, all extremism, insularity and isolationism is a reflection of alienation, of non-identification with the wider circle of humanity. As indicated, the answer does not lie in eliminating components of our human particularity. The absence of one's self identity particularity, as Kalman mentioned this morning, does not make for a sustainable universalism. In truth, universalism that does not respect these particularisms is, if not of morally dubious motivation, certainly of dubious moral consequence. It is inevitably manifested in some sort of cultural imperialism and triumphalism that we have seen that throughout the course of human history. Ultimately it is unsustainable and evanescent, without real roots and stability.

That is where I think there is a contradiction in some of the things being said. If we do not recognize and respect the other's particularity, which clearly do have national characteristics, then we alienate one another from the ability for common identification beyond our particularities.

So the challenge that we face, which religions face but it is not just a religious challenge -- religions are caught up within the broader context and are being utilized, for better or for worse, as a vehicle of the expression of human identity -- the challenge we face is how to facilitate the greater expression of universal values on the part of particular communities -- and specifically particular religious communities -- without devaluing those positive national or ethnic characteristics.

To this end, I believe we must give due attention to the aforementioned sociological insights regarding religion and identity, to what Ardrey describes as the most basic human need of security. Indeed, a call for justice, a call for dignity, is a call for security -- in other words, that one's place of particularity is recognized within the broader context.

To recognize the role that religion plays within this particular context and of how one's security is most threatened, religion gets caught up in this need, all too often at the expense of its most universal values and aspirations.

In this light, we may comprehend the regrettable reality that, while from time to time there are individuals of remarkable stature who rise above their contemporaries, as a rule, the representatives of institutional religion, reflecting rather than leading their communities, are unlikely to apply themselves to constructive relations between and beyond their communities if the latter feel threatened, whether by political, economic or socio-psychological conditions.

And all these components are to be found in our communities. It is not just our own community that is paranoid. I make so bold -- and I hope I will be forgiven if I say -- that everyone here is paranoid, and I think everybody here has good reason for that paranoia. Therefore, there is a fundamental insecurity that makes it very difficult for people to rise above their own particular pain in order to identify with the broader humanity that transcends particularities while respecting those particularities.

In fact, it is for precisely these reasons that we all too often find religious dignitaries and hierarchies as obstacles rather than serving as impetuses for reconciliation. But again, the biggest obstacles are those factors that generate the insecurity and resentment, that threaten the fabric of both societies and that lead to the expression of frustration through militant action and violence.

I do not think that ideology is a problem, and in this case we will find a difference of opinion here. Some of the terms used this morning I think show -- if I may be allowed to say so -- a degree of ignorance.

For example, there was an assumption clearly evident in Sari Nusseibeh's use of the term *chosen people*, that the Jewish concept of chosen people implies *ipso facto* some inherent superiority. That is a fallacy. It is not that there is never that implied assumption, but it is certainly not normative. It is not to be found in Maimonides or Saadia Gaon. In fact, the rabbis in the

Talmud, basing themselves on Deuteronomy, suggest that, in fact, the concept of chosen people was understood as having some particular purpose, goal and responsibility within the course of human life. Therefore, again, it is a concept which can be used constructively or destructively.

The nomenclature that you hear coming out of certain quarters, whether it relates to biblical or mythical imagery, of Esau or Ishmael or whatever, there are enough sources within it that it can be used constructively or destructively. The term used here, *goyim*, it is true that it has come to be used generally speaking in some form of isolationary manner. But its inherent origin and use is by no means negative, nor is there a reason to assume that the attitude toward the gentile is negative. On the contrary. In terms of fundamental Jewish teaching, each human being, because he or she is created in the divine image, has inalienable sanctity of life and human dignity. Which concept will be emphasized depends on the state of the community utilizing it. Its social, cultural and political context determines how religion is going to be used.

So what we have today is, in effect, a battle for texts and symbols. A most classic example of that within the Israeli context within religious circles is this concept of *pikuah nefesh*, saving life. For Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef, a Haredi rabbi in terms of our nomenclature, saving life is a reason to give up territory, to come to a political compromise with our Palestinian neighbors. For Oz and Netivot Shalom, the religious peace movement, it is an imperative not only for the sake of the Jewish community, but also out of respect for human identity and life and dignity of the other. But it is precisely the same argument that is used today by Habad, Lubavitch and Hassidic groups within ultra-orthodox circles today that may have become the most militantly opposed to territorial compromise. On what grounds? *Pikuah nefesh*. Because they believe that any territorial compromise is going to be life-threatening.

So this is a classical example that religious terminology and ideology can be used constructively or what we would see as destructively, depending upon the broader socio-political outlook of a particular community.

In other words, the challenge for religion within our context becomes to try to move beyond the socio-political limitations to be able to emphasize the more universalistic teleology. Under the present conditions that is very difficult because, as everybody has been saying in the course of the day and as the late Leibowitz said, it is essentially politics that determines theological outlook rather than the other way around. Until the political reality changes, this perception that seeks to move beyond the particular to the universal is likely to be a minority activity, more involved in damage control than being able to set the tone of the particular community's direction.

What we have to do, I believe, especially within the context if Ardrey's sociological insights are correct, is to give the other the sense that we value and respect their identity and their dignity. The ability to do that enables them to feel safe enough, I believe, to seek out some sense of common identification that can bind us together above our particularities.

I would say, personally, that while interfaith relations is the substance of my life -- and in many respects is the spice of my life because I get an enormous amount of pleasure and enrichment out of it. Even though there were no practical dividend I would still do it -- nevertheless, I think the area that has contributed most significantly within the context of our political conflict is obviously the organization which I helped to found, Rabbis for Human Rights, because it has specifically addressed issues that directly affect the dignity of the other and a sense on the part of the other -- in this case, the Palestinians -- to which there are those on the other side that care about that issue, and therefore the ability to feel some sense of identification beyond their particularity.

So my thesis is that the problem is not ideology. The problem is that ideology will simply be manipulated and exploited according to the socio-political context. I might even say that it is not Gush Emunim people either. I think that the ideology, the mentality of Haredi society is less problematic to the mentality that comes out of religious Zionist neo-messianism. But nevertheless, you cannot say that is the problem either, because within even that context, you can produce a friend like Rabbi Menahem Frumman and some others, on the one hand, or Bin-Nun, whom I would describe as a moderate as opposed to Levinger. So the possibilities of what I would call subjectively constructive or destructive elements can emerge out of almost any ideological context.

MUNTHER DAJANI: In your statement, Mr. Bar-On, you started by mentioning Moshe Dayan's Sharm al-Sheikh over peace anytime. Then you mentioned Begin in your paper, his statement at the Hebrew University that he thought there was not a problem with four million people ruling two million people. He got away with it because nobody said anything at the time. But in my point of view, if both of them were living now, they would have changed their minds because of what has happened in the last few years.

First, one comment about Herzl's statement: If you will it, it is possible. This is also possible for the other side. The same way Israeli children were politically socialized in such terms, also Arab children -- and especially Palestinian children -- have been socialized in that way. I can give you numerous examples. Not a single Arab child has not been socialized in the poetry of the Arab nationalist, Palestinian nationalist language or terminology. So these terms also mean something for us, and we are living up to them. You saw what happened in the Intifada where children took it upon themselves to will the impossible possible, which was, in their point of view, to drive the Israeli army out of the West Bank. And in their minds they did that.

One child was telling me the other day how, for him, this peace process does not mean anything. But he is very proud that his brother was shot putting up a flag somewhere on a pole in the West Bank, while today you see Palestinian flags all over the place. For him, that was enough, for the peace process to have achieved national identity, national police, national symbols of what he thinks of in terms of the Palestinian state which, in his mind, is not coming. In his mind it is already there. Whether the Israelis want it or not, it is already there.

The political socialization of both nations has been very strong and very nationalistic. In those terms, the Palestinians also feel they have achieved something like the Israelis. The Israelis now have their own state, which was impossible in the early 1900's. But it is now on the ground with six million people and four million soldiers and 8,000 tanks or 12,000 tanks and so on.

Another comparison which I found very interesting was about the terrorists with blood on their hands. One kid was asking me the other day: Why don't they think in terms of Israeli pilots having blood on their hands? In Beirut and Amman and Damascus and all over the place they go and kill hundreds of people within minutes and come back heroes. He said: The pilots are the elite group of the Israelis, and they should all be brought to trial.

The political socialization on both sides is changing and people are thinking in those terms. The other day I had an interview with the Jerusalem Post, and they cut off the most important statement which I thought made my point. The whole page was on crime and punishment and about how central the problem is of our heroes, the freedom fighters who are in Israeli prisons. I said: Why do the Israelis have the right to go to the United States and make a big issue and almost reach a point of crisis in the middle of the Wye Plantation agreement about Mr. Pollard, while we, as

Palestinians, do not have the right to speak about our kids who actually brought us the peace process?

In every Palestinian house they speak about these forgotten children who helped us accept the peace process because the PNA will bring them back to us, and they signed the peace process to bring them back to us. And this central core issue, they keep thinking that it is not as important as Pollard, as Azzam Azzam, because of whom Israel's relationship with Egypt plummeted.

Also, with regard to some of the terms which Mr. Netanyahu uses, as a Palestinian, I am personally very grateful to him, and I will tell you why. He speaks about reciprocity. The Labor government never spoke about reciprocity. Reciprocity is something you ask from somebody who is your equal. You do not ask reciprocity from your slave, your occupied. He raises us up from being occupied as a nation to being equal to the Israeli nation when he asks us to reciprocate. If he knew for a second that he is using an expression that we value very much -- we have asked for reciprocity. I am a political scientist. For me, reciprocity in political science means equality because you do not reciprocate to your master. You reciprocate to your equal. For me, Netanyahu put me on equal footing with Clinton. Actually, the other day he said, Mr. Arafat, I am honored you are in my country.

All these are gains achieved by the Palestinian people by means of Mr. Prime Minister Netanyahu, and we would not be there if it were not for him.

With regard to nationalism versus chauvinism and religion, most of the language you used and the books you referred to -- Toffler and so on -- talk about the paradigm of the 1960's and 1970's. For many people now these paradigms have collapsed and there is a completely new literature. From my point of view, the proliferation of sects came about because people in

the 1960's and 1970's could not deal with change, especially in the United States.

People could not deal with change and were looking for another paradigm which was not there yet. They were overwhelmed with the technological revolution, the media and communication revolution. All of sudden, somebody living in South Carolina sees on TV the stomach of his brother in his hands in Vietnam, or Walter Cronkite's picture of somebody putting a knife in somebody else, I think American society at that time could not deal with that. In particular, with the Vietnam case, they could not deal with those changes which were imposed on them within a few weeks or months where the information was being transferred from Southeast Asia to the bedroom of an American middle-class family.

There is a professor at Harvard, Samuel Huntington, who wrote a book called *Social Change* which speaks about the stability of Iran, Libya, Ethiopia, all these regimes. The book came out in 1968. Later on, his latest book *Clash of Civilizations* is completely contradictory to all the literature which we, as political science students at American universities, studied. *Social Change* was the dominant paradigm in political science. And when I read his book *The Clash of Civilizations*, it was, for me, very hopeful because people do change and do learn, and they never really stop learning even at an older age. I thought, at one stage or another, that Huntington thought of himself as God because of the way he was treated in the late 1960's, 1970's and early 1980's, and the way the book was being studied and compared to other books. In comparative political systems, this was one of the cornerstones of the literature.

The last thing is about life and dignity and saving life and how you can explain that. Our fundamentalists do the same. They use the Quran in every way possible to show you that. We have some things called Ishtahad. Exegesis, Midrash. Ishtahad means we Muslims in the Quran have the privilege of making an explanation. If we do it right, we are

rewarded twice by God. If we are wrong or if we are proven wrong later on, we are only rewarded once. This is very important in our religion because you do it in order to explain something, but later on you discover that it was not the real truth. There was another side or other information which was lacking and so on, so you are proven wrong. But it is actually not that bad because you took action rather than not taking action.

And in our explanations, a lot of things which you think in terms of Israel and the Jews and the Bible and the Torah, we have exactly, comparably speaking, the same language and the same explanations and so on. For example, for the loss of the 1967 war or the loss of the 1973 war at a later stage, or the loss of Palestine in 1948, they can give you a very quick and easy explanation. It is one of the human soul for pressure, and they give you the example of Jesus Christ when he came back from the mountain and God asked what would you like me to do for you as a favor. He said, Please don't test me again because that was the hardest of all.

So the test is there the moment we are not on the path of God. We are very far from the path of God. If we were to go back on the path of God, our problems would be solved.

AN ISLAMIC POSITION PERTAINING TO THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI ACCORD
Jamil Abdel Rahim Abdel Karim Hammami

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

Introduction

forgiveness and to whom we turn in repentance. Prayers be upon our master Mohammed, the messenger of goodness, love and of all humanity,

The talk about peace in our time is the talk of the day. Hopes were nurtured, and imaginations aroused when the Palestinian-Israeli accord known as the Oslo Agreement was signed. People believed then that suffering would come to an end, that wounds would be healed, that the image of the Israeli soldier heavily armed with the equipment of death and destruction would disappear, and that the dirty, abhorrent occupation would come to an end.

That is what people believed, but some of them either misunderstood or ignored the nature of the enemy. The suffering increased, wounds became deeper, the ugly picture became uglier, and the machinery of destruction continued its rampage, with the boots of the occupation crushing all hope and turning it into nothing but an almost forgotten dream. In short, we witnessed the natural results of the illegal actions of one of the parties to the agreement, namely Israel.

This research is based on the concept of peace in Islam, especially in relation to the fundamental elements of various agreements, including the

Palestinian-Israeli accord. In the first chapter, I deal in detail with the general concept of peace in Islam, and in the second, with the way in which Islam imposes on any accord a number of controls and conditions. In the third and final chapter, I present the Islamic attitude toward the Oslo Accord, based on my own understanding and an analytical study of the agreement.

I hope I have contributed to the discussion concerning this subject. If I have succeeded, my success is attributed only to Allah. My shortcomings, if any, are mine alone and the manifestation of my human nature.

Preface

This study on the topic of peace in Islam is not intended to be anything more than a modest contribution to the efforts to reveal the attempts by wicked writers to distort if not totally misrepresent the nature of Islam and its teachings. Having submitted themselves to the will of those who manipulate the media with the intention of striking at Islam and Moslems, these writers persist in writing falsehoods and making malicious claims concerning both. Indeed, their success has reached such a level that the concept of peace in Islam for many non-Moslems has become nothing more than a delusion or fantasy.

When Moslems, including myself, talk about peace in Islam, it should not be regarded as a miserable effort to prove that we have what we do not have, or as an effort to realize the natural aspirations of human beings. It is rather a means by which we hope to affirm the invariable beliefs that stem from the Book of the Almighty and the tradition of His messenger (may speak by a genuine desire for improved understanding and peace, not a wish to engage in a futile exercise in clever writing or rhetorical speaking.

Peace has been an intrinsic feature of Islam since the time of its inception, and it will remain so until the Day of Judgment. The features of peace are mentioned in the Book of God and in the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ subject to the mood nor whim of any individual, academic, or ruler, or to the opinion of a leader or a group. The features of peace are fixed binding rulings, which cannot be changed or replaced; not by the moving sands of politics, nor by temporary selfish interests, according to which the strong imposes his conditions on the weak, the rich on the poor, and the victorious on the defeated.

Our talk about peace should not be viewed as an indication that Islam is a field for experimenting with modern political terms which have been imposed upon us by the current bitter realities. Such realities include the cowardly attempts to assassinate the concept of peace, made by wicked individuals and groups who no longer belong to this nation, but who opted to bury equality, human rights, justice, security, freedom, and dignity.

Rather, we present a position towards peace as we understand it, and as defined in Islamic teachings, without resorting to falsifications or attempts to placate others. We have only one guideline, namely, to discuss the issue of peace in Islam whilst remaining true to the concept of the truth.

Peace in Islam

Islam is a blanket religion whose teachings encompass every single aspect of life. It aims to establish the bases of goodness and stability in them to live contentedly in the absence of any discrimination. As well as establishing stability, Islam also provides its followers with appropriate practical and theoretical paths to realizing the meaning of peace. Indeed,

peace is one of the basic principles of Islam, and being such, it is deeply rooted in the hearts of all Moslems to such a degree that it has become not only part of their belief, but also their very existence.

feeling and attitude, which stems from God the Almighty and the Sunna of the Prophet, his sayings and a

Peace, which is the name of our religion, is one of the names of God
The Source of Peace, The Guardian of Faith, The Preserver of Safety, The Exalted in Might, The Irresistible.
The bearer of this message, Prophet Mohammed (may the prayers of God be upon him) is considered the bearer of peace because it

It is therefore not coincidental that the word peace (*salam*) is constantly reiterated in the everyday life of Moslems. Let us look at some of the occasions when the word *salam* is used; anyone who has done the same should be left with no doubt that Islam is indeed the religion of peace:

Salam

alaikum
beginning and end of any conversation. The Quran was first revealed to Prophet Mohammed during the Night of power (*Laylat Al-Qadr*), a night which epitomizes the meaning of peace. On this night, peace prevails and the angels of peace are everywhere.

Peace in Islam means security for free non-Moslems living in Moslem countries. If an opponent utters the word, then all fighting against him must cease.

Peace is the greeting with which God will receive his

subjects

salutation): Peace unto you for that ye persevered in patience! Now How

Heaven, promised to believers, is the house of peace.

Peace is also the language of the people of heaven.

Peac

A Moslem does not hold back from responding positively to the call of peace.

towards peace

A religion in which peace has such meaning is indeed the religion of true peace. How can it be otherwise, when it has deepened the spirit of intimacy, affection and love among its followers and prohibited splits and dispersion, thereby ensuring that its structure remains solid and strong?

The fruits of peace in Islam are evident and easily recognizable. There is therefore no need to hold meetings and conferences in order to convince people that it is so, because the very foundations of Islam are based on love and dignity. Amongst the greatest and most natural of the fruits of peace in Islam is the acceptance of the principle of coexistence among nations, which not only organizes the relations amongst Moslems, but also their relations with people of other countries and religions. (Understanding and coexistence cannot be recognized between two parties of different ways of thinking and beliefs, unless each is willing to live with and tolerate the other, settle matters of difference and accept the principle of religious plurality. It is not sufficient for one party only to believe in coexistence and tolerance, while the other party - or parties - rejects them).

The basis of the tolerant attitude of Moslems towards their opponents is the religious education that has been instilled in their hearts and minds. Theirs is an inherently solid perspective, which cannot be shaken by selfish whims. The examples of the attitude and behavior of the

this is so. Al-Bukhari related, after Jaber Ibn Abdallah (may God be pleased with both of them), the story of how when a funeral passed by the Prophet (may the prayers of God be upon him) he immediately stood up, and upon

This is the concept of peace in Islam: security, safety, and stability in every aspect of daily life. It is coexistence among the nations, built upon the basis of mutual respect, which acknowledges the dignity of man and protects him from the evil inclinations and wrongdoing of those with a tendency to act upon whims.

The history of the world has never witnessed an era in which the manifestations of goodness, mercy, love, selflessness, justice, kindness, faithfulness, peace, and security were more prevalent than during the periods of Islamic rule. During such periods, free non-Moslems lived freely under the rule of God. Can we forget that the Christians of Syria said to us, and do rule us better than those (the Greeks), who overwhelmed us,

I conclude by quoting the orientalist Gibb, who said in one of his books, Islam is still capable of presenting to humanity a noble and great service. There is no responsible authority that can succeed so greatly in unifying scattered human races in one party. So if you study the conflicts of great Eastern and Western countries, then resorting to Islam to solve the

Treaties in Islam

The relation of Islam with other regimes and rulers is based on respect and mutual recognition. War is considered an option that should only be pursued in order to resolve an extraordinary situation that has arisen as a result of an aggression waged against the State of Islam and Moslems or a serious attempt to derogate their rule. Islam

wars to be the paths of devils, which destroy human life.

The obligation to refrain from waging war unnecessarily is mentioned clearly in the Quran, which addressed the Islamic nation and all generations of Moslems without making any distinction between one age and another. The Almighty said, (*and follow not the footsteps of the Evil One; for he is to you an avowed* (*(instead) send you (guarantees of) peace, then Allah hath opened no way* *ncline towards peace, do* *thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah. Should they intend* *those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for, Allah loveth not transgr*).

These words affirm the nature of relations between Islam and other regimes unequivocally and without any ambiguity. When fighting was imposed on the Moslems it was made clear that it should take place only when absolutely necessary and under certain circumstances, as clearly *To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged, and verily, Allah is Most Powerful for their aid- (they are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right (for no cause) except* *Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries,*

churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated, in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid his (cause)- for verily Allah is full of Strength, exalted in Might (Able

The Prophet was therefore instructed to fight for two reasons *only*: To repel an act or acts of aggression waged against the Moslems, such as

when they drove him out of Mecca. To confront an act or acts of aggression by states or regimes against Moslems under their rule. In this respect, the Moslem State is bound to defend its sons and daughters and

is a rule and war is a necessity to establish the rule of God on Earth and to liberate the people from slavery but to God, and a necessity to repel the tyranny of tyrants, and to establish the word of God and the justice of God. It is a necessity to realize the welfare of humanity, not just the welfare of a nation, a race or an individual. It is a necessity to realize the higher example

basis of relations between Islam and other nations and regimes, but there are controls that protect these relations, lest matters be governed by the mood of a ruler or the self-serving wishes of a regime.

Among these controls are the following:

1. Respect for the basic principle of the dignity of man.

God created man in the best of all shapes and preferred him to many of His creatures, blessing him with the ability to establish the rule of God on earth and realize the humanity of mankind. This honor is not specific to a certain race or persons; rather it was bestowed upon all people, who are equal before God. The Prophet (may the prayers of God be upon him) said,

human dignity is established by the Quran and Sunna (tradition of the Prophet), for all those in whom the meaning of man is realized. Man was honored by the mind that God the Almighty gave him, and with which the Almighty brought the whole universe and its contents, whether on the earth or in the heavens, with no preference among people based on their color, as the white and the black are equal except in fearing

2. The unity of human origin.

Islam looks at all people in a humane and positive way. Differences and splits occur only as a result of whims or impulsive behavior. God the Almighty says,

you from a single Person, created of like nature His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women - fear Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (revere) the wombs

The Almighty also says,

and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full

God the Almighty sent his messengers with gifts to rule among the people, according to His will. *Mankind was one single nation, and Allah sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the Book in truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed; but the people of the Book, after the clear signs came to them, did not differ among themselves, except through*

In this kind of spirit, Islam regards every individual as equal, there being no discrimination on the basis of race, color or language.

3. Cooperation for the benefit of humanity.

Islam called for the principle of cooperation for the benefit of humanity, and not for the sake of establishing narrow regional alignments, or to allow the members of one group to cooperate together in order to harm another.

4. Tolerance.

Islam established its relations with others upon the principle of tolerance without humility or subjugation. History serves as a witness to the tolerance of Moslems towards others and to the fact that such tolerance gave an entirely new quality to relations amongst peoples and regimes.

The story of the conquest of Mecca is an excellent example. The Prophet (may the prayers of God be upon him) displayed amazing tolerance with regard to those who cursed and insulted him, harmed him, and incited the tribes and all the people against him prior to expelling him and his followers from the country. In spite of the way in which he was treated, the Prophet became stronger and was able to return victorious with dignity and honor to Mecca. The people of Mecca, who were accustomed to acts of revenge, wondered what the Prophet would do to them following his

he between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate, and no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint- none but persons of the greatest good

According to Abu Zahra, it was the tradition of the Prophet, during all his battles, to please hearts with forgiveness instead of provoking them to seek revenge or resort to acts of revenge himself. After the onslaught of Bani Al-Mutlaq, he secured the release of 100 people whom the Moslems

wanted to enslave by marrying Huriyyah Bint Al-Hareth, the daughter of the chieftain of this tribe. Following his marriage, every Moslem soldier

a commendable declaration of forgiveness.

5. Freedom.

The principle of freedom is a basic aspect of the Islamic attitude toward mankind. The mentality, psyche, body, property and belief of man are respected unless they are used to attack others. In other words, the freedom of the individual is controlled, in order to preserve the lives of others, their dignity and feelings, and to ensure that man does not behave without a conscience, morals or values. Islam gave man freedom because it believed that man is trustworthy; should he prove unworthy of this trust, then his freedom will be withdrawn and his movement restricted, in order to protect society.

Islam respects the mind of the individual and gives him the freedom to think, travel and believe. The Almighty said,

A good example of the way in which this instruction was heeded involves the Caliph Omar Al-Farouq (may God be pleased with him). When an aged non-Moslem woman who asked the Caliph for something rejected his call to enter Islam, he was afraid that he would be suspected of having tried to force the woman to become Moslem. For this reason, he prayed to God,

6. Justice.

Islam was established upon the principle of justice. Whilst adhering to this principle, the great State of Islam remained supreme and successfully ruled the land and people, who were pleased with the justice

inherent in Islam and the manner in which the orders of God the Almighty were implemented.
liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice

This great religion, which imposed these restrictions and controls, all of which stem from the Book of God and the tradition of his messenger and were implemented by the rulers of the Islamic State throughout the ages, asserted that the destiny of nations should not become hostage to the moods of human beings and the whims and impulses of kings. The question now is whether the treaties and accords that are today being concluded among the regimes of the world are governed by controls that preserve the dignity of man and respect his humanity. The answer is a these treaties merely aim to recognize the dominance and superiority of one people over another and to enable one party to steal the wealth of another, which is forced to constantly pay the price of being the weaker party. At this very moment in time, we are witnessing the signing of different, unbalanced treaties and their negative consequences.

Conditions of treaties in Islam

In order to maintain control over the signing of treaties, Islam identified certain conditions that must exist in order for them to be signed and established rules to be used as a reference in the event of differences occurring amongst people. Thus, it was able to ensure that man did not become a slave to the whims and opinions of others. The conditions are as follows:

The treaties should not contradict a legal text or agreement signed between Moslems. Islam does not endorse any treaty that contradicts religious texts or enables the enemy to conquer Moslem land, degrade its Islamic character or that of its inhabitants, or stea

Prophet (may the prayers of God be upon him) said, Any condition not

The provisions of the treaty should be written in a clear and unambiguous manner to prevent the different parties from interpreting them in different ways. Moreover, they should include identified goals and objectives. The Almighty said, (

after it was firmly planted, and ye may have to taste the evil
It is vitally important that every party to a treaty should be fully aware of his rights and obligations.

A treaty should be based on the acceptance of the parties. An agreement based on suppression, coercion, and threats by a strong party against a weaker one is an invalid agreement.

In light of these controls and conditions, it is possible for us to identify our position regarding the treaties concluded among the regimes and states of this era, be they political, economic, or cultural. Since our topic is the Islamic position towards the peace process, my comments mainly concern the treaties that were concluded between the Israeli party and the Palestinian party: the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, the Cairo Agreement and the Paris Economic Agreement. No differences are seen between these agreements, for the simple reason that the bases upon which which we are seeing

The Islamic Attitude Towards the Palestinian-Accord

Egypt and Israel on the one hand, and Jordan and Israel on the other, for I believe that the beginnings of these agreements and the methodologies behind them are the same. The following points become obvious following a quick reading of the Palestinian-Israeli accord:

The Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles is the second agreement with which Israel attempted to split the Arab ranks, the first being the Camp David Accords signed between Egypt and Israel in 1979. The DoP is considered the most dangerous accord signed to date between the Arab parties and Israel due to the fact that it represents a dangerous turning point in the course of the quest to find a solution to the Question of Palestine. The accord has ousted the problem from its real dimension, namely the Arab and Islamic one, and placed it instead in a narrow regional dimension, which Israel has attempted to emphasize since it emerged as a state.

The agreement totally contradicts the basic principles and programs that the PLO adopted prior to its signing. From an international perspective, the agreement was reached with representatives of the Palestinian people, who have more right than any other party to sign such a document.

accelerating the signing of unilateral agreements with the Israeli party. This resulted, amongst other things, in the states in question opening representative offices in Israel and the Israelis opening representative offices in states such as Oman, Morocco, Tunisia, and Mauritania. I believe that were it not for the current political situation, many Arab states would have rushed to the shores of Jaffa, Haifa and Tel Aviv.

The effects of the Oslo Accord on the Palestinian, Arab and Islamic arenas are as follows:

The agreement, signed by the two parties most directly concerned with the Palestinian problem, removed the problem from its international context and confined it to the bilateral track. The agreement changed the

international attitude toward the Palestinian people who, in the eyes of the world, were no longer a people whose rights and land had been confiscated, who had been deported from their land, and who were fighting to secure their return and freedom, but instead, a people who had signed a peace accord with the enemy and were therefore obliged to fulfill their commitments as outlined in the agreement. Israel, it should be noted, has various political spheres.

By signing the accord, the Palestinians have ceded for ever their internationally recognized rights of return and self-determination and their right to liberate their land by all possible means, as outlined in and guaranteed by the UN resolutions and international covenants. The accord caused an internal rift among the Palestinian people and weakened their political performance. It also decreased the possibility of achieving a unified position against the Israeli occupation and contributed to the obliteration of the issue of the Diaspora Palestinians and their Palestinian identity.

The accord ended the deadlock in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict and accelerated the process of normalization between the Arab countries and Israel. It provided some Arab countries

justification to reformulate their relations with Israel. The accord created a state of apathy and indifference in the Arab street and decreased the possibility of mobilizing the Arab and Islamic peoples to the benefit of the Palestinians. The accord created internal obstacles inside the Palestinian and Arab societies, which negatively affected the capabilities of the Arab and Islamic nations without resulting in any benefits.

A quick reading of the Oslo Accord also reveals the following:

1. The issue of redeployment.

Redeployment does not mean the end of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, nor the return of the occupation forces to the lines of 4 June 1967. Instead, according to the Israeli military mentality, it means the reorganization of the Israeli military forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Following the final redeployment, the Israeli army will be centered in security areas o the Palestinian territories. According to this logic, redeployment means transforming the West Bank and Gaza Strip into cantons, whilst placing the responsibility for the security of the settlements built on land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip into Israeli hands whilst denying the Palestinian party any say in the matter.

2. Jerusalem.

The accord ignored the issue of Jerusalem and postponed any negotiations pertaining to the finding of a solution to the permanent status negotiations. This helped Israel to impose facts on the ground in Jerusalem, thereby changing further the features of the city. In fact, Israel has been accelerating its efforts to change the features of the city. Moreover, it re-endorsed a decision it took in 1990 to annex occupied Jerusalem, thereby affirming that it considers unified Jerusalem as its eternal indivisible capital. The Labor Party, whose government signed the accord with the Palestinians, also enacted a law that expanded the municipal borders of Jerusalem to include a number of settlements in the West Bank. According to the Israeli perspective, postponing the discussion of the Jerusalem issue was merely a tactic, which was employed only to ensure the continuation of negotiations with the Palestinians on other issues; Jerusalem will remain, from a Labor Party perspective, the unified eternal capital of Israel.

3. Land and settlements.

The Israeli party refused to delineate the geographical jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority during the negotiations that preceded the signing

rights with regard to the use of land and natural resources, particularly water. Moreover, Israel postponed discussion of the issue of settlements but asserted that those in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will remain following the final status negotiations. Israel exploited this provision, expanded the settlements, confiscated thousands of dunums of land under alleged security pretexts, and constructed by-pass roads. The fact that the Palestinians agreed to postpone discussion of the issues of land, settlements and the geographical jurisdiction of the PNA enabled Israel to impose new facts on the ground, including the expansion of settlements, the confiscation of land, and the reduction of Palestinian options.

4

The accord empowered Israel with sole responsibility for dealing with the issue of security. The Palestinian party is unable to hold any Israeli who commits a crime in the Palestinian territories and is obliged to hand him over to Israel.

The Israeli party determined that any attempts by the Palestinians to deal with their own security needs or those of Israel should be restricted to

The security agreement between the Authority and Israel led to a state of confusion in Palestinian society, as the Authority now considers itself chained to its agreements with Israel, while the opposition believes that it has the right to resist the occupation by all legal means.

5. Water.

The accord stated that both parties must cooperate in administering water in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and in formulating proposals concerning the water rights of each part, but did itself identify the rights of each. It should be taken into account that Israel is in control of water resources in most the West Bank and Gaza Strip, prevents the Palestinian party from digging new wells and makes unilateral decisions concerning the quantities of water to which the Palestinian party is entitled, thereby obstructing the development of the Palestinian infrastructure on both the agricultural and industrial level.

Israel still considers the water resources in the Authority areas as national Israeli water resources, having decided that the sole function of the Palestinian Authority in this respect is to prepare data and submit it to the proper Israeli authorities.

6. The refugee issue.

It is most regrettable that the Oslo Accord did not tackle the issue of refugees and the Diaspora Palestinians, because its failure to do so has resulted in a state of frustration and despondence amongst them and a feeling that the Palestinian leadership has abandoned them.

The only thing done on behalf of the refugees was to form a quadrilateral Palestinian, Egyptian, Jordanian and Israeli committee, which is responsible for deciding upon the manner in which some of the refugees will be allowed to return. The committee is progressing slowly and is still trying to determine who is a refugee and who is a displaced person without referring to the right of return.

7. Economy.

Israel has resorted to various methods to destroy the Palestinian economy and keep it dependent on its own, including by controlling the

resources of the Palestinian economy in order to obstruct its growth and struggle for independence. I do not wish to go into greater detail in this respect, or to analyze the Paris Economic Agreement, which is in fact part of the overall agreement that was signed by the two parties. It is sufficient to say that Israel will continue to deal with all economic, security, and political agreements according to its own perspective. Clearly, any agreement, based on so shaky a base, will never be able to withstand the current harsh realities.

I would like to repeat what Munir Shafiq wrote in his book about the Oslo Agreement:

new dimensions,
which exceed the concessions of the Palestinian party and do not only infringe on the rights, invariable principles, history, national and psychological reserve of the people, maintaining the occupation, settlements and the annexation of East Jerusalem to the state of the enemy, but also endanger Arab security and the Palestinian affiliation to the Islamic Arab nation. This resulted in Arab and Islamic opposition to the agreement. Such opposition was reduced only by renegotiations in Cairo and by making Egypt a partner to those negotiations, which resulted in a slowing down of the pace of the implementation of the Oslo Agreement and the restriction of its momentum, which the

The real goals of this agreement are the following:

The agreement supposedly aims to solve the big problem, namely the problem of the Palestinian people. The result, of course, will be neither just nor mutually beneficial for as long as it is produced in the game of the New World Order, whereby the Jewish mentality controls the situation of the

Arabs in the new Middle East and views the Palestinians as nothing more than a bridge to the Arab World.

The Israelis are masters of political maneuvering and mass deception; accordingly, the agreement aims to both pacify and warn the Arab and on of the land. The agreement was concluded at a time when it was possible for the Palestinians to secure much better conditions than those to which it was entitled. This was due to the fact that rejection of these conditions by the other party would have resulted in it being condemned as a non-genuine partner in the search for improved understanding and peace.

The agreement was designed to rescue Israel from the state of embarrassment in which it found itself as a result of the Palestinian *Intifada*, which changed the balance of power and empowered the people in the occupied territories with the ability to play an important and vital role.

In light of the above, what position should we adopt?

There is no doubt that the Oslo Agreement itself and the speed at which it was initially implemented have put the Palestinian society in general in an extremely difficult and complicated situation. It has also put the opposition - at the forefront of which is the Islamic movement - in an even more difficult and complicated situation due to the fact that it has been forced to face the Palestinian Authority, which is determined to protect and defend its national project at any cost. The Islamic movement, including Hamas, has found itself facing a sweeping current, the

The agreement has made the Islamists face difficult options: either to become a part of the political transformation in the region, or to enter a state of conflict with all its responsibilities, forms, and dangers. The events that took place in the areas under the control of the Palestinian Authority and the tense relations that developed between the Authority and the

Islamic movement are but two examples of the negative results of Oslo. Fortunately, the Islamic movement was able to settle its differences with the Authority in a satisfactory manner, which was based on recognition of the need to prevent fighting amongst the people.

The Islamic movement believes that the land of Palestine is a religious endowment, which should be neither partially nor totally ceded by anyone. The Hamas Covenant states in unequivocal terms that no leader or people has the right to cede it. For as long as Palestine is occupied by the Jews, then liberating it is considered one of the most important duties of the Islamic nation.

This belief has effectively enchaind the Islamic political position and prevented the Islamic movement from developing political initiatives to deal with the realities of the current phase. The one exception, namely, what was presented by Dr. Musa Abu Marzouq, was believed to represent progress in the performance of the Islamic movement. It did not, however, meet with the approval of the movement itself, which attacked it in the strongest possible terms, and the movement remained a hostage to the military discourse and did not indulge in making any contribution to the political dialogue.

I believe that the agreement has been reached in a situation that is dangerous for several reasons, including the following three:

Arab and Islamic splits, and the inability of the nation to reformulate its position.
The political imbalance that is to the exclusive benefit of the Israeli party.
The imbalance became even more evident following the demise of the

Not even the most basic of Palestinian rights has been realized by the agreement. The fact that it was not reached in accordance with the

conditions laid down by Islam gave the upper hand to non-Moslems, who have little respect for the dignity of man and none whatsoever for that of Palestinians or Moslems. This agreement is far too weak to lead to peace, security and stability in the region, and being such, lacks the features that will ensure its success. Moreover, it will be seen as non-binding by future generations.

I believe that the pious religious scholars of the nation, empowered with the tool of Islamic understanding, should formulate a political discourse in a bid to free the nation from the suffering it is experiencing under the current circumstances. This discourse should not stand still at the point of rejection, lest more rights be lost in light of the fact that the Arab and Palestinian parties are still suffering from a state of intoxication, while the Israeli party is becoming more cunning and powerful.

I am convinced that we as a Moslem Palestinian people cannot keep the wheel of conflict running all alone. It is necessary for us to mobilize the peoples of the Arab and Islamic nation toward helping us gain our rights and keep the flame in the hearts the people of this nation alive.

Conclusion

This conclusion does not represent the end of everything, but rather the end of an era and the beginning of action; action which requires a deeper level of understanding and the formulation of a new, original discourse that is based on clarity of perception. To formulate such a discourse entails gathering together all the intellectual, financial and human

image of Islam and its followers has been unfairly distorted.

I intended through this modest research to shed light on the concept of peace in Islam, a concept that so many have attempted to distort and defame. When we talk about peace we talk with hope, knowing in our hearts and minds that man, if obliged to live in a world where peace does not exist will continue to live in a state of fear, misery, and insecurity, threatened by thieves and other immoral people.

We are in desperate need of an Islamic discourse that stems only from the Book of God and the tradition of His messenger, and which is based on the understanding of eloquent scholars, many of whom exist in the various corners of the large Islamic World.

This article is a modest effort and contribution, which is made in the name of salvation and enlightenment. It was born of a genuine belief, based on Islamic teachings, - including respect for the principles of peace and the dignity of man - that the conflict between right and wrong cannot be abrogated by a one-sided agreement or treaty. The conflict can come to an end only when the people are granted their rights and human dignity is restored.

Let us hope and pray that this will happen soon.

Jerusalem
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**THE INFLUENCE OF THE PEACE PROCESS
ON RELIGIOUS-SECULAR RELATIONS IN ISRAEL**
Naftali Rothenberg

The domain of relations between the religious and secular sectors and between religion and state in Israel is extremely complex and among those with the most significant and profound implications for the collective identity of Israelis. The roots of the problem of religious-secular relations lie in deep ideological rifts, the processes of emancipation in nineteenth-century Europe, and of secularization in the first half of the twentieth century. It was perpetuated in the struggle between Zionism, with its mainly secular leadership, and the anti-Zionists, led by the most important rabbis of eastern Europe. The focus of the tension today, which actually began to develop shortly after the birth of the state, is expressed in a legitimate political struggle between parties and sectors, which is based less and less on ideology and more and more on influence and the distribution of resources.

The peace process has never exerted a pivotal influence on relations between the religious and secular sectors or between religion and state in Israel. The fact that today, as we shall see below, a portion of the religious sector has adopted hawkish positions opposed to the peace process, has only tenuous historical roots. In the age of the great debate between the Revisionists, led by Zev Jabotinsky, and the other Zionist streams, the religious Zionists adopted a moderate position in the middle, much as it did with regard to other political altercations. In those days, the ultra orthodox stream was almost completely out of the picture and was even more moderate, because of its rejection in principle of Zionism.

not have nearly as serious and far-reaching an influence on Israeli society as do secular-religious tensions. It is important to emphasize this at the

outset, so that my remarks below will be understood in the light of this reservation and in the correct proportions.

The Peace Process and Relations between Religion and State in Various Sectors of Israeli Society

As already stated, the political controversy about the peace process has only a limited influence on relations between religion and state and between the religious and secular. The correlation between the two disputes is to be found chiefly in specific subsectors of the secular and

peace process stems from ideology or deeply seated identification. The following two groups belong to this category:

1

Ashkenazim: They frequently hold positions against the religious or against the religious establishment and are actively seeking separation between religion and state. For this secular left, the fact that the spearhead of the right, Gush Emunim, are religiously observant, creates a link between

its adversary. ces the militancy of its stand against

2. The religious right, which populates the settlements, and its supporters, Gush Emunim and the ideologically motivated group centered around the Merkaz Harav yeshiva: Only some of the ideologues of Gush Emunim and the religious right combine the ideology of settlement throughout the land

of Israel with a philosophy of Jewish sovereignty that has implications for relations between religion and state. But the link between the two ideological components is not absolute, and the religious right tends to give preference to the drive to settle the land. Many settlers are actively opposed to religious legislation and understand the need for pluralism in this domain. Some of them take a moderate stand in matters of religion and state because they have decided that Jewish control of the territories is a more important value and believe that a linkage of the struggle for the Land of Israel with that of the issue of religion and state decreases the chances of gaining broad public support for the former.

Outside these two specific sectors, however, the majority of the Jews in Israel make no linkage between the two areas. It is important to note that Israel has experienced a process that has changed it from an idealistic and collectivist society into a nation of individualists whose identity and positions are not to be judged on the basis of the militant minorities of left and right. Most of the secular and traditional public occupy the center of the map in every respect. Politically they identify with various formulas that associate the concepts of peace and security, with a slight preference for the more stringent version of the Likud, vintage 1998. At least a third of the modern religious-Zionist sector is also aligned with this majority. The balance of the national-religious sector includes, as stated, the hard core of the opponents of the political process. This is the group that produces the leadership of the settlers in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, Gush Emunim and the YESHA Council.

The ultra orthodox do not have a uniform position on the peace process. Its many constituent communities hold views that cover the entire

spectrum of its leadership support the peace process. One hears voices like that of the Belzer Rebbe expressing opposition to continued Jewish settlement in Hebron. As long ago as the early 1970s, the Shas

Rabbi Shach. The positions of the Gerrer hasidim, who are largest hasidic community in Israel, are further to the right, but certainly not on the far right. The hasidic leadership favor Israeli sovereignty over as much of the territories as possible, but their approach is pragmatic: they reject any extreme political position and understand the need for compromise and international support. In general, the main thrust of the political activity of

focused on the allocation of national resources and reinforcement of the ultra orthodox sector and its institutions. They conspicuously avoid any display of public activity on general political issues, foreign affairs and defense policy, and the peace process. By contrast, the Habad movement, another large community that has a broad distribution of supporters in every city and town, and has been more active in its opposition to all the peace agreements between Israel and its neighbors. It worked vigorously to support of the movement to halt the withdrawal from Sinai, at the time of the peace agreement with Egypt, and has been extremely active against the Oslo accords and continuation of the peace process with the Palestinians.

The focal point of the tensions between the secular and religious in Israel is the relations between the ultra orthodox and secular-traditional sectors. These relations are based on a balance of mutual fear and deep roots of intersectoral conflict. Unlike the national-religious sector, which is fully integrated into all spheres of state and society, the ultra orthodox lifestyle is an alternative that is totally antithetical to non-ultra orthodox life, and vice versa. Because, however, the majority of the ultra orthodox leadership has a dovish attitude toward the peace process, there is a blatant lack of correlation between the religious-secular tension, the controversy about religion and state, and the disagreement about the peace process. A large proportion of the anti-ultra orthodox secular left is unable to internalize this fact.

A political expression of the dissociation between the two realms of in the secular sector, can be found in results of the 1992 elections as they relate to two parties, Meretz and Tsomet. These two parties have diametrically opposed positions on the peace process but take very similar stands on the separation of religion and state. Many secular citizens with hawkish views would never have dreamed of voting for Meretz because of its support for the peace process; Tsomet provided them with an opportunity to express their views in the political area while also asserting their demands with regard to religion and state.

I shall relate briefly to the sectoral and ethnic division and its significance for the peace process. It is true that Ashkenazim (those of European ancestry) and secular Jews are more disposed to support the peace process and that traditional Sephardim Jews (those of Asian and African ancestry) are more likely to be opposed to it. Many of the former support the Labour party and Meretz, and many of the latter vote for the Likud. The reasons for this are not ideological and have no direct connection with questions of religious identity; instead, they are associated with historical processes of the consolidation of Israeli society and differences of culture and mass communications.

We must not forget that many Jews from the Oriental communities support the peace process and many secular Ashkenazim are opposed to it. The identification of broad strata of Sephardim with Shas also has a moderating influence on the political expression of their preferences with regard to the peace process. The unequivocal dovish position of the leader of Shas means that its Knesset members support the peace process.

An analysis of the prevailing opinions in the various sectors of Jewish society in Israel strengthens the picture of asymmetry in the debate over the peace process and disagreement about matters of religion and state. Insofar as positions on the peace process influence religious-secular

relations, it is a case of subsectors motivated by an ideological approach that links the two components: support for peace and the struggle to separate religion and state, on one hand; or an effort to settle the territories and a political philosophy that favors the integration of religion and state, on the other. Most Israelis, as stated, support neither of these two positions.

ape after the Sixth Day War, in parallel to the political debate about the attitude toward the territories: should they be annexed to Israel or used as a means for achieving peace with our neighbors? This debate has its roots in the pre-State contention surrounding the various plans for partition of mandatory Palestine. In those years, some argued that halakhah forbade Jews to that in any case the Land of Israel was not under Jewish sovereignty and any proposal that could contribute to rescuing Jews and consolidating national survival should be accepted.

The situation after the Sixth Day War was of course different: its results left all of The western land of Israel under Israeli civilian or military sovereignty. Now there were real and practical implications to giving up territory. Two disagreements emerged in this context. One of them asked whether halakhah should even express an opinion about such an issue, while the second debate related to the issue itself. With regard to the first question, some rabbis maintained that in so complex an issue, from the political and security standpoints, the decision should be left to the politicians and security establishment; rabbis should not be involved. The most prominent exponent of this view was the late Rabbi Hayyim David Halevi, the chief rabbi of Tel Aviv. Many other leading rabbis of all camps did not accept this approach, but disagreed among themselves as to

whether it was permitted to give up the territories in the context of political negotiations. This is not the place to get into the thick of this controversy and the various arguments advanced by either side. We should merely note that this question has never been decided in either direction and that there is no real chance that it ever will be. Those who are opposed to the peace process, who support their position with a halakhic argument that it is forbidden to give away parts of the Land of Israel, have a solid basis for their case. By the same token, those who support the peace process and allege a halakhic justification for returning territory to prevent war, even if the peace is not absolute, also have copious sources on which they can rely.

If the political process with the Palestinians moves forward and agreement is reached on a permanent settlement and peace, it stands to reason that much of the ideological discord within Israeli society will

will have become moot.

Using Halakhah for Political Objectives

early 1970s. Since the beginning of the Oslo process, however, we have witnessed another form of involvement by rabbis from Israel and United

denouncing the peace agreements and their implementation. The ritual has been repeated a number of times: at each stage of the interim agreement or any political accord, a number of rabbis, most of them identified with the national-religious stream, have issued statements opposed to them. Some of these declarations were presented as halakhic rulings, as in the celebrated case in July 1995 the Land of

implementation of the Cairo agreement. Anyone who knows what a

halakhic responsum looks like and reads this document understands at once that it was a political manifesto in the superficial guise of a halakhic statement. Even though hundreds of students of these rabbis were actively engaged as soldiers in the redeployment that followed the agreement, there is no need to point out that there was not even a single case of a soldier refusing to obey an order. What is more, their older disciples, who were serving as senior officers in the IDF, appeared in the media and made it known that they would obey military orders and comply with decisions of the political echelon, while i

proclamations as well, including the most recent, published after the Washington agreements of November 1998, included arguments made in the name of halakhah, but they were careful to state that they were not themselves halakhic rulings.

Another attempt to mobilize halakhic rulings in the service of political debate is associated with the publication by Habad of statements, signed by dozens of rabbis, to the effect that returning territory is forbidden, on the grounds that it would violate the halakhic principle of saving lives (pikkuah nefesh) by endangering the Jewish people. Here we have an inverted use of the halakhic argument that supports the principle of land for peace, as advanced by Rabbi Ovadia Yossef and leading ultra orthodox rabbis, who hold this same principle of saving lives may require giving up the territories, if this would make war less likely.

It is important to distinguish between this wave of proclamations and a serious halakhic investigation carried out as part of the authentic debate of the issue of territories for peace, as discussed above.

In our context, particularly after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, political proclamations camouflaged as halakhic rulings actually have a more negative impact on relations between the secular and religious than does the actual debate over the peace process. Groups of rabbis who attempt to dictate policy by issuing halakhic rulings intensify the fear felt

by broad segments of the population of a process that might lead to a theocratic regime.

Of course one significant event associated with the peace process, unlike all the other components of the debate about the process, had a decisive and far-reaching impact on religious-secular relations: the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by an assailant who alleged that he was acting on behalf of the Jewish people and had the backing of religion and halakhah. In the eyes of an absolute majority of Israelis, ultra orthodox, religious, traditional, and secular, Yigal Amir is a religious person. Most Israelis also believe that there really were halakhic rulings to the effect that the life of the murdered prime minister was forfeit. Naturally this leads to a more severe rupture in religious-secular relations. On the other hand, the fact that the peace process itself does not have a significant impact on religious-secular relations, but only an extremist act associated with it, tells us quite a bit about the question we have raised.

Israelis have not yet internalized the full significance of the murder of the prime minister. The complexity of these influences and implications for the coalescence of the collective identity of Israelis remains to be seen; it will depend on a series of processes and reactions over the coming years.

Changes in Basic Concepts of Identity

The involvement of many religious Israelis in the settlement movement in the territories and the religious preoccupation with the significance of the meaning of the Land of Israel as a component of identity has influenced the cultural identity of very broad sectors of the population. This influence is not unambiguous and actually works in opposing directions.

From the ethical perspective we are witness to a phenomenon of a sectoral appropriation of Jewish and Zionist identity. Some secularists tell themselves, accordingly,

then it belongs to the religious, then it belongs to the religious who appropriate this value tell themselves that, as Jews who observe the commands they are just as meticulous about this as they are about the other components of their religious identity.

A similar phenomenon is basic value in the Jewish and Zionist identity of secular Jews, to the point of eliciting a conditioned reflex of opposition and alienation among the religious, who deem the commitment to peace and aspiration to attain it as an expression of secular identity. Some of the religious public are angry that the value of peace has been hijacked by the secular left.

But alongside the process of alienation from basic elements of identity, as a result of these sectoral appropriations of normative values, the various groups have contributed to the internalization of these and other identity-concepts and their consolidation within the collective identity. The kulturkampf between the sectors is not only negative; broad segments of society acquire the elements of their cultural identity thanks to definitions attached to them by one sector or another. The collective consciousness of a large secular-traditional public in Israel attributes its cultural terms of reference to the extreme groups. The cultural concepts of Judaism or the Jewish religion that are adopted were created by religious or ultra orthodox society. In recent years, the national-religious sector has been producing the Zionist terms of culture, while circles that were formerly responsible for creating Zionist terms of culture have moved on to producing post-Zionist terms of culture.

Religious society does not have a monopoly on the production of terms of culture. The intellectual elite makes available to the collective Israeli consciousness cultural terms that are associated with the values of democracy and human rights; other sectors, too, contribute to the shaping of the collective identity of Israeli society.

Summary

In the specific context of this article we can say that the difference in attitudes toward the peace process has led to a deeper split between the religious and secular only with regard to defined groups on the secular left and religious right. Even though questions of religion and state and the tension between the sectors are central for them, the influence of the peace process on this arena has remained marginal for the majority of Israelis, except for the far-reaching implications of the Rabin assassination and some influence of the use of halakhah for political purposes.

The fact that a large plurality or even majority of Israelis are committed to peace, not as an abstract ideal or as lip service but as a reality and way of life that is the product of a particular compromise, is also an outcome of basic identity components of the Jewish and Zionist ethos. Jewish culture, which contains within it religion and halakhah, is chiefly a culture of peace. Life is held to be a higher value than many other important ones; centuries of Jewish life without sovereignty or territory intensified this primacy, not only over particular values but also over sectoral and national values. Jews in all generations and within various civilizations were among the pioneers and advocates of the universal approach that holds up general moral principles, including the prevention of violence and a commitment to peace, as the supreme values for all humanity.

This commitment exists in all streams and sectors. This ethos, which sees the aspiration for peace, realized through concessions and

compromise, as a way of life, existed during the first nineteen years of Israeli independence and throughout the half-century of Zionist settlement that preceded it. The ethos of a commitment to peace was not shaken by political and security activity that was not always compatible with it, because the general public was not always aware of the latter. But the military victory in 1967 marked the start of a process that was strongly influenced by the fiasco of the Yom Kippur War and which peaked in the Lebanon war. The commitment to peace derived more from the cost of war than from elements of identity and culture.

If there were a need for another factor to show us that collective identity and a change in values are not the product of the bookshelf only, the breakneck improvement in the Israeli economy provides it. The rapid economic development of Israeli society during the last decade has led to a significant alteration in the scale of social priorities.

Somewhat absurdly, a high standard living as the collective identity of Israeli society contributes to the prospects for peace even more than longstanding ideology and norms, though it does not necessarily compete with them. The synthesis between the set of socioeconomic factors and an ethical and cultural fabric creates the conditions for an optimistic society that rejects feelings of anxiety and uncertainty and reduces the odds of belligerent entanglements.

The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, November 1998

DIALOGUE AND PEACEMAKING

Ron Kronish: Someone asked what is the purpose of dialogue. One purpose is to try to understand where the other one is coming from, what they are thinking of. That is one of the things I am trying to do here during these two days.

My first question is to something Said Zeidani said that two momentous decisions need to be made, one by Israel which would be the acceptance of a Palestinian state and the return of refugees, and the other by Palestinians and Arabs to put a real end to violence and to accept Israel. And you said that the first has to come first.

I want to try to understand -- if some of the political scientists around the room can help me -- what happened in the Oslo process. I have this perhaps naive notion that what happened was what I thought was mutual recognition. That is, Mr. Savir and his colleagues and the Palestinians and everybody there got together and made compromises. What I thought happened was that they agreed, after thousands of hours of discussion, to a concept of mutual recognition.

SAID ZEIDANI: Israel recognized the PLO, not a Palestinian state.

RON KRONISH: I understand that. But what I thought happened there was a series of compromises, and the end result was recognition by Israeli leaders of the Palestinian people and its right to something that we will call for the sake of the discussion now an entity, because we all know that Mr. Peres and Mr. Beilin did not say the something which was not clear exactly, but the big step forward was recognition of the Palestinian people, which was not there before. In exchange was the recognition of Israel then, and I thought I heard in a lot of the speeches an end to violence on both sides and resolving things by

discussion, by what they call negotiations. Somebody referred to it as business deals, which is not quite the same as dialogue.

I want to understand. Here we are sitting here a few years later. Oslo happened. They talked for ten months and Oslo happened and they signed this, that and the other, and now you are saying that we have to start over or start at a new place? I need clarity on that.

Also, if someone could help me understand why the Palestinians at that point went for that deal, which was less than a state by a long shot. And everybody knew that. Nobody admitted publicly to a commitment to statehood then, even though privately there may have been various understandings. So I am asking for a little help in understanding what happened then and where we are now, because we seem to be going backwards.

The second question has to do with the concept of reconciliation. Mordechai, if I heard correctly, said peace is done by a deal. Then some people say, if it is successful, then we do reconciliation of the heart later. But first make a deal. But you also said, no, we cannot wait that long. We have to start the reconciliation process now even though we do not have a final status. We do not have the end of the occupation. We do not have what some people call justice. We do not have everything maybe everybody would like. But you say the reconciliation process has to begin now.

One of the things Uri Savir admitted in his book was that the peace process was one of the elites and that very little was done to bring, as it were, the people into it. So my question is, how do you do this reconciliation now in a process which was full of so many obstacles and problems.

The last question is a naive question, a simple question, but I do not imagine that I will get a simple answer. I need to understand, besides the

politics of it -- like whether Bibi wants it and all of this -- what is the problem -- would somebody please explain -- for the Palestinian people in revoking this Charter. I do not get it. I do not understand it. Someone needs to help me understand it.

Why would it not be a step forward in the reconciliation process for the Palestinian people as well? It would somehow convey a message that, hey, we really do not want to destroy Israel. We really accept a two-state solution and we are ready to broadcast it on CNN with Clinton and the rest of the world. This defuses Israel's right. I don't get it. Why? It seems to be a very simple thing which, to me, would go a long way in this process. Why is it so complicated?

GERSHON BASKIN: I would like to try and answer some of your questions and to add some of my own thoughts. The one perhaps undeniable achievement of Oslo was the principle of mutual recognition that led us to a point where we are talking to each other directly after not talking to each other for so many years. This has become an undeniable reality. But it only went halfway. The refugee issue presents the major obstacle which limits our ability to complete the process.

To complete the process Israel and Israelis will have to confront an acceptable solution for the refugee problem. The Palestinians will also have to internalize the legitimacy of Israel impossible without putting an acceptable closing chapter to the refugee problem. This is, in a way, for both sides, almost a psychological impossibility because it requests from each side in some way to deny their own collective identity, their own political reality. For Israelis to fully recognize their part of the responsibility for the refugee problem is almost to say that Israel was born in sin. Yet all Israelis believe that the creation of Israel was, after the Holocaust, a moral imperative. For Palestinians to fully recognize Israel's right to exist, what Israel is asking for, is almost an impossibility for Palestinians because in a way it denies their own

legitimacy as a people on this land. The Palestinians and the Israelis have moral rights of existence of the other side. This must be done through a continued process of reconciliation.

The strategic realities between Israel and the Palestinians produced agreements which did not consider the lack of balance of power between the sides. Nor did the agreements pay enough attention to their longer term needs and interests. Furthermore, the agreements did not consider how their implementation would bring about a decline in popular support for them.

Negotiations focused on the narrow perspective of each side attempting to protect and advance their own interests. Negotiations of this type lead to agreements which are incapable of emphasizing future needs; instead they provide for immediate needs and answer only very short-sighted interests.

Both sides were not aware enough that the actual agreement produced is the less important outcome of negotiations. The most important outcome should be a positive change in the strategic relations between the two sides. New strategic relations must be based upon the achievement of mutual interests and cooperative relations which dissolve old animosities. This is possible only when each side is honestly interested and actively working to strengthen the strategic assets of the partner, rather than interests and short-sighted needs are paramount.

success on the basis of the nature of the strategic relations between the sides we would not reach a very positive grade. The Oslo Agreements are not perceived by the Palestinian public or by the Israelis to be fair and balanced. The leaders have tried to explain away some of the problems of Oslo by saying that these agreements are interim in nature and we have not yet reached the

final status. This will not be the case with the final status talks. The leaders will, therefore, have much less room for maneuverability because concessions will be permanent and later achievements will be unlikely.

Our current situation is that a handful of terrorists have successfully erased the major achievement of Oslo II - the construction of tens of frameworks for cooperation. Almost the only remaining framework is the joint patrols which today are far less successful than they were at first.

separation is a basis for vision. Oslo II has been emptied of its most positive elements because we and our leaders have been incapable of standing in the face of the horrors of terror. The vision of the New Middle East has been replaced by a new reality which includes fences, closures and separation. Talk about closure and separation can not go hand-in-hand with peaceful neighborly relations.

I expect from our leaders to stand up in the face of these horrors and not to surrender to them. I still believe that the border between Israel and Palestine must be a border which is built as areas of joint interests. Industrial parks must be created, not to exploit cheap Palestinian labor, but to attract joint ventures which will merge local Israeli and Palestinian capital (economic and human) with foreign capital. The border must become an example of cooperation in the joint management of water resources, in agricultural research and development, allowing for the free flow of people, goods and capital.

The Israeli market must be open to Palestinian goods, lab time that we see Palestinian olive oil, tehina and other processed food products in our supermarkets. It is time that Palestinian pharmaceutical products are sold in our pharmacies. It is time that we see Palestinian banks opening branches in Israel. Israel must invest in peace much more than it has until now. This is not a donation or a gift to the Palestinians.

Europe, Japan and the United States make donations. Israel must invest, it has a direct, immediate and long-term interest in a prosperous Palestine.

Israel received a considerable peace dividend, mainly the result of new markets in the Far East, new international investments in Israel and better

on t
Palestinian GNP. But the Palestinian economy has deteriorated since Oslo.

interests.

The main challenge for Israel in the future negotiations must be seen in its ability to translate political concessions into strategic gains. That is how real peace will be achieved. The more that our Palestinian partners are strengthened at the end of the negotiations, the stronger the peace will be. For Israel, the single most important concern is security. For the Palestinians there is a need for national honor, independence and dignity. The more the Palestinian side can feel secure with their national honor, independence and dignity, the more security Israel will have. The yard stick for measuring these two elements cannot be the same for the two sides, but they are parallel. Israel should not measure its national honor and dignity with respect to that of the Palestinians. Israel, almost 50 years old, with a European economy and one of the strongest armies in the world does not have the same need for national honor and dignity as do the Palestinians who are only now approaching a normal national status.

in needs are to prevent terrorism. The Palestinians will only truly be partners in the fight against terrorism when that fight merges with their own national interests. Real security will exist not when a Palestinian general receives orders from Israeli general, but when the Palestinians are independent players on a level and balanced playing field which will provide them with the political will to fight the enemies of peace. Both

sides must learn that the joint and mutual interests are superior to the narrow and individual ones.

Finally, time is of the essence. The longer the negotiations takes, the greater the possibilities for the opposition on both sides to derail it. It is in t rather than hold out for as long as possible until the Palestinian side collapses in compromise. Both sides will compromise in the end. The Israeli sides holds almost all of the assets which will ne negotiated. An agreement which will force the Palestinians to give in on their most vital interests will not be an agreement which will receive public support.

These negotiations are going to be much more complex and difficult than any of the previous negotiations and therefore it is urgently important that several key principles are well understood by both sides:

order to be a full and equal partner.

interim measures.

relations which must be based on openness and cooperation and not closure and separation.

omy.

GHASSAN ANDONI: I am a physicist from Bir-Zeit University. I also direct the Rapprochement Center in Bet Sahur.

Let me start with Said Zeidani. I really appreciated the presentation. I learned a lot from it. Nevertheless, I have a problem. Academicians are always trying to make a parallel between Palestinians and Israelis as if, in every corner of life, the same thing happens equally, without quantifying it or without taking into consideration the relevancy of either side. I want to contradict that.

Hypothesis. If all Israelis would change tomorrow, the whole situation would change. If all Palestinians would change tomorrow, nothing would change. So in a sense, when we bring in a parallel, we need to put it in size and relevancy to the situation. This is a critique I have to bring it up because, everywhere I go, most Palestinians are trapped in the idea that when they want to mention something bad on the Israeli side, they have to bring a parallel on the Palestinian side. Otherwise it will not be balanced, right?

Secondly, I want to go to the very important issue of David Rosen's comment that people with a certain identity will become more global and more accommodating to the other side if they feel more secure. And then we introduce the concept of fear. That leads me to the concept of fear in the Palestinian- Israeli problem. I am not comparing now. I am trying to say fear is not only feeling insecure about your life and property. It is also the fear of losing something, or the fear of not having an advantage over so.

We have to define fear very specifically on both sides. One is physical fear. I am threatened. I might be killed. But other fears include, if I have an advantage over others, why should I lose it? I have the chance to expand. Why should I stop? If you get that, then we are tackling the issue of fear more realistically. All the time when we talk about the issue of fear, the impression is that somebody is afraid that his child or his life is in danger. In ninety percent of the cases it is not this. It is different. People are full of fear, but for different reasons. Fear usually produces aggression. I want

more and I am very worried that I cannot get more. I do not want to reach a situation in which I cannot get more.

In my understanding of some Israelis what was described as the Zionist response, which I call the colonial expansionist side of Israeli society, is still extremely high among the public. That is a major part of it. If you ask an Israeli war or Jerusalem, he will say war. I cannot give up Jerusalem even if the price is war. It is the same as Dayan when he said he preferred war and keeping Sharm al-Sheikh. Now it is war and keeping Jerusalem, and gradually it might become war and keeping Kiryat Arba. The challenge is not immediate, but I think this aspect of it is there.

The second issue is a development that we have to witness. The Intifada signalled to Israelis what they called the significance of an enemy from within. In the beginning the enemy was outside. Therefore, if Jordan was neutralized, then you had a good solution to your problem. Now, most Israelis are attuned to the fact that the enemy is from within. That is how the concept of separation, even on a racist basis, even by creating closed Palestinian ghettos, has become extremely important to both right and left in Israel. I think the concept of separation came about from this understanding and not from the ability of Israeli society to apprehend the value of peace in the future. This has to be taken into consideration if we want to understand.

The other fear is that of being killed by violence or terror attacks. On the Palestinian side, the story is different. The fear is not that we are not going to get a Palestinian state in the end. The Palestinian state is a total assumption. People do not really worry a lot about something they do not have in their hands. Rather, the fear in Palestinian society has two dimensions. One is human. Can I live? Can I work? Can I stay here, or in two years will I be outside? Can I move a bit more freely? That is one part of the fear that exists. The second part of the fear is can I hold on to what I have now. People are thinking in those terms.

Said Zeidani mentioned a very interesting thing. Israelis think a Palestinian state is inevitable. But the Palestinian state is not there. On the other hand, very few people among the Palestinian intelligentsia even think in terms of the possibility of a Palestinian state.

The reason for that is that Palestinians calculate it in the following way. In 30 years of Israeli occupation, taking into consideration what Palestinians already have, you can see how it developed at a certain pace until we reached the peace process. Then the pace greatly accelerated. Finally, in terms of how much we lost, I am not sure about this figure, but there are figures that indicate that in Oslo, the Palestinian Authority was given about 150,000 dunams of land. In the same period, Israel expropriated 133,000 dunams of land.

In the end, many Palestinians are full of fears that maybe, in one deal which might take us a year or two, Israel will be able to take over legally probably 40 or 60 percent of the total area of the West Bank. For 30 years the pace of settlements was gradual, and we were fighting as much as we could to hold on to what we had. We are reaching a stage in which, in a year's time, they could be taking probably 300 times what they already took. This is our fear. I think it is the fear of the Authority and for everybody else. Even people engaged in the negotiations are full of fears about that.

Now, why did the Palestinians go to the negotiations? Simply because they were too weak not to go. They could not but agree on whatever was possible to agree upon in that period, hoping things would change in the future.

Now can we address the fears of both. I do not think we can reach a stage at which the end of this process will be known. There is no way now that Netanyahu, or even Peres or Barak -- or even if Yossi Sarid would become the Prime Minister of Israel -- will stand up and say, at the end you will

have a Palestinian state on 1967 borders, more or less, and we will have this arrangement about Jerusalem, etc.

Let's agree that this is a long process. During this period we need some reciprocity in terms of addressing the fears of both, and let me suggest an agenda for addressing those fears.

All Palestinians, including the opposition and including Islamic opposition, will be willing not to take any offensive action against any Israeli who is not directly involved in a direct offensive action against Palestinians. Let's assure the physical side of it. So if you do not take any direct offensive act against Palestinians, not only the Authority but the opposition as well will be willing to work hard, control their members, do whatever in order to guarantee your safety, personal physical safety.

Second, we guarantee, for the interim period, that we will not go into any economic deals that will hinder the position of Israelis who take advantage of our fragile economy or us as a captive market, for this period until we finish. Nobody should be worried about losing.

But we can never address aggression to land. I do not think we can calm Israeli fears of losing the possibility of taking more land in exchange for Palestinians moving freely, no check points, no borders, better employment opportunities even inside Israel, being assured of their property and what they stick to. Probably using the term freezing settlement activities might be very provocative to Israelis. Then we can genuinely see what the real fears are on both sides. Let us genuinely check, with such a proposal, what it is that makes Israelis afraid and what it is that makes Palestinians afraid. If at the end we realize that the major fear on the Israeli side is the fear that you will not be able to take more, then I do not think there is anything to talk about now. If it is proven that it is really security and people are worried and voted because of bombs and attacks, then I think it is our duty

to address that. We have to address that because we genuinely believe we want peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

Let's make this a test case and see whether any politician in Israel would be willing to write his name under it.

PINCHAS INBARI: I am a researcher at IPI, the Peace Implementation Institute. Some short remarks, first about ideologies. I want to speak about Israeli society. I do not see that ideologies now in Israeli society are any obstacle to peace because, in reality, we are now in the age of vanishing ideologies. The fact that the Likud party is exerting the withdrawal from the West Bank speaks for itself. I do not think that the observation that Peres wanted peace with security and Netanyahu wanted security with peace is correct any longer because the differences between Labor and Likud are very minimal. We saw, in the latest municipal elections in Israel, that both Labor and Likud were shattered altogether and new combinations were gathered.

This is the process in Israel, that Likud ideology and Labor ideology -- and Meretz ideology -- are now in the process of changing. I believe that, because of the peace process, new political combinations in Israel will take place in the not too distant future.

As a matter of fact, when we observe the Oslo process, we must admit that it is not a peace process. It is a security process. Initially the Oslo accord was a peace accord. In the original Oslo document, the declaration of Principles, the intention is really for peace. It is really a peaceful document.

But when you compare what is written in the Oslo document with what real peace document that spoke about economic cooperation and down. It turned from a peace

of peace to advance security cooperation between Israel and the PA. When you agree that security dominates everything else, it means that the most that you want to achieve is a cease-fire and not peace. We are now in the process of trying to achieve some kind of a cease-fire and not peace. Once we realize this, we must return to the original Oslo agreements and to creating real peace.

The emphasis on security was not a Likud invention. It was the Labor party's emphasis from the very beginning. The differences between the Likud and Labor are only rhetorical. Nothing else. All the further redeployment maps were already arranged in the IDF, not in Likud headquarters. Whether it is Peres, Rabin or Netanyahu, the maps are the same maps and the road is the same road. But every leader speaks differently, not because of ideological considerations, but because of his practical considerations. In addition, Netanyahu's ideology is not really ideology. It is a practical ideology. As practical considerations change, he will also change his rhetorics. Now he is speaking rhetoric which will keep the support of the ultra-orthodox. That's all. But with a different combination of political influences in Israel he will change this rhetoric as well, and you will see that ideology is not an obstacle.

Even Meretz, which is considered to be a very ideological party, has also changed its very concept of the peace process. When Meretz was a member in the Labor party government, they also agreed to emphasize security considerations rather than peacemaking.

To me, it is very strange. Meretz, which stands for human rights, defending human rights, during the Israeli occupation was the champion of human rights, and it was very important for Meretz to promote education and protect the human rights of the Palestinians. But the moment the Oslo agreements were signed and the PA arrived, Meretz forgot everything regarding human rights. So are there are no human rights any longer? Now

Meretz is undergoing an ideological change and becoming practical like all the other parties.

RIAD MALKI: I am the director of a Palestinian NGO called the Panorama Center for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development. I have also been a professor at Bir-Zeit University for the last 15 years. I am professionally a political engineer. My Ph.D. is on artificial intelligence.

Four quick points based on the presentations. First, ideology. When we look at ideology more closely related to Palestinian and Israeli society, we see that it is mainly a combination of politics and religion. But over time, it is obvious that, in Israel, religion has become a more important element in the formation of ideology, while on the Palestinian side, religion has become less important, while history and perhaps dignity have become more important elements in the formation of ideology.

Now, through the peace process and through the years, we have witnessed the Palestinians moving closer towards getting rid of the influence of ideology, becoming more political pragmatic practitioners in terms of their vision of reality, while Israeli society is still entrenched in their vision of ideology because of the influence of religion. Israeli society is a mixture, and religion is still an integral element, even among secular Israelis, and you can see that in all facets of life.

So because of that right now, we can expect from the Palestinians more initiatives vis-a-vis peace, and a willingness to acknowledge the other and to accept certain concessions and agreements, while on the other hand, we do not see the same coming from the Israeli side in terms of reciprocity because ideology is still an integral element of their vision today, and will continue to be in the future.

This is very important in terms of what I see as the political maturity of the Palestinians, how we were 20 years ago and where we are today, versus where the Israelis were 20 years ago and where they are today. We see that

we have moved ahead much faster than the Israelis in terms of accepting realities, acknowledging these realities and being ready to accommodate ourselves within these realities. Maybe this has to do with weakness versus strength, but in terms of ideology, right now we feel we are freer from the influences of ideology in terms of determining and dictating our own decisions vis-a-vis our political future.

Another point about religion. I was hesitant about raising this issue, but I will raise it nonetheless. It has to do with the image of the other in each one's religion. This is very important. We talk about religions. We talk about Islam, Christianity and Judaism, but we do not go deeper to see how Judaism and Christianity are portrayed in Islam or how Judaism is being portrayed in Christianity. We have all been educated in a way by stories about religion, and these stories sometimes strengthen the stereotyping of the other religions. This, in turn, sometimes strengthens the belief that there is a distance, there are distinct differences between the three religions, and that each one takes a defensive position vis-a-vis the other two. Because we take these defensive positions vis-a-vis the other two religions, sometimes it is difficult not to see those other two religions as enemies, as threats to our integrity, to how we will survive.

Sometimes we hear in Islam the stereotypes about Jews that we were given as children, stories about the Prophet Mohammed's war introducing Islam and how the Jews betrayed him, etc. This is always the case and it keeps coming back. We, as mature individuals living right now in almost the year 2000, are still very influenced by what happened 2,000 years ago in terms of the relationship between these three religions. It influences our behavior and our vision of the others.

It is very significant that Christians talk about betrayal against Christ by a Jew. This is all still very vivid in the minds of people of today. Perhaps this is very important in terms of how we look into the concept of religion in order to begin to go deeper, to educate ourselves about this stereotyping,

and how we can overcome this by trying to understand exactly how it happened, in what scenario and under what conditions. As long as we do not touch it, it is a taboo that continues to influence our minds and our decisions vis-a-vis rapprochement, Muslims vis-a-vis Christians and Jews, or even Palestinian Christians or Muslims vis-a-vis Israelis who are Jews. This is very important. It engulfs our mentality and our vision and our approach.

Third point is reciprocity. Dr. Dajani was talking about how grateful he was to Netanyahu, but he failed to mention one important point. Even today, words like reciprocity still have more than one definitions. You have yours and Netanyahu has his. You are happy because, according to your definition, this is a good thing. You want to see it this way and so you are grateful. But Netanyahu sees it in absolutely the opposite way. That is why Netanyahu separates between giving and taking. For him, reciprocity in terms of giving is your definition: the Palestinians have to give exactly the way the Israelis have to give.

In terms of reciprocity, he takes your definition when it comes to Palestinians giving. But when it comes to Palestinians taking, then it is his own interpretation of reciprocity. That is why we should not fall into the trap of allowing ourselves to interpret things according to what we want. This is exactly what happened with the Wye Plantation agreement. When the Palestinians came back they thought they had negotiated the release of 750 Palestinian political prisoners. But Netanyahu was given the option of selecting the 750 without any constraints, and he decided that out of 750, only 250 would be political prisoners. The rest would be criminals and car thieves. This is precisely the issue.

MUNTHAR DAJANI: One of the basic principles of Oslo was gradualism. Today he speaks about his own definition of reciprocity. Tomorrow he will speak about the US definition of reciprocity. At one stage or another he will have to speak about the international comprehensive understanding of

the word reciprocity. You cannot blame the guy. If he defines reciprocity as take and take, that's fine. Now he is defining it as take. What is yours is mine and what is mine is mine. That's fine. He is talking about the whole West Bank and Eretz Israel and everything. Now he is talking about 9 percent, 7 percent, 16 percent. And we have not yet started any negotiation.

Today two principles of Oslo are missing. One is reciprocity and the other is movement of goods and people. Because of security reasons, Peres, and Netanyahu's government continues, the process of killing both. Now we are at another stage of redefining those terms in Wye Plantation.

Wye Plantation is a completely different agreement from Oslo 1 and Oslo 2. Oslo 1 and 2 were based on economic prosperity, economic stability, confidence-building measures, gradually addressing the grievances of both peoples in order to reach peace and a culture of peace. The Wye Plantation is a new stage of redefining the peace accords.

RIAD MALKI: Of course, gradualism is there, but I think it is the reverse of what you said. Netanyahu starts with a general and moves into the specific. He was talking about reciprocity in the general sense. Now he wants the Americans to stick to his own interpretation of the definition of reciprocity. I believe it is very important, when we talk about reciprocity, to talk about it in the absolute sense -- meaning everything will be included -- and that, of course, will include the Palestinian dimension as a whole. Just to summarize this concept of absolute reciprocity, we really have to get rid of everything that existed in the past in terms of ideological platforms, concepts, policies, everything, and begin rewriting for ourselves new concepts that represent this period of peace that we are talking about.

My last point has to do with fear. You were talking about two simple fears, moving from one place to another and then holding on to what you have as a result. I totally agree, but I would like to raise another issue. It is not

always appropriate to blame only the other side for introducing fear into ourselves, the Palestinians. Sometimes we should ask ourselves who is really to blame in terms of the fear that possesses us, either in terms of being able to move from one place to another or in terms of holding on to our territory. This is very important.

I agree that the Palestinians could not afford not to go to Oslo because they were so weak, but as a result of Oslo and of Wye Plantation, the Palestinians are now experiencing additional fears, not only those that existed prior to Oslo or prior to Wye. In the post-Wye era there are multiplied dimensions of fears. Even the existing fears have multiplied in terms of their effects. Our fears have essentially been a result of the occupation and Israeli policies, but the Palestinian negotiators, in accepting these bad agreements, have also contributed and added to the dimensions of Palestinians' fears vis-a-vis their existence in Palestine.

HANNA SINIORA: I would like to direct a comment to what Ron Kronish. You mentioned the issue of eliminating articles from the Covenant. At least two of us Palestinians here are members of the Palestine National Council. In 1996, both of us raised our hands to annul some of the articles of the Covenant. We did it. So what Netanyahu is doing today is trying to rub our face in it. At that time the government was headed by Mr. Peres, and a letter came out the next day which was sent to Clinton and to Peres saying that the Palestine National Council had voted and annulled the clauses. This is history. It is written.

A few months ago -- as a result of the Wye Memorandum -- the PLO's Executive Committee, the highest body elected by the PNC, also met under the chairmanship of Mr. Arafat. Every member of the Executive Committee present there endorsed and signed the letter that Arafat sent to both Clinton and Peres and it was re-sent. Today, the smaller body of PNC members is meeting in Gaza to again endorse the letter that was sent by Arafat. So this is already very clear. I believe that most of the people of

Israel should already understand that Mr. Netanyahu is playing with words. And he is playing with words not only with Palestinians, but also with his own ministers. Yes, we have responsibility in this. But you also have a responsibility to talk to your public, to explain some of these finer points that some politicians are using just to stay in power. We came out of the Wye Plantation agreement and then we heard Mr. Sharon say to the settlers: Grab as much land as you can.

When it comes to the issue of reciprocity, Netanyahu is today dictating to us that we cannot unilaterally declare a Palestinian state. But again, why did you accept Oslo? You accepted Oslo as a process that would lead eventually to a Palestinian state by building good will and understanding between the two peoples. What is the crime of somebody saying that his dream is to have a state of his own? This is very natural for every people, and it is being referred to as something outrageous and vicious.

My last comment is about prisoners and blood-stained hands. We know that most of those prisoners were directed by their leadership to act in a war of liberation. They committed some acts that we can certainly say were outrageous. But the people who gave the orders are being received at the highest offices in the world, while those people who actually brought about the change are still in prison.

Sharon was responsible directly and indirectly for Sabra and Shatilla. Yet today he is in a big fight about who is going to arrest whom. Even Nobel laureates like Rabin or Peres. Everybody heard what Rabin said during the Intifada about crushing the bones of Palestinians. Yet today we all respect him because he changed and brought about the process of mutual recognition between the two peoples. We can say the same about Mr. Peres. Peres blames the Palestinians because he lost the last election, but he should blame himself for the massacre that took place in Qana in Lebanon.

Finally, today we are looking for change in Israel, yet the leader of the opposition, Ehud Barak, was responsible for an attack in 1972 in Lebanon where he killed several Palestinian people. During the Intifada he was directly responsible for the killing of Abu Jihad. These people are today considered to be statesmen and are received at the highest levels.

What is relevant is that we are talking about an evolutionary process. We ourselves should as people who are trying to bring about change in both our peoples and nations and communities, not to rely on governments at all to effectuate that change. This is what comes out of dialogue and meetings like this.

GERSHON BASKIN: I take issue particularly with what was said about the disappearance of ideology in Israeli society. I claim that the problems of ideology are the major factor why it is difficult or impossible for Israel to make peace with the Palestinians now. I am only talking about the Israeli side, not the Palestinian side at the moment. I agree that political platforms of parties no longer exist, nor have they really been relevant for a long time. They write platforms for election campaigns, and no one listens or reads them afterwards.

But ideology exists within Israeli society, and the paradigm of the ideologies of Israel are both internal -- Israelis vis-a-vis Israelis -- as well as external -- Israelis vis-a-vis Palestinians and the rest of the region. I would say the paradigm is on the question of separation and integration. Vis-a-vis the Palestinians, it is clear that virtually no one in Israeli society offers a vision of peace which is based on integration, which in my view is the only possibility for peace to exist. Peace will not exist with Berlin walls and fences and barbed wire. The security dimension from Oslo or what we have today is a manifestation of the separationists winning out in the argument. The people who talk about integration are a small minority. Integration means envisioning peace between two societies with openness -- open borders, movement of goods and people. Remember that a few short years

ago, before the Intifada, there were no borders. There was occupation and I do not want to go back to occupation, but there was a time when people had no problem with thousands of Palestinian cars crossing into Israel, and today when we should be trying to create peace, that is unthinkable.

We have the ridiculous and dangerous permit system. When people talk about the imposing of a closure from time-to-time, they are wrong. There is always closure. Closure exists all the time. There are just certain times when more people are allowed to move with a certain kind of permit than other times. This is the vision of peace in the minds of most Israelis which has turned into ideology. With regard to talk about Israel integrating into the region, Israelis do not want to integrate into the region. We want to be Europe or America. We want to participate in the Eurovision song contest, not a regional Middle Eastern song contest. We do not want to integrate into the region. So it is external vis-a-vis the Palestinians, external vis-a-vis our neighborhood where we live, but also internal within the society.

In my view, the greatest fear in Israeli society is of Shas, which is becoming the new elite in Israeli society. The Ashkenazi establishment wrongly fears that Shas will bring about integration. That will not happen because Shas is also in favor of separation. But the Ashkenazi elite is fearful because Shas represents Jews who are more like Arabs than Europeans. That creates a great fear. Shas is a religious party which is conservative and has acted in similar ways to the Muslim Brotherhood with regard to addressing social and educational needs, so in that respect it also fits more into the region. But it is a false fear. Shas is also separationist. They do not want to merge with Arabs. They do not want to be part of the neighborhood. They also want to be part of Europe.

This paradigm of ideology in Israel is one of the major factors in our society preventing us from approaching peace with the Palestinians. The vision of peace is built on walls and fences and security and not on the openness of integration. This is an intellectual challenge, and we must translate it

practically into the political dimensions of conceiving of peace in a different way.

RELIGION AND PEACE: JEWS AND JUDAISM, PALESTINIANS AND ISLAM

ROBIN TWITE: I suggest that we should try to look for the positive concepts which come out of the meeting. I hope that one way or another we shall reach some sort of positive thinking, particularly in the last session which is about education and long-term prospects.

David Rosen introduced the subject. Religious identity in this part of the world has gone through quite a few changes. If you had been here in Turkish times you would have been identified mainly by your religion, whether you were Greek Orthodox or Muslim or whatever. When I came here in 1958 for the first time, we all thought religion was not going to be a very significant factor.

I remember talking to Israelis at that time who generally agreed that organized religion was in decline, fading away. But it turned out not to be true. In the last 40 years, religion has pushed through into a very prominent position. It is now a question of whether that pushing through, that arrival of religion on the scene, is positive or negative. Unfortunately, there is a lot of evidence that it is negative, and some evidence that it is positive.

Today we are going to look at religion and peace, so we are looking at the positive side. David Rosen is president of the World Conference for Religion and Peace, a major NGO based in New York which is struggling to take out the good of religion and mitigate the bad, if I can put it that way. I think that is what we are trying to do here, look at what contribution people of religious views can make to improving the situation and how fanaticism and negative qualities can be made less significant. What can the positive side, the identification of the individual soul, be made to contribute.

Our first speaker this morning is Sheikh Jamil Hamami who is going to speak in Arabic and be translated by Mustafa Abu Sway.

Hamami: The topic of my paper is peace and Islam. It is a contribution to unveiling the vagueness that encompasses this topic. It is not a desperate attempt to reflect on this topic, rather to talk about the essential positions in Islam regarding peace.

Peace is an integral part of Islam. It has its own laws -- that is, jurisprudence -- regarding this topic. It does not change with time, and the quacksand of politics do not have an impact on the notion of peace in Islam. The notion of peace is repeated often in Islamic contexts. One is the salutation Muslims always use. They always begin with Peace be upon you. Salaam aleikum. This is an indication of offering peace and security to the other.

Peace is part of worshipping and giving service to God. For this reason, peace is mentioned in the first verses and hadith of the Quran. One is that if the other, the non-Muslim, starts with a notion of peace you cannot regard him as a nonbeliever. The best thing that one is met with on the Day of Judgment or upon entering Heaven is that particular salutation of peace, and so it is this life and in the hereafter that this notion prevails.

Paradise itself is called the House of Peace -- Dar es-Salaam. Believers again are saluted in Paradise with Salaam. Their speech does not include language that is not proper as such, and a Muslim is never reluctant to accept peace once it is introduced in a context that fulfills all the conditions surrounding it from an Islamic perspective.

Peace yields real fruits. There is no need for conferences and workshops. One can realize this immediately. Accepting peace in Islam should lead to accepting the notion of co-existence between different peoples. It does regulate the relationship between those different peoples.

In the book *Understanding Amongst Peoples*, two prominent scholars say that for peace to exist, there is a need between different peoples for a will for co-existence. There is a need for pluralism within faiths, a multi-cultural approach, and for permissiveness about notions of conflict where there are differences. Islam, in a nutshell, guarantees the rights of the other to believe and of pluralism.

On the concept of treaties in Islam, as quoted by Said Kutab, peace is the known. War is the exception. No race, no people, no individual, is better than the other per se. There is a need for war during exceptional times. Wars are intended to liberate man from servitude to any side other than God's.

For a treaty to be concluded it has to fulfill several conditions. One is to guarantee the dignity of human beings. A text that elaborates this is that all of you, all human beings, come from Adam and Adam comes from the earth, from dust. The second point to be emphasized is that all people come from the same origin. The third point is collaboration between different peoples for the sake of the good of humanity. Tolerance and freedom for human beings should be respected, their minds, souls, money and beliefs. And the final notion is that of justice.

To evaluate treaties concluded between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, it is the powerful party -- that is, Israel -- that has imposed conditions upon the weaker party. There is an imbalance of power. Israel wanted to reach the Arab and Islamic world by means of concluding these treaties. The whole issue was reduced to an issue of security, as if the Palestinians have become responsible for the security of Israel rather than an original position where the Palestinian issue has its dimensions within the Arab and Islamic world.

This morning I heard Netanyahu on the news saying that next Monday is crucial, meaning that, again, Netanyahu will try to impose his conditions on the Palestinians. He wants the Palestinians -- the sane and the insane, the

Palestinian Authority and those outside the Authority, the dead and the living amongst the Palestinians -- to modify the Palestinian National Covenant.

The struggle between those who have rights and those who have confiscated these rights will continue. A treaty reflects the balance of power, but this balance of power will not remain as it is. The history of different peoples tells us that at one point it will backfire because no people will give up their rights.

Abu Sway: I would like to start with some comments about things that took place yesterday. The notion, for example, of the I and Thou is only normal. I have heard the same comments from different people.

I would like to refer sometimes to Islamic and sometimes simply to Palestinian reflections. Islam guarantees the rights of the other to be other. There is no need -- and it will never be the case -- to meet as merely humans. Wherever I go -- and I have traveled extensively in the world -- in the Boston area, for example, the North End is Italian. East Boston is Irish. There are certain neighborhoods that come from Latin America. Brookline is Jewish. There are no Islamic neighborhoods in the Boston area yet, but probably they are coming. If you go to Malaysia, the notion is whether you are a son of the land or not. It makes no difference whether you are Muslim or Buddhist or whatever.

So the notion of the other is always present. But here there is an added dimension. There is an occupier, and you will always be identified thus one way or another, even if you are a peace activist within the occupation. We cannot reduce it. It is a reductionist position to reduce human beings simply to the biological level.

Another notion we heard yesterday was that air and water were accessible to everybody here. It is not true. In the West Bank, only five minutes from

Jerusalem, you find a lack of water. Peace activists sent five tanks of water to Jenin only a few weeks ago. So water is not really accessible to everybody. There is water flowing in the ducts beneath our own houses and we have no access to it. Everybody knows that there are ample Artesian wells for the settlers. Palestinian farmers are not allowed to dig Artesian wells to the same depth.

The notion of comparing felafel to academic excellence is absolutely unacceptable. To say on the existential level, yes, there is co-existence, but is that the relationship between the Jews and the Palestinians? That we have taken from you academic excellence and you have taken from us felafel? Are you saying, because we have been stuck together in this unfair relationship, we have gained from it?

You have been impairing our academic excellence thus far. You have prevented our universities from functioning. Military orders have closed down our universities for years if you add up the six months, three months, one year here and there. Books were prevented from coming in. Only a couple of weeks ago Israel prevented Arab publishers from participating in the Book Fair in Palestine. So you cannot say we have taken academic excellence from you.

I heard Weizman say, during the Jewish Olympics, that today Israel can be a light for the nations. This is a position of those speaking from up there to those down here. You mean that those not under Israeli occupation did not achieve academic excellence, in Jordan, for example. Leave us alone and you will see how we will excel. I trust that we will do that.

I will reflect on what Sheikh Hamami was trying to say, but using different vocabulary. Regarding the treaties, certain positions are no different from other Palestinians. If we talk about the Islamic position, it is no different from other Palestinian organizations or schools of thought. There is an occupation. It should end, and this is a prerequisite for peace. Otherwise,

you will end up with some worthless pieces of paper. History will document that once upon a time you signed them, but you did not fulfill them.

The concept of reciprocity cannot be one-sided. You cannot continue the attempt to outsmart the Palestinians. One day you agree to release prisoners. The next day you release criminals. This is totally unacceptable. So there is no difference between the different Palestinians, whether Muslim, Christian, left or right, etc. I do not think there is a difference on the Palestinian side.

The basic position of Islamists regarding the conflict is that ultimately there will be no legitimacy for the State of Israel. This is not a tactic. It is not really a card they show that they will change later on. But they have offered another card which is the concept of a truce. This, again, cannot be fulfilled except within the conditions that Sheikh Hamami spoke about which could be translated on the ground not only as withdrawal, but also as reparations.

You have demolished 8,000 homes between 1967 and 1998, with an average of ten people in every house. You have created a state of war with those people in these homes. How are you going to make peace with those particular people? Every single home has its own story of agony and pain.

We talk about dignity, about protecting the rights of the individual or the family. So it is not really only withdrawing to a certain borderline. Even beyond that borderline a Palestinian official -- let's say a minister -- right now, because of the accords, cannot talk about the rights of the Palestinians, for example, inside the 1948 area. But academicians and other Palestinians can talk about the rights of the Palestinians there.

Palestinians are still subjected to all kinds of double standards. Look at how the Keren Kayemet is trying to cheat people out of their lands. In

Biram and Iqrit, after 50 years with a High Court ruling in their favor, still there is no justice done. If we talk about justice, we cannot really draw the line. We cannot talk about justice beyond the 1967 lines because this is Israel proper, for example.

The notion of truce could be understood in this fashion: it is exactly like the ultra-orthodox Jew who can live with the State of Israel as a realpolitik, but it is not his or her best option. The same thing for the Islamist. They might reach the level -- and it is again conditional. There are many conditions that should be fulfilled -- of accepting Israel de facto, but never de jure.

The Islamists or the Islamic movement does not deal only with Israel. It also has its own agenda with the Palestinian Authority. Ultimately, the Islamists are always attempting to achieve an Islamic way of life, whether in Palestine or in neighboring countries or anywhere in the world, and they function from within this paradigm.

As stated earlier, some people have just discovered that religion still plays an important role, whether in politics or otherwise. There is a discussion amongst Islamists on the nature of the relationship between the Islamic movement and the state. There are three models, regardless whether we are in Malaysia or in Egypt or in Palestine. One of them intends a head-on coalition with the state, but this is a minority. Very few people think in this fashion. The majority is trying to work within the parameters of the law. Another minority is attempting to work from within government institutions.

RON KRONISH: I just want clarification to see if I understood the thrust of the presentations of both the Muslim scholars who spoke.

If I understand correctly Sheikh Hamami -- I understood you to say that the State of Israel does not have, and will not have in the future, any legitimacy

as a state de jure, but de facto you will have to live with it. Then, in the last part of the discussion, you differentiate and say that dealing with Jews is one thing, co-existence with Jews in an Islamic state is possible. But here in the land of Israel or the land of Palestine and Israel, the notion of having two states side by side, a Jewish state called Israel and an Islamic state question mark called Palestine side by side, is not the vision that you have.

JAMIL HAMAMI: No. That is not really the question. You cannot extract an acceptance for the State of Israel, nor is this the question. There is no way to guarantee you your existence later on. Right now there is a people and there is a state. But if you are seeking guarantees of your existence, that cannot be given. Nor would I ask you for guarantees of my own existence. Subsequent generations might behave differently.

MUSTAFA ABU SWAY: From my perspective, I do not really think within the framework of 1998. I look at history, the history of ideas. The nation state as such, as a political form, is, relatively speaking, new. But we have learned from the history of ideas that sometimes there will be newer ideas. I cannot really subscribe to and guarantee the existence of any political form nowadays. Europe, which is the source of the nation state, is doing away with it in favor of a union. The same thing could take place in the future in this area. From an Islamic perspective, we will attempt to make sure that this comes about. This is an integral part of what an Islamist is all about. You cannot really think within the parameters of a nation state.

But with regard to my position regarding the legitimacy of this particular one, why should I pledge that there will always be even a Palestinian state in the future? From an Islamic perspective, there is no way I can guarantee that.

JAMIL HAMAMI: Recognition takes place between two states. You do not ask an individual to recognize a state. What value does it carry if he recognizes the State of Israel and the rest of the Arab world does not? On

the other hand, the Israeli position so far has been that of denying the right of the Palestinians to have their own state. It does not recognize the Palestinian state. Netanyahu, as a matter of fact, makes that a condition for the continuation of the peace accords. The process, it seems, on its own merits will continue only if the Palestinians pledge not to declare statehood.

RIAD MALKI: While we keep talking about reconciliation between the societies, Israeli and Palestinian, sometimes I wonder if we should look into the deep roots of the conflict itself in order to see how we could reach a point of reconciliation. If it is possible, for example, to distinguish between the different dimensions of the conflict in order for us to be able to achieve a certain reconciliation. Is it possible to take out, for example, the religious dimension to see if there is a possibility for religious reconciliation? Or it is easier to look into other dimensions for reconciliation while keeping religion as an intact element that, by itself, should be totally independent of the form of reconciliation?

In a way, the moment we start touching the holy books and trying to look into them, we will immediately find so many issues that make any form of reconciliation almost impossible. That is why, from my perspective, the religious dimension should be taken out. If we want to talk about historic reconciliation and look into the other dimensions, we should accept and respect the religious elements of each society and keep it as such, and work on reconciliation in other items. The moment we start to present ourselves as experts and try to negotiate and talk about the different contents of each holy book of the other religions, then of course we enter into very murky water that will bring no results. From my perspective, when we talk about reconciliation, we should be very specific in terms of what dimensions we should focus on.

JAMIL HAMAMI: The Quran that say there is no coercion or compulsion with regard to religion. You are free to believe in whatever you want. We are not here to discuss the details of what this or that religion says. It is an

imperative, as a Muslim, to talk about the background of these universal values. Islam says I should respect you and that the Muslim does respect the Jew and the Christian. He believes in Moses and in Jesus Christ. Regarding the notion that the Jews came first, obviously Jews do not accept any other religion outside Judaism.

**EDUCATION FOR PEACE - EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION TO LIVE IN
PEACE WHILE PEACE IS STILL ABSENT**

RON KRONISH: I have four points. One is about dialogue. The second has to do with the peace process as a context for our work. The third is a few thoughts about the role of religion in peace and peacemaking. And the last has to do with education and our role as people involved in inter-religious or inter-cultural education.

One word about dialogue apropos the previous session. I think genuine dialogue involves listening to other people and trying to understand them from where they are coming from, even if what we hear is sometimes very difficult and very painful. It is important to try to listen even when it is extraordinarily difficult.

There is a flip side, however, and that is that a genuine dialogue not only involves a kind of mutuality which makes it more of a dialogue than a monologue -- which we did not have previously, but there is a certain tone of voice, a methodology, a style, that I find missing sometimes. Particularly as we warmed up in the last session, the style got more confrontational and less dialogical. I think we ought to keep this in mind if we want to learn from each other.

I want to say a few words about what I call the peace context. I am of the opinion -- although I am not sure I believe it every day, but in general -- that what happened five years ago with Oslo created a new situation in our region. What generally goes under the concept of mutual recognition was a radical breakthrough compared to the past. The fundamental change was that we stopped playing the game we call in Hebrew *c'itu* -- making believe that you did not exist, that I did not exist. At least at some level we began to recognize the other as peoples or nations and as people and human beings.

This set some things in motion. If we reflect back to the first year or two after the Oslo signing there was a flurry of activities, meetings, conferences, seminars. It is no longer against the law to talk to the other so we can now meet in all kinds of forums and have all kinds of above-board discussions. This era of euphoria began a process of getting to know one another more at many level, from the official levels of diplomats and politicians to all kinds of groups in our societies meeting together and learning about one another. Unfortunately, that has changed and slowed down in the last few years due to the slowdown, if you want to call it that, in the political processes.

Nevertheless, I am of the opinion that we are on this inexorable road to peace. Unless some terrible things happen -- which I hope do not happen -- we are not going backwards. I work on the assumption, almost on the axiom, that what is called the peace process is going to get resolved. That is, the diplomats and the politicians involved, whether good or bad at this particular moment, are getting it resolved. We -- the society, the leaders -- are working on resolving this conflict. We will have, during the coming years, more and more peace agreements, and on the political-diplomatic front, the business deals are going to get worked out. The lawyers will do their job. They will do it better or worse and they will be perfectly or imperfectly. We will still need the interpreters to figure out what people agree to, but that will continue to happen.

The question I ask myself all the time is how do we move from peace agreements, of which it seems we have a fair number, to peaceful relations between people (individuals) and peoples (collectives). How do we move from peace agreements to peaceful relations? I do not know that there is a simple answer to that, like waving a wand, holding a signing ceremony and then thinking everything is fine. It seems to me that that is a long road which will take a number of generations of an educational process accompanying the peace process, and we have only just begun to do that in very small ways so far.

My second comment has to do with the role of religion and peace. From my perspective, religion and religious leaders, religious groups, particularly national religious groups or ideologies, have mostly served us badly in this process over the years. Most people I think tend to view the contribution of religion and religious leaders to the solving of disputes as negative. They only get in the way. If we could only have a nice meeting between the liberal democrats on the one side and the liberal democrats on the other we could resolve things. But if we bring in these religious -- excuse me -- fanatics on all sides, they will only mess it up and tell us how intractable things are. So for the most part, we have been hard pressed on all sides to see religion, religious groups and religious movements as making a positive contribution.

On the Jewish side, there are some relatively small religious groups -- Netivot Shalom, Oz Ve'Shalom, certain parts of the Meimad, Rabbis for Human Rights -- that are very small in terms of the big picture in Israeli society, but have nevertheless tried to play a role. And from time to time in recent years you have seen some of our "official religious leaders" -- chief rabbis -- try to make some statements in the right direction. They have had meetings in the last year with the Latin patriarchs -- which are, I think, more symbolic than terribly practical -- but for the most part, religion on both sides has not played a very major role in what we would call conflict resolution.

In addition, the work of the religious Jewish peace movements of various kinds is hardly known around the world. I had an amazing experience last summer speaking at a conference in Bucharest of a group that, every year, brings together people from world religions. I participated in a panel discussion about the contribution of religions to human rights, and spoke about the work of some Israeli groups in the area of religious peace activism. In the front row was a bishop from Mozambique who came up to me after the session and said: I never heard of any of this before. I had no

idea anybody in Israel was for peace -- religious or not religious. So even the little bit that has been done is not very well known.

I will not now give you the traditional quotes from the sources about the search for peace within Judaism. What I want to say is that while praying for peace and studying about peace is important, I think more important is preaching and teaching and living a life of peace and dialogue. What we need more in our society in the years ahead are people who will speak out on all sides from a religious perspective on the need for reconciliation based on religious traditions. We do not hear too much of that yet, and I hope we will hear more of it in the future.

My last comment is about the role of those of us, like myself, who are involved in inter-religious or inter-cultural dialogue. I use both terms because I think one can be engaged in understanding the other from different perspectives. Some people may come at it through the prism of theology and others through the prism of culture and tradition. It does not much matter to me how one comes at it. The key thing is that it gets done.

I make a distinction between our role as educators and our role as politicians. I myself am not a politician and have no intention of becoming one, and our role is different from those who are engaging in the diplomatic and political negotiations who, as I said earlier, seem to be doing a fairly good job in the long run. A lot of things have happened and will continue to happen.

Our role is not political but rather spiritual, psychological and educational. What people like us -- and others -- can do is try to help create this culture of peace that we are talking about, not only in our personal lives, in our own teachings, but through the various institutions in which we work. There is a tremendously important role to be played by religious leaders, both at the national level and the grass roots level, in their religious

institutions, in synagogues and mosques and churches, through prayer and study and sermons and healings of the heart.

And there is a great role -- that has not been given much thought -- to the whole area of religious education that would take place in the community, not necessarily just in schools. We tend sometimes, in thinking about education, that the schools will solve everything. The schools, as you know, do not have time to solve everything.

In addition, we need to think of concrete, practical, positive steps that we can take in the broad area of educating about each other, and I want to conclude with a few brief examples.

IPCRI and the organization I direct, ICCL, were approached over the summer by something called World Space Radio. It was what I call a serendipitous Internet event. Every now and then something good happens on the Internet, and this may be one of them. One day I got an e-mail from London saying: I am a consultant for a thing called World Space Radio. We want to establish a radio station in the Middle East dealing with peace and reconciliation. We went on the Web and saw your goals. Are you interested in talking to us? Please respond.

I did not respond right away. The next day -- Thursday -- I got a phone call. We are coming to Israel on Monday. Would you like to meet? I said okay. So we met and talked. They were here for a few days, and they met with Zakaria from IPCRI. Three weeks later we held a larger consultation of Palestinians and Israelis which led to a team of people -- three Palestinians, three Israelis and one other, the moderator Robin Twite -- and we put together a paper over the summer on what a radio station would look like that focused on peace and reconciliation issues.

You can read the report about what we came up with you, but the process of the dialogue that went into it was fantastic because, among other things,

I sat with, in this case, Palestinian women -- and I am sorry there are none here -- with whom we met a number of times for coffee over at the American Colony, and said: What should be on this station? They said: We want to talk about normal life -- what you do, what we do. We want to learn about each other's normal life. How do we do this? How do we get this on the radio? Just that little thing, for me, was an indication of some sort of grass roots desire for reconciliation. So this may be one avenue. I only used this as an example of the possibilities. One reason it seemed important to me is that one area of education about which we do not do enough thinking is that of the media. And this just fell into our laps -- a chance to mold something new in a more dialogical direction than the usual confrontations. You know, you turn on CNN and you see one extremist you must have heard a hundred times and another extremist you have heard a hundred times going at each other, and this is called dialogue.

I think we need to bring educators together. By educators I mean people who work in schools, synagogues, churches and mosques, people who see their role in life as educating. There are many places where we could do that. We need to bring them together, in the first instance, to meet each other and to learn about what is really going on in their settings. We cannot educate until we know who is teaching what where, so the first thing is to bring people together who will meet and learn from one another.

We have done this periodically during the last three years. We have been working with a Palestinian partner for three years. Off and on we hold seminars on the theme of educating about each other in the era of peace, and we have had some amazing and very enlightening discussions on very difficult issues. This kind of process, if we could do more of it, would be very useful.

Third, it would be a very useful idea in the not too distant future to hold a small conference or workshop with peace educators, people working, either separately in each society or together, Palestinians and Israelis, to get some

sense, despite the problems in the political realm which we know all about, of what is going on to try to bring people together and to educate people in informal and formal settings. It might be interesting to see the gestalt, and that the sum is, in fact, a little greater than the parts. Each of us, working in this little project and that little project, gets frustrated. A small conference with peace educators who are doing real things in the field might be something to consider.

In the formal peace agreement with Jordan there is a particular paragraph put in by the negotiators calling for interfaith dialogue as one of the steps towards increasing peaceful understanding between the peoples. Crown Prince Hassan took that seriously and established, that same year, 1994, the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies. In the beginning it focused mostly on Christian-Muslim issues, but over time it has begun inviting Jews from abroad and Jews from Israel to some of their meetings.

I went there a year and a half ago for the purpose of seeing if there are things we could do to advance the peace process in what I call the supplementary process, which I view as the educational process. We are now in discussions which, hopefully, will lead, over time, to some work in the region or in the area.

Finally, I will just mention what I think is an exciting idea. I am working with a team of people, including Robin Twite, to bring a group of religious leaders to Israel next November, November 1999, on their way to the world assembly of the WCRP -- World Conference of Religion and Peace -- which will take place in Amman at the end of November 1999.

The idea we are working on is to have a three-day conference on the theme: Religion in Conflicts, Problem or Solution? We want to bring people from Ireland, Bosnia, South Africa and other places where religious leaders play a role in helping to resolve conflicts, and in the course of the three days, to mix in local people -- Israelis, Jews, Palestinians -- and to bring them into

contact with grass roots groups, in the hope that religious leaders playing a positive role in helping to resolve conflicts is not only a distant idea, but something that could be useful in our region as well.

MARWAN DAWEISH: I would like to offer some definitions and shed light on some concepts, and then try to describe what is meant by peace education. We are talking about peace-making, peace-keeping and peace-building, and mainly interested in peace-building and peace-keeping as an educational process.

I want to make the distinction between education and peace studies. Peace education emphasizes the learning process. Peace studies is a more comprehensive term that specifically relates to knowledge and research.

One concept I would like to introduce is that there is positive peace and negative peace. Positive peace is concerned with areas and problems of economic deprivation and development, environmental issues, resources, universal human rights and social justice. When we speak about positive peace, we are speaking about actual change in the structure of society. Negative peace, on the other hand -- which we saw in the 1960's and 1970's -- emphasizes the areas of arms control, arms races, war and violent conflict.

When we talk about peace education, we know what peace is not, but it is difficult to define what peace is. Anybody can tell you what peace or peace education is not. But if you ask what it is, you will find very difficult and differing opinions.

So the first thing is that we have to agree on central concepts about what we want to achieve: i.e., we have to define what the educational goals are. We also have to make the instructional approaches clear -- how are we going to do it. In the project that I am involved in with IPCRI, before we started we asked what is our statement of values, the values we want to

communicate through this project. So first we have to make clear what our values and concepts are.

In peace education we need to go beyond preparing for nonviolent politics. We need to investigate the roots and the causes of violence so that we can determine, in fact, how education can interrupt or stop this cycle. We are not just saying let's go and talk and meet and be friendly, Palestinians and Israelis. That is not what the philosophy of peace education is about. It is about searching for the causes and attempting then to interrupt and stop the cycle.

The general purpose of peace education is to promote the development of an authentic consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens. We are looking beyond just the Israel-Palestine conflict. We are looking at the whole world. The goal is to enable us to transform the present human condition -- whether in Palestine, in South Africa, in Mozambique, in Honduras or wherever -- by changing the social structure and the patterns of thought that have created this structure.

Unfortunately when we talk about peace education, Palestinians and Israelis think it is some sort of lovey-dovey dialogues and meetings. That is not what peace education is. We are, in fact, talking about something revolutionary in changing society. The focus of peace education must be a transformational imperative.

What does transformation mean? It means a profound global cultural change that affects ways of thinking, world views, values, behavior, relationships and the structure of our public order. We are basically saying we want to provide an opportunity to change this order. We are talking about something that is not simple and easy, and we are not just talking about a curriculum. We are talking about something more wholistic, about formal and informal education. The transformation that we talk about seeks

a more comprehensive goal. In principle it rejects all violence, not just arms races or wars. The concept is based on a nonviolent approach.

Briefly, the values or areas that peace education promotes include nonviolence and the rejection of violence. It calls for behavioral change, institutional change, and change in the system of values. We are not advocating simply mutual acceptance, although that is one aspect of it. We are also talking about a change in thinking.

In the statement of values we put forward before we went to talk to curriculum designers and to the people who will be writing the peace education package, we talked wanting to educate people as that critical and creative thinkers.

With regard to students or teachers or anybody involved in the education system, we want to move from the stage of dehumanization in the personal and collective arenas to the stage of accepting the humanity of the other, personally or collectively, and from the stage of delegitimization to the legitimacy and recognition of the other. In the end, we are looking for acceptance of the different historical and political narrative of each group. That, by itself, could perhaps be the first step towards achieving some of the other values I have mentioned.

This work can be done between Palestinians and Israelis and also amongst Palestinians and amongst Israelis. It is important that, at some point, this work that can now be done separately can also be brought into a framework where Palestinians and Israelis can discuss it and evaluate it in workshops or meetings or other encounters.

The aim of peace education is to give the opportunity to people to examine and to question rather than to just accept. And by questioning and reevaluating, we will be promoting better understanding and open discussion or dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis.

SALEM AWEIS: The first question I have not heard anyone address directly is what is our definition of a culture of peace. It is important for us not to fall into the trap of defining reciprocity in one way or another in order to come up with an operational definition of the concept of a culture of peace. This will put us on a solid base.

Another question is why is the culture of peace necessary at this stage in the Arab-Israeli conflict. A third question will be what should be the goals and objectives of programs that will be created to enhance the spread of the culture of peace. A fourth question is what is the nature of a culture of peace. Who should be participating in a culture of peace and in its enhancement, and does education -- and this is where I fit in -- have a role to play in the promotion of a culture of peace? And if so, what can education and educators do about it?

Let me first offer a definition of the culture of peace. The culture of peace is all the values, attitudes and forms of behavior that reflect respect for life, for human beings and their dignity, and for all human rights, the rejection of violence in all its forms and a commitment to the principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding among peoples and between groups and individuals. This is a very basic definition which I think applies to what we are talking about.

The next question is why should we promote an environment or a culture of peace. Chief among the reasons are the persistence and proliferation of violence and conflicts a diverse nature in various parts of the world and in our region. That is reason enough for us. Another is that there is a link between peace and development. A culture of peace can lead to education, science and communication along with the development of respect for all human rights and the promotion of democracy, dialogue, tolerance, reconciliation and solidarity, in addition to regional cooperation and economic development, and thus sustainable human development. That is,

there is a direct link between a culture of peace and human resource development.

What are the aims and objectives of a culture of peace and the programs that will be created to enhance a culture of peace? First, we need to promote values, attitudes and behavior in people so they will seek peaceful solutions to problems. Second, we need to promote adherence to the values that are at the heart of the spirit of peace. These include respect for all human rights and democratic principles; the rejection of violence and forms of discrimination; attachment to the principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding, both between peoples and between groups and individuals; and lastly, fostering the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes conducive to the promotion of peace.

It is important to acknowledge that the culture of peace is multi-dimensional or multi-faceted in nature. When we talk about its multi-dimensional nature we talk about two things: One, the number and diversity of people and groups to be involved in the culture of peace; and two, the many fields that are to be dealt with -- communication, education, media, economics and so on.

How do we go about all of this? In order to progress towards peace, one can follow a twofold approach. One approach is indirect and consistent in developing education, science and culture in order to contribute to social progress and to combating inequalities. The other is direct and aims at placing education, science and culture in the service of human rights and international understanding. It is this direct action which is designed to construct peace in the minds of men -- in other words, to change value systems, attitudes and behaviors. In short, everyday culture.

What should be done to create and maintain an environment of peace? We should encourage education for peace, human rights and democracy, tolerance and international understanding. We should also protect and

respect all human rights without exception and combat all forms of discrimination. We must also promote democratic principles at all levels of society. We should live in tolerance and solidarity. We must also protect and respect our environment -- and this is an issue that no one has touched on so far.

How do we go about all of this? One, education for peace; two, education for character; and three, education for democracy. We all know that these three concepts are interrelated and intertwined and include many varying concepts.

The next question is who can and should contribute to establishing a culture of peace. The answer is that everyone can participate in this endeavor. It is, indeed, up to every individual to put into practice the values, attitudes and forms of behavior which inspire the culture of peace. Each one of us can contribute to that end in our family, community, town, region and country by practicing and promoting nonviolence, tolerance, dialogue, reconciliation and justice in our everyday lives.

The following levels should also be involved: national and regional organizations and both governmental and nongovernmental institutions and grass roots organizations, including beneficial populations and communities who are the subject of the projects in creating a culture of peace.

Now I will say a little about the nature of peace education programs. Education for peace must be multi-faceted and multi-pronged. In particular, it needs to be carried along two dimensions. The first is classroom work based on knowledge and understanding, on discussion and attitude development, and on skills in dealing with conflict. The second is opportunities to meet on a regular and consistent basis.

To increase the likelihood of creating an effective peace education program, plans should be made to do the following: incorporating it into the

curriculum of the school in more than one subject. This is what we did in the IPCRI peace education program which was incorporated into Arabic, English and Social Studies. Two, supplementing it by extra-curricular opportunities such as community action, meetings, debates, joint trips, social and sports events. Three, promoting it first to administrators and senior teaching staff.

Teachers, students and all individuals should acquire the following behaviors, skills and values: conflict resolution skills, peer mediation skills and anger management skills, tolerance, respect, willingness to learn from each other. These are the values upon which democratic nations thrive. They are the values that schools must teach and practice.

Other skills that need to be introduced and taught are skills in understanding and responding to conflict and how to manage conflict constructively and not destructively. And the last set of skills would be communication and social interaction skills.

An essential element in the creation of an environment of peace is to teach democracy. The question is how? Does teaching democracy mean inculcating religious values such as the Ten Commandments and so on? Does it mean developing students' self-esteem, autonomous decision-making and the ability to clarify values? Does it mean training good corporate citizens, obedient, productive and respectful of authority? Does it mean raising the consciousness of young people about the history of oppression in capitalist and racist societies?

All of these are important, but we are missing a very important point. There is no right way to teach democracy unless we also practice it. Integrating conflict into the school as a means of teaching democracy. Do we need to keep conflict out of the schools? There are two schools of thought here. One says we need to insulate our students and not introduce conflicts because this will create more frustration. This is a valid argument, but as a

general rule, we do need to integrate it because students need to practice democracy if they truly want to achieve and accomplish democratic actions.

The decision to incorporate conflict as part of the curriculum necessitates equipping students and peace promoters with the necessary knowledge, skills and strategies. Some of the basic skills are conflict management, conflict resolution and peer mediation.

How do we do this? Management of conflicts can be accomplished in two ways. We can manage conflicts destructively by winning at another's expense, by creating anger and resentment, by hurting feelings and creating distrust. This is the win-lose aspect. We can also manage conflicts constructively by enhancing mutual problem-solving, by maximizing joint outcomes and by strengthening the liking, respect and trust of the others.

There are two approaches with regard to managing conflict constructively. One is called the cadre approach in which a small group of people are selected and trained in the peer mediation process. The second approach is called the total student body approach where everybody is given courses in peer mediation and conflict resolution.

Another point is character education or developing character. Character must be broadly conceived to encompass the cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects of morality. Good character consists of knowing the good, desiring the good and doing the good. Education should help students understand the core values, adopt or commit to them, and then act upon them in their own lives.

If we have a comprehensive concept of character, we need a comprehensive approach of developing it. In classroom practice, a comprehensive approach to character education calls upon the individual teacher to do the following: to act as a caretaker, model and mentor. To create a moral community in the classroom and in the school. To practice

moral discipline. To create a democratic classroom environment. To teach values through the curriculum. To use cooperative learning. To encourage moral reflection and to teach conflict resolution and peer mediation.

In conclusion, in order to succeed in creating a culture of peace we need to do the following: to recognize its multi-faceted dimension and nature and each party should do its own part in the process. Here I am speaking of two processes which I have borrowed from statistical literature. We have to do the within before we do the between, meaning we need to promote peace, democracy and reconciliation within the culture before we do it between the cultures. We must involve official and nonofficial levels -- in other words, government and NGO's. In order to ensure a successful culture of peace we must develop a conceptual framework. We also need a methodology, and we also need to set priorities of action. What needs to be done first?

The focus of such projects should be both on the process and on the product. In many cases we forget about the process and look only at the product. Culture-of-peace projects must be strategic and never be seen as tactical -- strategic meaning a long-term endeavor. To educate for a culture of peace means educating for democracy and educating for character.

And the last and very important thing is that we should try to minimize mismatches between formal and informal education. Whatever students do in the classroom -- they can learn all about democracy, co-existence, rapprochement -- if they are confronted outside the school with a different orientation, it will all be in vain.

GERSHON BASKIN: The major challenge facing us with regard to educating for peace in our society is the fact that we are still in conflict and violence is still rampant on the streets. People are getting killed and people are suffering. The average Israeli or Palestinian citizen/teacher/student says:

How do you want to educate for peace when all this is going on? This is the major challenge.

If we are talking about a strategic approach we need to adopt a philosophy that says we have to prepare the next generation to live in peace. That has to begin today. Today is even late. We have to create peace through the next generation so that they have the skills to achieve what we are incapable of achieving -- a true historic reconciliation . We have been educated and brought into a world that does not know peace, but we want to guarantee that our children, the next generation, will have different opportunities. In order to create those opportunities, the process must begin today.

We have to educate the children of today with the knowledge that the effect is not immediate. The effect is for tomorrow. Therefore, we cannot postpone it. We cannot give in to this dilemma that peace does not exist, therefore we cannot educate toward peace. We have to reject that kind of thinking.

I am not going to go into all the content of how and where it should be done. Over-all, it has to be done in every corner, in every place, in every classroom and community center. Every opportunity where it is possible to do it, it has to be done. Those committed to the idea of peace have to struggle with themselves and with their societies to reject the attitude that it cannot be done today.

That means facing our Ministries of Education who place obstacles in our way and tell them no, you are wrong. Whether you like it or not, I am going into the classroom because I am committed to my children, to the next generation. We have to do that.

We are, fortunately, not talking here about India-Pakistan. We are not talking about a billion people. We are talking about roughly 8 million people

between the river and the sea. Of that, half are 15 years and younger. So we are talking about an adult population of 4 million people. Of that, we are talking about a million Israeli and Palestinian students in secondary school. One million. Of that, roughly 250,000 Israelis and Palestinians are in each grade level of secondary school. Of that 250,000 students in each grade level, we have about 20,000 teachers teaching at each grade level -- Israelis and Palestinians.

If we are thinking about developing programs to strategically influence education for peace, we are talking about relatively small numbers. IPCRI's peace education program, one small program, is working with 2,000 students. It is only working with 2,000 students because of limited resources. We calculated that, within four years, IPCRI's program could reach 100,000 students with sufficient resources. 100,000 students is already significant if we have 250,000 students at each grade level.

We need to accept the idea that it is inconceivable that an Israeli and a Palestinian can go through 12 years of education without encountering the other in an educational experience. It should be inconceivable. It should not be allowed. It should be criminal that an Israeli and Palestinian student can go through 12 years of education without meeting each other, confronting each other, learning about each other, learning each other's language. Criminal. And I mean no less than that. If we are talking about peace education and creating a culture of peace, that is our responsibility, as people who are committed to developing peace, creating peace and making peace a reality.

What I am simply saying is that this is doable because we are talking about such small numbers. But it requires making a commitment that is translated into action. Everyplace I go and everyplace I speak to policy-makers and people who determine the allocation of funds and so on, I want to talk about creating a strategy so that every Israeli and Palestinian school child, during that 12 years, is involved in such an education program.

We meet sometimes with some of these donors who have very good intentions. They want to help us Israelis and Palestinians make peace and develop all these people-to-people programs. The main problem we face with all these good intentions is that it is almost entirely proposal-responsive. The donors, with all their abundance of good will, do not sit down and develop a strategy. Nor do we, the agents applying for the grants, sit with each other and the donors to develop a strategy.

What I am suggesting is that those of us who are concerned with peace education and creating a culture of peace need to sit with each other. Right now we are little drops of water. We need to make a big bang in order to change the situation. The major thing we need to think about is impact. What impact are we having on our societies? Right now, collectively, everybody involved in these people-to-people activities are making a tiny impact, with all the resources that are being spent. And it is limited. There is not more than \$10 million being spent on people-to-people activities across the board. Maybe \$12 million. But even that limited amount of money fizzles out because it is not concentrated in any strategic way to make an impact. And that is a challenge that stands before us as well.

GHASSAN ANDONI: If Israelis had been attuned to peace education in the 1940's and 1950's, I am not sure that they would have been able to build a state for themselves. This is a question I am throwing out.

While in Israel you are in a stage where peace education should be approached differently, in Palestine, which is hopefully in a state-building period, education or priorities in education have to be channelled differently. People have to be inspired to do their utmost to contribute to that state-building, and probably you need more to strengthen national identity. Whether that might be contradictory with those peace education programs or not, I am just questioning. What is why I agree that all possible research into the idea should be done.

We also have to take into consideration moral or ethical obligations when working with students. Among adults, everybody has his choice. But the minute you decide for school kids, you have to think more carefully about who has the right to decide and how and what and in which way, and process it.

The third point is that most of the time we start thinking Palestinian-Israeli, but we end up working on the Palestinian side. The easier audience is the Palestinians, and we can penetrate very little into the Israeli side. This is a problem in rapprochement, even if it works with others. De facto, those who come to our center are already left peace people. They are the only ones who are willing to cross borders and come to Bet Sahur because we cannot go there, and the audience we attract from the Palestinian side is much wider. Like the people from Bethlehem.

There is another issue we have to look at carefully. I was inspired by the idea about the necessity for school kids to learn about the other and encounter him at a certain point. But what other education are the children getting from up and down, etc. I would say that jointly, probably we cannot start such a program. Maybe we can merge afterwards. But to start with, there are certain differences in both societies as related to peace education or as related to state-building that might make it difficult to define common goals and common methods.

GERSHON BASKIN: I am not saying that it has to be joint. What I am saying is that in each society, each of us has a responsibility to make sure that the next generation that we are educating has the skills and the orientation to live in peace and to create peace. That is our responsibility as adults vis-à-vis our children, and as educators or as people involved in peacemaking toward the next generation. It does not have to be done together.

SAID ZEIDANI: There are two layers to these efforts in peace education or the culture of peace that sometimes have to be distinguished. Related to that two-layer notion, I think we can talk later about matters of priority. When you are talking about the other, as far as the Palestinians are concerned, the other can be an Israeli or a non-Israeli. He can also be another Palestinian. If you want to educate for peace or the culture of peace, democratization and character development -- it is basically an education within the society.

In our society, as in Israeli society, there is religious versus secularist, liberal versus conservative, gender issues and all sorts of other conflicts within each society. The question is how to manage these conflicts, how to resolve them, how to promote democracy, how to promote the culture of peace, and how to inculcate these values. This is important for the internal health and well-being of each society. I think that can be given priority.

So in talking about any project, any curriculum, we have to think about these two dimensions. If we can agree as to what is needed, what is required for a program to work inside each society, it will be much easier to apply it to national conflicts or inter- state situations.

RON KRONISH: I do think diversity is extremely important -- that is, to understand the pluralism and multi-faceted diversity in our own and each other's societies. I always find it fascinating, in dialogue with Israeli Muslims, Israel Arabs, Palestinian Arabs, how much one side disagrees with the other. It is very important to see it.

It is important to do things within our own societies. It may be that the primary work needs to be there in many ways, and it is a long-range thing. We have to work incrementally. Changing systems will take a long time. From my point of view, there is no replacing the person-to-person encounter of Israelis and Palestinians. Live, human, real encounter. Not on the Web and not through magazine articles, but the real thing. We cannot

do without that. This is what is going to change people in real ways, and we need a lot more of that somehow or other.

MORDECHAI BARON: I really do not know how Palestinians, at this juncture, can undertake peace education, mainly because there is a high level of justified anger, and anger is not conducive of peace education.

I very much admired the presentations, but they were too theoretical for me. If we relate to what can be done now, we have to relate to the context of the conflict. Nevertheless, let me say something about peace education among the Palestinians and then I will say something about peace education among Israelis, which I know better how to do and what to do.

In 1941, in the middle of the blitz over London, an article was published in the London Times by E.H. Carr, the most prominent historian at the time, in praise of German culture. He came out and said: Yes, we are now fighting against the devil Hitler. But we will punish ourselves if we do remember that this same devil Hitler came from a great culture which gave us Goethe and Beethoven and so on. Even in the middle of the blitz we have to remember that one day the war will end, and if we do not train ourselves to admire that culture that was there before Hitler.

We have to think very hard about how to do that. The one side justifiably hates us, fights against us, is angry with us. I would say that it is very important for Palestinians to remember that Israel is here to stay. One day, hopefully, peace will come, and the legacy of anger is not going to disappear as you imagine so quickly. So can anything be done about humanizing the face of the other? Despite all that was said about beating the uniform, not the human being, I think they did not beat the uniform. They did beat the human being.

On our side, I think there are many things which are put before this general education -- which is very important and praiseworthy -- for tolerance and

for character. Some of us are relating to this internally by talking about democracy and tolerance. We have to make sure, for example, that more Israelis will be able to conceive of peace and think of a future in which there are no atom bombs. It has to be much more contextual.

One more point. I realize the difficulties in doing things together, but things are being done. The Egyptians have a problem of normalization which Palestinians do not and should not have. As a matter of fact, they look at you for guidance. The Egyptian peace movement looks to you to strengthen them in their wish to do joint work with Israelis.

But generally speaking, despite the fact that the dialogues and meetings have very little impact they are still a very important part in creating this humanization of the other.

GERSHON BASKIN: I think there is danger in accepting the concept of what I would call worrying about the poor people in your own town and forgetting about the poor people in the next town. You do have to prioritize. Life is about making decisions and establishing priorities. But we have to be careful that while we are focusing inward, we do not entirely forget about focusing outward as well.

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE - A QUESTION OF IDENTITIES

Robin Twite

I first came to Israel in 1958 and has spent many years in the region in a variety of capacities, as a representative of the British Council from 1958 to 1962 and again from 1968 to 1973; as Secretary of the Open University of Israel from 1973 to 1976; as a staff member of the Hebrew University working on conflict resolution since 1990; and as director of IPCRI's environmental program since 1993.

When I was asked to write on the identities of the two peoples who confront one another in the land between the Jordan and the Sea, I hesitated. I am not a social anthropologist, sociologist or professional observer of the political scene. My observations come rather from the position of an outsider/insider who has spent many years in the region but is neither Arab nor Jew. And they are certainly subjective rather than objective.

The subject is rendered all the more complex by the fact that national identity is not a stable quality. Even in states which have been in existence for long periods and whose citizens have received the same basic education and share certain modes of behavior, it is often quite difficult to reach any firm conclusions about national identity, there are so many variants, so many who are outside the consensus. How much more is this true of states which are states of immigration, where different cultures mix and different standards prevail among the various groups that make them up.

In both Israel and Palestine national identity is not a given, a fixed point, but fluid and changing, sometimes quite rapidly.

When times were simpler: 1958 - 1962

It is forty years since I first came to the region straight from Oxford, curious and uninformed. In retrospect I would appear to have been profoundly uninformed (if this is not some form of tautology!). I had had nothing to do with the Jewish community in England, was neither a Zionist nor an anti-Zionist, knew about the Palestinian refugee problem from the newspapers but had never met a Palestinian. Just the right man to be propelled by blind chance and the arcane workings of the personnel department of the British Council (the semi-autonomous body responsible for much of Britain's cultural, information and aid work overseas), to Tel Aviv where I held what was probably the most junior post in the whole diplomatic community.

Very shortly after my arrival in the autumn of 1958 I had formed some ideas of what it was to be an "Israeli". Despite the fact that in reality the country was crowded with almost completely unassimilated immigrants from Morocco, Iraq and other countries of the Middle East, I did not include them in my impromptu consideration of what was an Israeli. Most of the Israelis I met were either members of families which had originally come from Russia, Germany or Eastern Europe or had themselves been born in those countries.

Almost all those I met were happier in Hebrew than in English, which they spoke with a variety of central European accents or with a distinct tone which I came to recognize as a "sabrah" inflection. However they made great efforts to accommodate to my linguistic inability. After all Israel was a country of immigration people were used to dealing with those who could not speak their language. Indeed the inability of many Israeli citizens to function fully in their own language was a cause of considerable inefficiency.

Most of the Israelis I knew were happy to be alive in the new State and proud of it. They saw themselves as "brands snatched from the

burning" and indeed when I traveled on the buses in summer and saw the numbers tattooed on the arms of my fellow passengers this seemed perfectly natural.

I benefitted greatly from the new found pride of Israelis in what had been achieved in the first ten years since the foundation of the state. Everyone was keen to show me something, a kibbutz, a carefully tended rose garden, a nursery school where the children sang what today I recognize as "Palmach" songs, a collection of coins from the Holy Land, or the latest play. My recollection is of a community full of energy, enjoying the business of building a society, and needing to show it off to anyone who was interested enough to enquire. Some diplomats built up a great reputation by responding to this need. At this time M. Gilbert, a French ambassador, spent seven years in Israel and became a popular figure because he learnt Hebrew and was an indefatigable speaker at functions and visitor to public institutions.

It was also a socialist orientated community. I did not realize for quite sometime that tucked out of sight in "mabarot" (immigrant camps) was real poverty, and as a liberal/socialist and member of the British Labor Party, was greatly taken by the fact that wage differentials were very small (popular legend had it that the Secretary General of the Histadrut - the powerful labor federation - was paid only twice as much as the man at the reception desk). The kibbutz was certainly the most prestigious civilian institution around. Indeed it was quite unfashionable to be rich and bourgeois. Of course there were people who were both but they were not the leaders of society. Even those who had left the kibbutz made a point of telling you that they had been on Merhavia or Degania in their youth before they became Director General of this or that Ministry.

This equalitarian trend was always symbolized for me by the fact that in my job at the British Council I occasionally found myself chauffeuring professors from the Hebrew University or the Weizmann Institute who had

attended some Council sponsored function. The great majority of them did not have private cars and were happy to take a lift in my modest vehicle. I never heard any of them complain about the fact that they could not afford, or did not want to, own vehicles.

Plainly dressed, noisy, self confident and direct, the "average Israeli" if there was ever such a thing, was for me very likeable. There was something just a touch naive about the assumption that everybody made that Israel was the center of the world, but it was understandable given the fact that Israel had come through the struggles of 1947/48 after what was perceived of as a dramatic victory against great odds. Today historians are casting some doubt on this view of Israel's struggle against the Arab armies in the 1948. Some argue that in fact the sides were more evenly matched than the traditional view of Zionist history will allow, but in 1958 I never heard anyone who did not picture the struggle to establish the state as a David against Goliath affair. The Suez campaign of 1956 was perceived in the same light and the role of Britain and France much played down.

One thing was missing from Israel as I knew it between 1958 and 1962 as I know it today. That was "Jewishness". Of course everybody was aware that they were Jews as well as Israelis but it was possible to live for years in Tel Aviv and not have a discussion about what it was to be a Jew. The important thing was to be an Israeli, that new kind of person, not to be confused with the Jews of former times. Indeed for children the history of the Jewish people as taught in schools seemed to stop in 70 C.E. with the fall of the Temple and only begin again with Herzl.

There were of course orthodox Jews in the country but neither they nor the more moderate religious, seemed to play much part in the social and political leadership of the country. It was possible to have quite wide contacts, to visit Ministries and educational institutions, to travel all over Israel, and yet to meet very few kippa-wearing Jews, let alone orthodox ones. The National Religious Party was a loyal partner in the Labor led

government. From time to time a specific incident would focus attention on the religious community - child would be abducted from its parents so that it could be given a religious education, a noted Torah scholar make a widely publicized statement on an issue of public concern, or stones would be thrown at cars in Mea Shearim (I remember hto drive a long way round on Saturday to get to the Mandelbaum gate - just beyond Mea Shearim - so as to cross into Jordan because several cars had been stoned in the area). In general though the "Israeli" seemed quite alienated from Jewishness as perceived in religious terms a very different type of Jew from his ancestors and one who wanted to be different. The orthodox communities of Jerusalem, Safed and Bnei Brak.

The religious jews did not seem to impinge much on the life of the country or play much of a part in shaping its identity.

Of course what I was seeing at that time was only a segment of Israeli society but it was the segment that mattered socially and politically. Yigal Allon, who I got to know a little and admired a lot, was for me a typical Israeli, though I suppose that statistically he and his kind were not a majority in a population enhanced by a major influx of immigrants from Asia and Africa (the so-called Sephardim). Allon was a kibbutznik, a patriot, a former army commander, liberal by temperament, a man with a thirst for education. When he served in Government he was expected by those who supported him to look after the interests of their movement but only within some quite strict norms. He did not brazenly direct funds to the movement nor, when in a Ministerial post, did he surround himself entirely with his cronies.

Of course there was an "in" group in the Israel of the fifties. Men and women who had played a part in the illegal immigration during the Mandate, fought in the wars, belonged to the Labor party or to a kibbutz but it seemed to me then, and seems now, that it was an "in" group with a

strong sense of democratic values and wish to preserve equality and follow the law.

The Israelis whom I knew were bound together by the sense that they had struggled to secure the state and were enjoying the business of building it up. They set much store by the symbols of statehood, the flag or the national anthem, but were also concerned to be accepted by the international community (though the term was not as fashionable then as it is today). One of the reasons for the underlying bitterness against the United Nations, which still exists today, was not only the repeated anti-Israel resolutions passed by the General Assembly but also a sense of pique that Israel's struggle against a colonial power had not given it automatic standing among the other countries which had emerged from the break up of empires.

Of course many groups were outside this consensus - most of the Sephardi immigrants, most of the orthodox, and even marginal groups such as some of the British immigrants I knew, who did not master Hebrew properly and remained rather too attached to the British Council library where they could read English papers and feel themselves temporarily in their old homeland. But national identities, at least as perceived by outsiders, do tend to be perceived of as being made of up the central and majority groups and these had succeeded in creating an image, the "typical Israeli".

At that time I knew remarkably little about Palestinians. The occasional Arab would turn up at the office in Tel Aviv seeking a scholarship and when I went to Jordan crossing the Mandelbaum Gate, I met Arabs in East Jerusalem and elsewhere, but I did not have much inside knowledge of their concerns. Both in Israel and in Jordan Palestinians seemed relatively quiet and unassertive.

Traveling about Israel you could see the ruins of the Arab villages scattered around the country, sometimes recognizable only because of the hedges of prickly pear around their former sites or the presence of a few fruit trees and some half ruined walls. This was a sad but not, for me, an emotionally moving sight. Israel had done an excellent job of eradicating most of the villages and I did not have the sense of history to realize what had really taken place.

I did not visit more than one or two Arab homes in the four years I lived in Tel Aviv, between 1958 and 1962, and while I was in Beduin encampments in the Negev I never saw a refugee camp. For me an Arab in the Galilee was an "Israeli Arab" and an Arab in Jerusalem, a Jordanian. It is my sense that it was not only in the Israeli press and among Israelis that the Palestinian identity had little recognition, even among the Palestinians themselves who had remained in the Holy Land (whether in Israel or in Jordan) their sense of their own separateness had suffered a temporary eclipse.

In general, Palestinian Arabs did not make news. Occasional bursts of publicity over a particular story like the efforts of the people of Biram and Ikrit to return to their homes within Israel proper from which they had been expelled in 1949, long after the end of hostilities might have justified such a move, were exceptional. In Israel though there was military government in the Galilee and the "Israeli Arabs" were certainly discriminated against and lost much land during the fifties, their community lacked leadership and the word Palestinian was for the most part used only when referring to the Palestinian refugees. In Jordan likewise every effort was made to convert the people of the West Bank into Jordanians and, outwardly at least, this tactic was quite successful. While it would be rash of someone like myself who had only a nodding acquaintance with Palestinians at this time to make a generalization, my sense is that the shock of defeat and dispossession must have caused many Palestinians

themselves to how have lost their sense of identity and begun to think of themselves as Israeli Arabs or Jordanians.

Return to the Holy Land: 1967 to 1976

Only six years separated my departure from Israel at the end of 1962 and my return to it in August, 1968. However in that brief span a revolution had occurred. In 1967 Israel had fought a short decisive war with her Arab neighbors and occupied Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights and Sinai.

After the victory of 1967, the first reaction of the general public was one of overwhelming relief. Prior to the war, fears of heavy loss of life, and perhaps even of defeat, had been commonly voiced. These fears had proved to be groundless. Instead the Israeli forces had routed their adversaries with extraordinarily rapidity.

Returning to Tel Aviv was returning to a society full of confidence in its future. Diplomats, like the Israelis themselves, enjoyed the sensation of walking from West into East Jerusalem, without the necessity of crossing the border at the Mandelbaum Gate. The unsightly barriers that divided the city were swept away. Doubts about the long term aftermath of the victory were not in evidence. New roads were rapidly constructed. Israelis drove down to the Dead Sea, visited the ruins at Sebaste (Samaria), strolled around the Old City, prayed at the Wall, drove down to Nuweiba, climbed the Golan Heights. They enjoyed a new sense of space.

There was even a sense among those Israelis who cared to think of them at all that the Palestinians had benefitted from the defeat of the Jordanians and Egyptians. In 1970 I was taken on a trip with a group of Israeli agricultural experts from the Ministry of Agriculture and shown the positive results of the Ministry's work in the West Bank, farming under

plastic, new techniques for irrigation, a new marketing structure. The merchants in East Jerusalem had more business than in Jordanian times; Gazans worked on construction sites in Israel. The fact that the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza had lost their freedom was lost sight of.

A new confidence and sense of invulnerability had been born. The greatest prize was Jerusalem. Almost at once declared united, its boundaries expanded and plans put in hand for turning it into a capital worthy of the new state (previous efforts to build up Jerusalem had been handicapped by its poor economic position and the fact that it was situated at the end of the "Jerusalem corridor and to a certain extent isolated from the rest of the country). The sight of Israeli soldiers at the Western Wall was a unifying symbol for almost all Israelis as well as for Jews everywhere.

These dramatic changes did not, of course, change the Israeli sense of identity at one bound. Living in Tel Aviv in the late sixties did not immediately reveal great changes in the self identification of Israelis. They were as they had been only more so! The army, for example, had a higher profile than ever and stood at the center of national existence. One change which affected me directly was that the novelty of having embassies in a new state had definitely worn off - the standing of the diplomatic community and the amount of interest it attracted was very definitely lower than it had been ten years earlier!

However, while change was not immediately apparent, it is from this time certain trends can be perceived which ultimately lead to a distinct alteration in the Israeli identity as perceived by outsiders and, indeed by Israelis themselves.

For the first twenty years of its existence Israel had been a strongly nationalistic country, trying to create an Israeli identity through the use of the Hebrew language, through the people's army, through the emphasis on

love of the land and the flag, all reflected through the media and in everyday public rhetoric. However classical socialist Zionism had tempered nationalism with a dose of internationalism. Not for nothing was the overseas relations department of the Histadrut well staffed and well funded. Israel saw itself as an important player on the international socialist scene and senior politicians regularly appeared at socialist gatherings. The emphasis placed on Israeli technical assistance given to countries in Africa and Asia was also a way of demonstrating Israel's international role.

After their victory in 1967 the leaders of the country, most of whom were socialists of one stripe or another and as such committed to the end of colonialism and the recognition of national identities by the creation of new states, found themselves faced with a dilemma. They could retreat to the pre-1967 border, the so called "green line", following the precedent Ben Gurion had set when withdrawing from Sinai in 1956, or they could hold on to what they had so providing themselves with additional security, retaining Jerusalem, and reaping rewards for the victory which had been won.

By choosing to hold what they had won the leaders of that period took a decision which would in the long term change the sense of identity of the Israeli people. Such a change might have occurred in any case but holding on to the occupied territories made it inevitable. Whether the Israeli leaders of the time foresaw this result is not clear. One of the most intelligent of them, though not perhaps the most politically adept, Moshe Dayan, saw the dangers inherent in ruling over the Palestinian population and moved to prevent crude demonstrations of religious nationalism (for example he prevented orthodox groups from praying on the site of the temple, now the precincts of the Haram al Sharif, and gave control over the area to the Moslem religious authorities). Another liberally minded nationalist Yigal Allon sought through his still well known "Allon plan" to achieve security by establishing a minimum of settlements at key points on

the West Bank while at the same time encouraging the establishment of Palestinian universities at Bethlehem, Ramallah and Nablus.

But none of them seem to have foreseen that so far as the identity of Israel was concerned, the victory of 1967 would not only affect Israel's relations with the Palestinians but also release into the Israeli body politic forces, concepts and ideas which had all been previously present but which had not been able to assert themselves, so strong was the position of the ruling group as expressed in its dominance of public life and well established sense of identity.

The changes that took place were of several different kinds. First, there was a new articulation of the concept which had first been expressed by the Revisionists in the 1930's of a greater Israel, ruling over all the land between the Jordan and the Sea. This led to a strengthening of nationalist ideology. This went together with renewed indifference to world opinion (after all who had helped Israel in its 1967 God given victory, only the Israelis themselves?).

Secondly was the new confidence given to orthodox religious leadership by the repossession of Jerusalem and the holy sites there. Many religiously observant Israelis who had hitherto tended to stand aloof from Zionism now began to identify with the state notwithstanding the fact that the great majority of the Israeli public were, and are, secular in their orientation. Emerging gradually into day-to-day public life, religious leaders finally threw off the hesitations they had about the nature of the Israeli state and embraced it, but not in its entirety. They accepted its existence, saw its value for the Jewish people both in Israel and the diaspora, but were not attracted by the idea of Israel as a "light unto the gentiles". Internationalism was not part of their program. Nor was permitting their young people to serve in the army. They began to dream seriously of a theocratic Israel devoted to the Torah and living in accordance with the "mitzvot".

Thirdly, there were the changes introduced by the simple fact that by undertaking to rule over almost two million Palestinians (as well as a small number of Egyptians in Sinai and of Syrian Druse on the Golan) Israel had become, willy nilly, a colonial power at a time when colonialism was becoming simply unacceptable in a world context. Not surprisingly Israel attracted increasing criticism for not relinquishing its conquests and this in turn created a reaction from those Israelis who took a narrow nationalistic view, regarded Israel as entirely dependent on its own strength and expressed indifference and disdain for the opinion of other countries and international institutions generally. Many rank and file Right wing leaders delighted in the conquest and had no reservations about encouraging the settlement of Jews in the West Bank and contemplating its final annexation and absorption into Israel.

Just as important as any of these was the emergence of the hitherto under privileged communities of Jews from Africa and Asia (the Sephardim) into a more prominent role. This would have happened without the catalyst of the Six Day War but there seems little doubt that the war accelerated it. The newly confident politicians of the nationalist Right set out to win the allegiance of the Sephardic immigrants and their children. They did so by promising them full absorption into Israeli society, something that they had been denied by the Labor party which had failed to assimilate them effectively into main stream society or politics. They also played upon their chauvinistic interests, something made easier because many Israeli Sephardis remember without enthusiasm the way they had been treated in Moslem societies. A new pool of voters were created who cared nothing for international concerns, regarded themselves as superior to the Arabs (the bottom of the pile), and looked to the Right to give them a better future. Individual Sephardi politicians such as David Levy emerged into a degree of prominence and were subject to a battery of jokes about their lack of social agility or understanding.

Any concept of identity for Israelis now had to take account of the pre-1947 leadership establishment or the kibbutzim but also of these new players. The larger role accorded to Sephardim and religious Jews on the national scene necessarily meant a smaller role for other interest groups which had previously had the field to themselves.

This power shift was accelerated by two dramatic causes of change during the 1970s. The first was the war of 1973, the "Yom Kippur War". This came as a complete surprise to the rank and file of the Israeli people and indeed to most of the leadership, including that in the army. The general view was that the Arab states would not dare to challenge Israel so soon after their defeat in 1967. Nor were the Israelis alone in this opinion. I remember well the total incomprehension of the likely course of events which prevailed in the British embassy where the received wisdom was that if the Egyptians did get across the canal in some sort of offensive move they would rapidly be wiped out by the Israeli air force which had complete control of the sky. The Israeli reverses of the first few days of the war had a devastating effect on the confidence of the country which could not be fully offset by the subsequent reversals of fortune which left Israelis on the Egyptian side of the Suez canal and once more on the road to Damascus.

Prominent personalities among the Israeli leadership emerged with their reputations tarnished and the power of the Labor party and its allies was sapped by ever more bitter personal disputes. The narrowly avoided defeat could not be transformed into a triumph in spite of media efforts to make it one. It opened the way to the victory of the Right in the elections of 1976 and more, it revealed a characteristic which had perhaps always been present in national life but which now began to appear more evidently. This was the existence within many Israelis of a severe sense of insufficiency, amounting in some cases almost to trauma, in their relations to the outside world in general and the Arab world in particular.

Of course it was, and is, true that the Arabs greatly outnumber the Jews in the Middle East, but the victories of 1948, 1956, and 1967, had served to build up the confidence of the new nation. But beneath this somewhat brash confidence there had always lurked a deeply rooted sense of fear and distrust engendered by 2000 years of persecution and reinforced by the Holocaust. Jewish history seen positively is a triumph of survival, of faith over materialism, but seen negatively it is the story of suffering, persecution, destruction. The shock of the 1973 war made evident these fears which were in any case perhaps more prominent among the new groups emerging on the political stage. To adopt nationalist views with their its emphasis on Israeli right, might and military strength was one way of overcoming fear and self doubt. Another was to link a sense of religious mission which combined nationalism with the Jewish religious, as opposed to Israeli, identity in a close embrace.

At a more day to day level Israel began to be characterized by more aggressive behavior in discourse between its people. The "average Israeli" had always been direct and self assured but now the quality of dialogue on the streets and in the homes became more strident. It sometimes seemed, and seems today, that many Israelis feel confident only when they are in an aggressive mode verbally. Their sense of identity, undermined by fear of the outsider, the Arab, the "goy", needed constant reinforcement by reiterated verbal challenge. A simple request became a shout, a minor argument a test of will. A similar wish to assert, to be the first to argue and if possible to intimidate the enemy could be seen among the new generation of political leaders in their dealings both with each other and with the outside world, the world of the "goyim" and the Arabs.

The war of 1973 began a more rapid change. The second great catalyst which accelerated the political shift was the victory of the Right under the leadership of Menahem Begin, in 1976. This victory, won with the votes of Sephardim who finally broke with their "controllers" from the Labor party, opened up a new stage in the development of the Israeli

identity. Himself a Polish Jew, discriminating and even aristocratic in some of his characteristics, Begin was able to give the Sephardi voters a sense that their interests would be found a place in the new polity he would create (how far this has actually happened must be a matter of doubt - the creation of the "Shas" party in the eighties and the discomfort of David Levy, the most prominent Sephardi politicians, within his chosen Right wing party, both seem to indicate that the Sephardim had not been given all that they asked).

The power of the old established groups, symbolized by the Labor party, the Histadrut and the kibbutzim, began to decline. That of the nationalist Right and of the organized religious groups began to rise. The Israeli identity could no longer be defined as being equalitarian, vaguely internationalist, resolute but realistic in its assessments (as Ben Gurion had been in 1956). No longer typical was the young man or woman in shorts serving in the army or tilling the ground, or the greying kibbutznik with his sense of democratic values and his ability to work for little reward. Perhaps these stereotypes had never been as typical as the media and official publicity made them seem, but at any rate they were now superceded by something much more complex.

The standards of the community of 1947, the six or seven hundred thousand people who had ousted the British and thrown back the Arab armies, no longer prevailed. They had failed to absorb the new immigrants or to fashion them in their own image. This was in part because of a certain arrogance towards the immigrants from African and Asia who were perceived of as primitive (and indeed from an educational point of view some of them were). In part too it was because of decline of socialism world wide and the growing influence of America with its emphasis on the free market and materialistic concerns which had undermined the groups which had adopted a form of socialism as part of their identity. In part too they had failed because, being relentlessly secular and seeing religion as essentially an unnecessary burden brought forward from a past which was

dead, they had ignored the religious history of the Jews and the strength of religion among powerful elements in society.

Israeli identity in 1976 had to embrace Sephardi Jews and orthodox communities, as well as the groups which had predominated hitherto. Israel as a country of immigration had in a sense lost its "false" identity which in 1958 had seemed to assured and was setting out to find a new one. A confident and increasing affluent society but one where there were already deep fissures apparent and many different conceptions of what it was to be an "Israeli" were apparent.

The Palestinians in the sixties and seventies

The dramatic events of June 1967 were just as significant for Palestinians as for Israelis and played, if anything, a more immediate role in changing their sense of identity.

The Palestinian cause in the years following the defeat of the Arab armies in 1947 had been represented not so much by action among the Palestinians within Israel or Jordan as by activity in the Diaspora. It was the Palestinian diaspora through the establishment of Fatah - officially the Palestinian National Liberation Movement - in 1959 and subsequently of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in 1964, which kept Palestinian identity alive. The decision of these organizations to embrace violent struggle as a means for obtaining national liberation kept the Palestinian cause before the international community.

But Palestinian identity remained fragmented. Of course the Palestinian residents of Israel, the Palestinians in Jordan, and the Palestinians scattered in refugee camps in the Middle East or creating new lives for themselves in the Gulf or in North America, retained a sense of being one people with common traditions but events were combining to render their sense of unity less important than their sense of diversity.

Within Israel the small and vulnerable Palestinian Arab minority, most of whose leaders had fled abroad in 1947, was much influenced by Israeli example. Hebrew became the second language of most of them and many were completely bilingual.

In Jordan the Palestinians, both those in the West Bank and those in Jordan proper, felt discriminated against but not to the extent that they were willing to actively struggle against being officially perceived as Jordanians or against the Jordanian state.

In the camps in Egypt, Lebanon, and elsewhere the struggle for material survival tended to dominate life and the absence of visible leadership inhibited political expression. The Palestinians in the Gulf and North America also, though in a very different context, were dominated by the need for material security and not immediately concerned with questions of their Palestinian identity.

Against this background the activities of Fatah and the PLO had a slightly unreal quality, their efforts to engage in violent struggle at times an almost amateurish air.

However, the aftermath of the war of 1967 changed things very much. First, because the Palestinians saw that they could not rely on the leadership of the countries surrounding Israel to reconquer the lands that had been lost and restore them to their lost heritage. Secondly, because the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza found themselves suddenly deprived of their ambivalent relationship with the authorities in Jordan and Egypt. The West Bank Palestinians still carried Jordanian passports and Jordanian currency was still in circulation but the Jordanian link was severed and became gradually weaker as the years passed. The people of Gaza had always been isolated and no serious effort seems to have been

made to draw them into any type of long term relationship with Egypt. Now they were on their own again.

The Palestinians in Israel also found their situation changed. Their ability to move relatively freely into the West Bank meant in many cases reunion with relatives and seemed likely to lead to reintegration into the main stream of Palestinian affairs. Suddenly the Palestinians in the Middle East were seen to enjoy a sense of identity which was defined at least in part in terms of their common opposition both to Israel and to the regimes which had exploited them and let them down militarily.

Yasser Arafat and the PLO emerged as the leaders of the Palestinians in their quest for the return of their homeland and the end of Israeli occupation of the West Bank. Their leadership was repeatedly challenged over the years but remained intact in spite of extreme variations of fortune till the peace process began in the 1990's.

The years 1968 to 1976 saw the Palestinian cause dominated by the struggle of the PLO to achieve - by violence aimed at Israeli interests, pressure aimed at Governments in Jordan and Lebanon and lobbying the international community - the recognition of Palestinian rights. This struggle was marked by an increasing number of acts of terror, hijacking of air liners, attacks on Israeli diplomats, and incidents such as the murder of Israeli athletes at Munich in 1972. It also led to a direct armed confrontation with the Government of Jordan in 1971 which ended with the defeat of the PLO in Jordan and the death or flight of its leading representatives.

But the reaction of the Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and in Israel proper to this struggle was not always what the leadership in the diaspora, the PLO, could have hoped for. Overwhelmed by the defeat of 1967 and by the impact of Israeli energy and drive, the mass of Palestinians

remaining in the land between the Jordan and the sea remained relatively quiescent.

Israelis traveled freely in the West Bank, Palestinian citizens of Israel did not work effectively with the PLO and the Israeli security services succeeded in preventing the few activists who sought to combat Israel from within, from Gaza, the West Bank or Israel proper, from doing more than cause minor damage to Israeli interests.

During this period the Palestinians had only partly succeeded in creating a sense of national identity. After all, their's was no easy task. The Palestinian Arabs though they had evolved their own society, their own traditions and their own literature had never ruled themselves. They had been ruled for most of the time by Moslems but these were from Damascus, Baghdad, Egypt and Turkey. From 1917 to 1948 they had been governed by the British and most recently by Israelis and Jordanians. Their tradition was one which lead to compromise with authority and aiming to adjust to new conditions so as to live life successfully irrespective of the political constellation of the moment.

The uneasiness generated by the fact that as a separate political entity, Arab Palestine had throughout history at best only fleeting independence has lead to some rather desperate efforts to relate the Palestinians of today to the ancient peoples of the region, the Canaanites, and thus to trump the historic claim of the Jews by a yet more ancient authority. Personally, I have always thought that a claim based on over a thousand years of continuous residence, almost all of them under Moslem rule, was a better base for claiming independence than any mystical like with Canaan.

A Palestinian trying to define his identity in the sixties and seventies would often fall back on identification with a place, often a place in which he was no longer resident and which had been long since destroyed or

taken over by his enemies. Only in the diaspora did the relative freedom of the PLO (though this was often constrained by Arab governments jealous of their power or suspicious of Palestinian long term aims), manage to formulate a program, the Palestinian National Charter of 1968. A significant step on the way to shaping a national identity.

For myself, living in Israel and able to move relatively freely in the West Bank, I was struck by the limitations of Palestinian sense of self identity in the period 1967 to 1976. Many Arabs in Israel were frankly uninterested in the idea and had no faith in the PLO to change anything substantial. In the West Bank, at least in bourgeois circles, there was a distinct tendency to opt for a quiet life and one which had become economically easier as a result of Israeli occupation and consequent access to new markets. It was only as time passed and the Israelis so far from leaving the occupied territories seemed to sink their tentacles more deeply into them, did things began to change.

Return to the Holy Land - 1988 to 1997: Israeli identity

Returning to Israel in 1988 after an interval of fourteen years as number of changes were very readily apparent.

The tendencies already apparent in the early seventies towards a more strident expression of nationalism had not decreased over the years. Indeed they had become more evident. Alongside them the confidence of the religious communities and parties had grown with equal strength. Aided by Israel's system of proportional representation (which had always given the religious parties more influence than numbers alone would indicate since they held the balance between the two main parties), the religious parties had advanced to a much more prominent role in the political life of Israel. They were buoyed up by the demographic growth of

their communities and the immigration of a small, but significant, number of American orthodox who were totally without inhibitions in their expression of religious and racial superiority not only viz-a-viz Arabs but also in relation to other Jews who were secular or belonged to less orthodox communities. They had also received additional strength from the emergence of a new party, known as Shas. It represented the interests of Sephardi Jews who did not sport the black hats of the Ashkenazi groups, the "haredim", but who could find a home in a party with a religious identification. Many Shas supporters were disillusioned erstwhile voters for the right-wing Likud party who had found that the party did not give them the prominence they felt they deserved in its affairs.

The increasing prominence of Right wing nationalism and religious orthodoxy had provoked a reaction among those Israelis who still adhered with greater or less enthusiasm to the standards and outlook of the dominant group in Israel prior to 1976. The creation of a new grouping of leftist parties, "Meretz", went alongside a revival of the Labor party under two able leaders, Peres and Rabin. A large number of voluntary bodies devoted to making peace with the Palestinians also arose and began work.

The country was thus polarized even before the outbreak of the active Palestinian resistance, the intifada, in December 1987. This outbreak of violence was in part a reaction to the result of the success of Right wing and religious ideology in Israel during the eighties. The building of settlements on land occupied in 1967, especially those in Jerusalem, and the evident determination of Israel to retain its hold on the land conquered in 1967 eventually united the Palestinian people in an effort to shake off the yoke of their conquerors. This seminal event triggered an on-going dispute among Israelis of all persuasions and divided the country into approximately equal camps - the one advocating that the Palestinians should be freed from occupation and the other maintaining that this could not be done without endangering Israeli security and, in the view of its

more extreme advocates, the mission of the Jews to rule over the whole of the land designated as their's in the bible.

To meet and talk to politically aware Israelis today is to realize the extent to which the sense of a common Israeli identity had been fractured. Society is polarized along a major divide and the number of people willing to change their views or respond to advocacy is remarkably small.

Things were still further complicated by the fact that all this turmoil was taking place against a gradual rise in affluence in Israel. In the period from 1988 to 1997 the average per capita income of each Israeli citizen rose by fifty percent. Israelis now found themselves richer than Portuguese or Greeks and by 2000 plus they expect to be as rich as Englishmen or Italians. The materialism of the country showed itself in a myriad of different ways, evidently in the number of new cars, new villas, new country clubs and restaurants. The "average" Israeli is perhaps not a religious zealot or a left wing Peace Now activist but someone who lives on the plain in cities and towns along the shore of the Mediterranean and seeks the satisfaction of good holidays abroad, good meals, a new house, the material satisfactions which had hitherto been quite difficult to obtain but which were now within the reach of all save the ten or fifteen per cent of those who had missed out on affluence and whom the neglect of the social services had left highly exposed.

Fragmentation of society, or rather the fact that this fragmentation had become obvious (for it had perhaps always existed), had resulted in the decline of many institutions and idols which had previously been central to the Zionist identity. Now not only the Histadrut and the kibbutzim had fallen from public favor. Other institutions which once symbolized the creation of the state, the Universities or the Philharmonic orchestra, were perceived of as less central. The attitude of many Israelis to the land of Israel itself also underwent a change. Central to the Zionist ideology was the redemption of the land - caring for it, developing it, making it green.

This quasi-mystical attitude to the land now lingered only among a minority. There were, of course, religious Jews who also prized the land and included in their concept of it the West Bank but most of them were more interested in the possession of the land for ideological reasons than in farming or improving it.

To move freely among different groups in Israel is to be struck by the enormous variants in their self perception and in their aspirations. The "New Age" movement in Israel which has arrived twenty or so years after it took off in America is growing exponentially; converts to orthodox religion, the so-called "hosrim l'tsuva", are very numerous and like all converts more extreme than the orthodox themselves; Russian immigrants (400,000 of whom have arrived in the 1990's) have established their own party which seeks to care for their interests but which has no clear ideology - though it has seven seats out of the one hundred and twenty in the Knesset; while many individual young Israelis profess no interest in the country or its future which they see as dominated by struggle and violence. The latter aim to leave the country or to get so rich that they will be able to opt out when they want to.

This craving for material reward is apparent in the absence within the Israel of the 1990's of generally acceptable financial norms. Many public figures are currently under inditement for major or minor misdemeanors as the legal system struggles to combat a general tendency to lower standards. Ministers and other prominent individuals continue to function normally in spite of a heavy weight of suspicion and their doing so is accepted by the leaders of their parties and by society as a whole. The religious parties are particular prominent in the mis-use of public funds. Individual politicians direct money to the institutions or communities from which they derive support with scant regard to legalities. To be fair such things have happened before in Israel and are common in public life everywhere, but there is something peculiarly brazen about the way it is done in present day Israel. It is evident that many politicians are operating

from different norms than those previously prevalent in Israeli society. Indeed it is apparent that some elements among the religious and the Right have little use for democracy at all. They prefer the nebulous appeal to "Am Israel" (the Jewish soul"), the quasi-mystical concept of the will of the people, to the results of the ballot box. The orthodox religious community presents what appears to be a hostile and unyielding face to the world. And yet much of their anger arises from a sense that they themselves are threatened by the all-embracing rise of secularism. Perhaps once they have asserted themselves and conquered their fear of the outsider and of the secular world then co-existence with the secular majority may be possible.

Confusion of identity is evident in the absence of acknowledged role models or historically approved individuals. The "heroes" of Zionism, Weizmann, Katznellson, Ussishkin, even Ben Gurion himself, are not heroes to many Israelis who prefer Menahem Begin or the Lubervitcher rabbi. Some look back into distant history to the Gaon of Vilna while others prefer to make temporary icons of media personalities or pop singers.

Such fragmentation is not peculiar to Israel. The rapid spread of the media and of relative affluence have unbalanced societies which face less pressure and are more established than Israel, but Israel seems more than usually confused about its identity perhaps because the old elite has lost power and no generally accepted new one has appeared.

And yet...

In 1992 the Gulf War took place. Like everyone else I took refuge in a (poorly) sealed up room for a while and emerged to find a country which appeared totally united. Under intense pressure the different groups had recovered their sense of all belonging to the same community, of being Jews. The assassination of Prime Minister Rabin also had something of the same effect. It was refreshing to share in this sense of unity.

But these moments of national "togetherness" were of short duration. Within weeks of the war, within days of Rabin's murder, the discordant voices of conflict had re-emerged. Conflict, symbolized for me by a popular television program which invites well known personalities to deal with political issues, PoPolitika, which is distinguished by verbal violence, lack of any sense of mutual respect, and general boorishness.

It sometimes seems as if only when pitted directly against a readily identifiable common enemy is the Israeli identity clearly perceptible. Then the need to survive overrides other factors.

Palestinian Identity

The outbreak of the intifada in December was not at first perceived as being a major event. I arrived in Israel on the day after it broke out and remember clearly my neighbors discounting it as a short term explosion. Israeli military and political leaders were similarly mistaken in believing they could easily suppress it.

It became clear in the next few months that the intifada was a genuine national protest and that it was driven not by the PLO in Tunis but by local leaders who had the support of the people of the West Bank and Gaza. Their struggle lasted for six years or so and in the course of it the Palestinians developed a sense of identity which was stronger than any they had had before. Choosing to use only limited force and eschew the use of firearms, the leadership of the Palestinian people attracted sympathetic support from much world opinion and successfully polarized opinion in Israel, some recognizing the need to give the Palestinians their freedom, others adamantly opposed to doing so.

The Palestinians showed remarkable courage and persistence in maintaining their resistance to the Israeli army, in spite of the fact that they were for the most part unarmed. By 1992 they had so far succeeded that Israel was willing, with some strong encouragement from USA, to enter into peace negotiations with the Palestinian leaders and, in effect, to abandon the effort to absorb all the West Bank and Gaza. Since then Israel has given up Gaza and the towns in the West Bank, Yasser Arafat has returned and established himself as national leader, a legislative council has been elected and a "state in waiting" with its own ministries and officials has been set up. The international community has supported nascent Palestinian institutions.

The Palestinian sense of identity forged in conflict with Israel might well seem to have been firmly established. However there are certain negative factors which still remain to be overcome.

First is the fact that it has become apparent that many Israelis have not really accepted the Palestinians as a nation, a people who will require their own state. Many Israeli leaders seek to divide the Palestinians geographically by settlements, security zones, and new roads, and to weaken them internally by a mass of minor harassments.

While some Israelis have been doing their best to undermine Palestinian identity, the Palestinians themselves have had their problems in rising above local considerations. There have always been long term quarrels between the inhabitants of Nablus and those of Hebron and between large families which dominate much of the social and economic life of the West Bank. To these must be added more recent disputes between those who see religion as a key factor in creating Palestinian identity (Hamas) and those who are resolutely secular. Other divisive factors are the isolation of Gaza from the West Bank and the continued reluctance of the majority of the Arab population of Israel to risk their economic and

social status within Israel and actively support the Palestinian cause. The latter prefer, with good reason, to remain on the side lines.

Palestinian identity, exemplified by the intifada struggle and shared culture, is strong in that the people share a common history of resistance to Israel, a language and an attachment to the land (and especially to Jerusalem), but weak in so far as their political institutions are not yet firmly established, there is much mutual backbiting and lack of trust, and not only Israel but the neighboring Arab countries, Jordan, Syria and Egypt are ambivalent in the support to the idea of a Palestinian state.

And yet traveling around the West Bank, working with Palestinian professionals on issues related to the environment in which they are living, problems of how best to plan for the future or how to make the best use of limited water resources, leaves me in little doubt that the Palestinians have a sense of identity which ultimately overrides divisions. The suffering that comes from struggle has made them into a people apart from their neighbors, they are not Jordanians, not Syrians, but Palestinians. Only when this is recognized will long term prospects for peace look more encouraging.

Conclusion

In all the above one factor is missing, and yet it is perhaps the most significant of all in the long term. That is the simple recognition that both Israel and Palestine are extraordinarily vital societies. There is much energy in the region.

The success of Israel as a country is evident. In spite of its lack of consensus and the many different view of its inhabitants as to how they should shape their future, Israel is neither a dull place nor a negative one. Similarly the Palestinians, in spite of their weak political position, show great energy in managing their own personal affairs (which is not,

unhappily, always reflected in the machinery of government which is as yet inefficient) and continue to hope for a better future.

Living in the Holy Land is never dull. It seems that all extremes must find a place here and this may one factor explaining why this part of the world attracts so much attention from the media and the international community (out of all proportion to its size and economic importance).

The ultimate solution found by Israelis and Palestinians to their questions of identity are of long term importance. Because of its historic and religious past, because of the involvement of the United States - the most powerful country in the world, because of the vitality of the two peoples, what happens in Israel and Palestine matters far beyond the two communities themselves.

For the time being there can be no clear cut answer to the question "what is an Israeli identity?" nor to the comparable questions about the Palestinians. Both are in a state of flux.

My own hope is that within Israel, after long and difficult confrontation, the opposing groups will realize that neither of them can dominate the other. In the course of their struggle the various parties involved may come to see that their best chance of long term survival and genuine achievement is to give room to "the other" to flourish as they wish within a democratic framework and generally accepted standards of behavior.

If this should happen in Israel what will then emerge is a strong and unified society, perhaps a more religious orientation than the Israel of Ben Gurion, but not a theocracy. A society which shows confidence but not racial superiority in its dealings with its neighbors. Reading the newspapers of today with their accounts of disputes, accusations and counter accusations, such a scenario may seem rose-colored but my sense

that in the last resort the Israeli people have a sense of reality and can learn from experience.

The Palestinians are in some ways nearer to a consensus as to what sort of identity they, and their state in the making, will have in the future. It is surprising how much real support there is for democratic ideas and processes, not only among intellectuals but also among ordinary people. Palestine has a chance to be a democratic and progressive society if two conditions are fulfilled. First that Israel gives it room to breathe and second that its current leaders are capable of adjusting to new times and new demands upon them. A Palestine in which the people have realized their identity and established democratic norms will be much more significant in the Middle East than its relatively small size and population would suggest.

No clear predictions as to the long term development of the identities of the two societies which occupy the Holy Land can be made today. Negative factors, terrorism, chauvinism, racism, greed, and corruption are all in evidence, but the majority of Israelis and Palestinians are neither terrorists, chauvinists, racists, thieves, or cheats. My own sense is that in the long term the positive human qualities of the two communities and their shared longing for a life without continuous conflict, will most assert themselves. The progress that has been made since 1988, in spite of the many reverses sustained along the way, is the best argument for believing that in the end the twin identities of Israel and Palestine will be able to accommodate to one another.

IN ATTENDANCE

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DR. SALEM AWEIS, Prof. Of Education, Birzeit University
SHEIKH JAMIL HAMAMI, Lecturer on Islam, Al Quds University, Preacher,
Al Aqsa Mosque,
PROF. SARI NUSSEIBEH, President, Al Quds University
DR. MUSA BUDEIRI, Prof. of Philosophy, Al Quds University
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DR. MARWAN DARWEISH, Director, Peace Education, IPCRI
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DR. MUNTHEER DAJANI, Director, Palestinian Center for Regional Studies
DR. GHASSAN ANDONI, Prof. Of Physics, Birzeit University, Director
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DR. RON KRONISH, Director, the Interreligious Coordinating Council in
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DR. MORDECHAI BARON, Research Fellow, Yad Ben Zvi
KALMAN YARON, Former Director, Martin Buber Center
DR. SIMCHA BAHIRI, Peace economist and Co-Chair of IPCRI
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