Palestinian and Israeli Intellectuals in the Shadow of Oslo and Intifadat al-Aqsa

ARTICLE

Palestinian and Israeli Intellectuals in the Shadow of

Oslo and *Intifadat al-Aqsa*

Bruce Maddy-Weitzman

Tel Aviv University

The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research

The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research

The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research (TSC) is an multidisciplinary academic framework shared by the faculties of the humanities, social sciences, and law at Tel Aviv University. The purpose of the Center, established in 1992, is to promote systematic research and thinking on issues connected with peacemaking processes and conflict resolution.

In this context, the Center:

◊ Directs a project called the "Peace Index", which gauges trends in Israeli public opinion as the political process progresses;

◊ Keeps a database on Israeli-Palestinian cooperation in particular and Israeli-Arab cooperation in general;

◊ Sponsors conferences and workshops; encourages teaching, research projects, and authorship of graduate theses and dissertations on conflict-resolution themes;

◊ Fosters interrelations and cooperation with similarly focused institutions in Israel and abroad.

The Tami Steinmetz Center's Research Series

This series includes reports on research projects conducted by the authors under the sponsorship of the TSC. The views presented in the reports however are the sole responsibility of the authors.

Table of Contents

Preface

This study of Palestinian and Israeli intellectuals was conceived during more optimistic times. It was based on the premise that they had contributed in some way to what was hopefully an "irreversible" peace process, and would play significant roles in shaping longer term political and social processes subsequent to the apparently imminent final status accord. The failure of the peace negotiations and the renewed descent into violence in September 2000 forced a reevaluation but did not alter my belief that the activities of thinkers, writers and educators of the two adversarial communities remained worthy of study. The anger and frustration voiced by each side's intellectuals towards the other's during the last two years confirmed that they themselves believed that their actions still counted for something, their lack of military divisions notwithstanding.

Defining who exactly intellectuals are has always been elusive. It may be that one should avoid wasting precious energy and adopt Justice Holmes' famous comment regarding pornography: "I can't define it, but I know it when I see it". In this case, I have spread my net wide, including university-based academics, writers and other men and women of the "spirit" in what is clearly an amorphous group. But the focus of this inquiry is on the "secular", left-of-center intellectuals who represent important streams of public thought in both communities. In the Israeli case, I would argue that they represent the central stream; the standing of secular Palestinian intellectuals within Palestinian society is more ambiguous. In any case, secular left-wing and liberal intellectuals on both sides of the divide are important in an additional way, since they, more than others, engaged their counterparts in "conversation".

Permit me a few caveats. My concentration on these groups clearly gives short shrift to persons located on other portions of the spectrum, whether left or right, secular or religious. Even within these "streams", my choices of subject may seem arbitrary and overly impressionistic at times. In addition, this study does not

include a treatment of Palestinian intellectuals who are Israeli citizens, nor does it examine the future of Jewish-Arab relations within Israel. The events of the last two years, particularly the death in October 2000 of 13 Israeli Arab citizens at the hands of Israeli security forces, may well have been a watershed in these relations, and the whole subject, including the intra-Palestinian aspect, deserves a full examination of its own. Finally, my study covers developments up through the summer of 2001. Even by then, the Palestinian-Israeli confrontation had morphed into a kind of 'war', and could no longer be characterized as an *intifada*, whose connotation was one of a popular, mass uprising. Since then, the sharp escalation of violence has further rendered the term *intifada* obsolete. Still, Palestinians continue to use it, and the recent growing Palestinian self-criticism of their conduct of the conflict includes calls for a renewal of the "popular"/"mass" modes of action which characterized the first *intifada* during the late 1980s and, to a lesser extent, the initial stages of the current round of conflict. In any case, owing to its wide use by both the Palestinians and Israeli sides, I have chosen to use the term to characterize the renewed, violent Israeli-Palestinian confrontation, at least in its first phase, while recognizing that some may thus criticize me for adopting the Palestinian discourse.

Introduction

Amoz Oz, one of Israel's premier novelists and public intellectuals, and a long-time peace advocate situated within the Zionist left, declared in 1994 that there was no need to affix blame or fault regarding the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and that he could easily live with the existence of competing narratives.[1] Nothing could be further from the dominant view among Palestinian intellectuals. The Israelis, wrote Palestinian-American professor of Middle East history Rashid Khalidi, must learn that history could not be shoved under the rug, and that an acknowledgement of Israel's responsibility for the tragedy of Palestinian exile and dispersion was a *sine qua non* for any genuine peace agreement.[2] The gap between these two writers of stature was an accurate reflection of the ongoing chasm between their two communities.

The failure to achieve a final status agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority as envisaged by the framers of the 1993 Oslo accords, and the descent into a renewed cycle of violence, beginning in September 2000, left analysts, pundits, scholars and politicians alike scrambling for explanations. What had gone wrong? Were the underlying assumptions of the Oslo process fundamentally flawed? Shlomo Avineri, one of Israel's prominent senior scholars, certainly thought so. In a bitter open letter to the preeminent Palestinian-American intellectual, Edward Said, he declared that "you were right and we were wrong". The idea of gradual reconciliation within the framework of a two-state solution, in which each side agreed to discard its maximalist demands and "zero sum" approach, wrote Avineri, was a pipe dream. Was he correct? Was the problem, as Avineri stated, that the Palestinians were, in the final analysis, unwilling to accept Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state, as epitomized by their unyielding insistence on the "right of return" of Palestinian refugees to their original homes and lands?[3] Or, as Said had proclaimed from the outset, had Oslo been doomed to failure as it was based on an imbalance of power in Israel's favor and not on the principle of justice, thus constituting "an Israeli diktat, a Palestinian Versailles?"[4] Alternatively, perhaps it

wasn't so much the conception that was flawed as much as the implementation, in which the possibilities for a settlement acceptable to both sides were gradually foreclosed by mutual misdeeds, leading to a whirlwind of negative dynamics which trumped the last-ditch diplomatic efforts to salvage a settlement. Or perhaps the Oslo process, however flawed conceptually and however limited its results, was a necessary way station on the historical road to an imperfect, partial but nonetheless meaningful accommodation between two national collectives.

In any case, it is clear that the Oslo process suffered a serious, if not mortal blow in Autumn 2000. It is also clear that, as is the case with nearly all 'political' phenomena of this type, the brunt of the responsibility for the outcome of the Oslo process lay at the feet of the decision-making echelon, i.e., the actions, inaction and interactions of the political leaderships of both communities. At the same time, given the traditional role of intellectuals in shaping longer term social and political thinking, one must ask whether or not Israeli and/or Palestinian intellectuals bear a degree of responsibility for the failure to successfully conclude the peace process. Did Palestinian and Israeli intellectuals significantly contribute to the public discourse regarding the Palestinian-Israeli peace process? Did they have any measurable effect on the course of Israeli-Palestinian relations during the Oslo era? If the underlying assumptions of the Oslo Accords were flawed, then did intellectuals fail to formulate alternatives? If the collapse of the peace process was due to imperfect implementation, then did intellectuals fail to recognize the obstacles along the way and thus to shape the predilections and policies of their own societies and governments in ways that might have directed Palestinian-Israeli relations down a less tortuous path? Or perhaps the problem was more in the realm of the lack of influence of intellectuals on policy-making and public opinion alike.

Any attempt to address these questions requires a study of the 'production' of Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals in recent years: their writings, public activities and 'conversation' across the inter-communal divide regarding both the burning political issues of the day and larger issues connected to their community's

collective identity, understanding of history and desires for the future. Was their "conversation" meaningful, or was theirs a dialogue of the deaf?

Intellectuals in Politics: The General and the Particular

A few words regarding the theme of intellectuals in politics may provide some insights into the issues at hand. There is a broad consensus among scholars that the word "intellectuals" first came into widespread use in France as a consequence of the *1898 manifeste des intellectuels* evoked by the Dreyfus case. The term was used to refer to men of letters who led the protest against the conduct of Dreyfus's trial. However, it was during the Age of Enlightenment, more than a century earlier, when the idea of an 'intellectual idiom' became salient and the concept of the universality and authority of the intellectual mode began to be disseminated. The French Revolution marked a turning point, as the intellectual idiom became capable not only of inspiring the emergence of social and political movements but also of decisively shaping new social and political realities. Indeed, for many scholars, intellectuals have been the true agents of social and political change of the last 200 years. This does not, of course, imply a value judgment. Intellectuals in the murderous 20th century, for example, provided grist for all kinds of authoritarian mills, often in the name of improving the lot of humanity.[5] Max Weber foresaw the disastrous results of intellectuals entering into politics armed with the 'ethic of principled conviction', with no regard for outcomes, and without the 'ethic of responsibility.'[6] Paul Johnson's broadside against intellectuals may have been a case of over-kill, but his caution against "the heartless tyranny of ideas...the worst of all despotism" should not be dismissed out of hand.[7]

The preferred role of the intellectual and his position in society has, in fact, been much debated. Edward Said trumpets the "nay-sayers" positioned on the edge of society, those who "speak truth to power", ready to confront orthodoxy and dogma, "someone whose raison d'etre is to represent all those people and issues that are routinely forgotten or swept under the rug". Intellectuals, he states, "must be involved in a lifelong dispute with all of the guardians of sacred vision or text.[8] Michel

Foucault took matters a step further, charging the intellectual to act in a way that will explicitly undermine the existing hegemonic order in the production of ideology.[9] Regarding commitment, Eric Hobsbawm contends that no true historian of nationalism can be a true nationalist himself, since nationalism - any nationalism - is based on blatant historical falsehoods.[10] By contrast, Anthony Smith, no less an authority on nationalism than Hobsbawm, rejects the latter's insistence that commitment to nationalism and scholarship on nationalism are equivalent to oil and water.[11] More generally, Edward Shils believes it wrong to say that the very nature of the activity of an intellectual "requires undifferentiated and undiscriminating alienation from societal traditions, authorities and institutions".[12] Intellectuals, he concludes, may feel more responsibility towards the legacy of intellectual achievement than for the well being of their societies. However, they are not bereft of that either. In fact, the commitment of many intellectuals to their societies is often taken too far. Analysts have long bemoaned the decline of intellectual autonomy among Western democracies, let alone authoritarian regimes. A generation ago already, Daniel Bell noted that the phenomenon of radical, critical intellectuals was in decline in the post-industrial welfare state as more and more were becoming "technicians" whose purpose was to produce and improve the products of their society.[13] Since then, academic specialization and compartmentalization has only increased.

Clearly, then, intellectuals have variously played supportive and subversive roles: at times they have crafted the dominant discourse in a given society, at other times they have supplied the rationale for "hegemonic" political forces, and at still other times they acted to subvert the dominant order. One can find ample examples of all of these kinds of behavior in both the Israeli and Palestinian milieus.

Ironically, given the sharpness and mutual animosity which pervaded their own exchanges on Arab-Israeli relations,[14] the American Jewish political philosopher Michael Walzer and Edward Said seem to be closer than either would probably prefer to acknowledge regarding their 'ideal type' of intellectual. Walzer rejects Julian Benda's classic definition of the intellectual as "the guardian and possessor of

independent judgement owning loyalty to truth alone". Instead he prefers the notion of the "connected critic", one who exposes the hypocrisies and injustices of a society but does so from within, while remaining faithful to the common sense of ordinary people.[15] Said repeatedly refers approvingly to Benda's model, but his own ideal intellectual stands uneasily between loneliness-producing universal principles and primordial impulses and local loyalties.[16]

The Israeli and Palestinian intellectual communities are far from homogeneous, containing "Shilsian", "Walzerian" and "Saidian" types, as well as "organic" intellectuals acting completely in the service of the state. They operate in radically different contexts and come out of very different cultural and social milieus. Most importantly, they function within a context of a national and inter-communal conflict in which one side has developed a relatively "strong", institutionalized state,[17] and the other is a historically "weak" community which seeks to attain independence and historical retribution. Israeli intellectuals operate in a freewheeling, hyper-democratic, and no longer fully mobilized environment. Contemporary Israeli intellectuals find themselves in the post-heroic phase of their national life. The meaning of history, "Israeli-ness", and the character of the state have all become highly contentious issues. Many of Israel's founding myths and symbols, from Masada and Tel Hai,[18] to the theme of Holocaust and Redemption, involving the triumph of "the few against the many", have been under sustained examination during the past 15 years. The contentious debate over revisions introduced in recent years into school textbooks illustrated the linkage between intellectual discourse and policy-making affecting much broader sectors of society.

Palestinian intellectuals, by contrast, have largely been a mobilized group, working on behalf of their national struggle. They operated under serious handicaps: a) a long experience as vulnerable, stateless persons, b) the weakness of their post-1993 state-building efforts; and, more generally, c) the conflict with Israel, which both defines and distorts the nature of Palestinian intellectual life, and d) the broader authoritarian political culture in the Arab world where, for too long, the choice for intellectuals has been between doing service for the Ruler, self-censorship and

mental atrophy, or emigration/exile to the West.[19] Only more recently, as Palestinians move from the stage of revolutionary mobilization to the task of state-building under extremely difficult conditions, did issues such as the nature of the budding state and its relationship to both its citizens and its neighbors come to the fore. Resistance by the Palestinian Authority to such discussion, which preferred to postpone all debates until after independence is achieved, made the task that much more difficult.

Not surprisingly, then, the peace process has meant quite different things to the two groups, and the 'conversation' between them has been fraught with tension, mistrust, misinterpretation and mutual disappointment, even while they continued to seek out one another. One preliminary observation may already be in order. The dominant stream of Israeli intellectual life, broadly labeled here as the "Zionist left", played a significant role in shaping the public discourse that made Oslo politically possible. At the same time, its enthusiastic commitment to the agreement may have come at the expense of critical thinking about both its terms and its implementation. This criticism, of course, can be directed from both sides of the Israeli political spectrum. Palestinian intellectuals, on the other hand, did less to shape either public thinking or policy in advance of the agreement, reflecting their marginalization in comparison to their Israeli counterparts, as well as the constraints of operating in an authoritarian order. Their skepticism, extreme caution and lack of enthusiasm toward the Oslo agreements was, in part, a function of the difficulties of operating in such a milieu. To be sure, it was seemingly proven justified by events. However, one may also ask whether the Palestinian intellectuals' jadedness contributed, in some small way, to the results, i.e., became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

A broader observation regarding the differences between the two communities is that unlike Israeli-Jewish intellectuals, who nearly all reside within the state, Palestinian intellectuals with the greatest 'weight' reside outside the West Bank-Jerusalem-Gaza areas, mostly in the West. The implications are several: they possess a degree of freedom to articulate their views which has never been available to Palestinians "inside" (whether under Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian or Egyptian

control), or to those living in the Arab world, for that matter; their perspectives, inevitably, are different than those on the "inside", the emerging center of Palestinian social and political life; their "choices" do not have the same ramifications for the Palestinian collective as do those on the inside.

The Background to Israeli Intellectual Life

Many, if not most European Jewish intellectuals at the end of the 19th century were cosmopolitan and anti-nationalist in orientation, perceiving identification with the nationalist cause as a return to the ghetto tradition and a betrayal of the intellectual's mission.[20] Nonetheless, the budding Zionist movement had its thinkers as well. From its outset, the "Arab question" was part and parcel of the internal dialogue among the movement's men and women of letters and thinkers, as well as among its founding fathers, who generally had an intellectual bent. Awareness of the existence of the "other", i.e., a non-Jewish population and the inherent obstacle it placed in the way of implementing the Zionist vision, was common to Zionist thinkers and leaders across the political spectrum, beginning with Ahad Ha'am and Jabotinsky. The Zionist discourse may well have been, in Laurence Silberstein's words, "heterogeneous and inherently conflicted".[21] However, the broad consensus on the main elements of the Zionist vision - the territorial concentration of Jews in Eretz Yisrael, the creation of a Jewish majority there, changing the socio-economic structure of the Jews and the renaissance of the Hebrew language - limited the degree of their differences on the Arab question. For the most part, the issue was dealt with passively, viewed as a problem that could only be solved, or would simply fade away, once the Jewish population had reached a critical mass.[22]

As the Zionist movement gained momentum and the Arab-Jewish conflict gathered speed during the 1930s and 1940s, Jewish intellectuals in Palestine increasingly became a mobilized group wedded to the national purpose, relegating universalist values and concerns to secondary importance in the face of the challenges of the hour. They were gradually joined by Jewish counterparts in the Diaspora, particularly after the horrors of the Holocaust. Although Zionism was never a monolithic movement, the stream espousing social-democratic, secular, liberal values ("particularistic universalism") came to dominate.[23] By and large, this included a broad consensus on Arab-Israeli issues, in which the conflict was viewed as inevitable, the result of Arab unwillingness to accept the legitimacy of the Jewish

national movement. Differences on specific policies and actions, while always present, were largely subordinated during the crucial years surrounding the end of the Mandate, the founding of the state, and the 1948 War of Independence.

During the early years of Israel's independence, intellectuals had unprecedented access to Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, Israel's charismatic founder and state-builder, who encouraged them to feel that statehood had endowed them with a new mission and dignity. They thus initially participated in Ben-Gurion's state-building project, and the disappointment which intellectuals inevitably feel in post-revolutionary environments was delayed.[24] It was only a decade later that they abandoned Ben-Gurion and "their nominal role in the charismatic center" in favor of the model of an open, democratic society opposed to political messianism.[25] The "Arab question" generally took a back seat in those years. One exception was the ultimately successful advocacy by a number of Israel's leading intellectual figures of the rescinding of the Military Government over Israel's Arab minority in 1966.

The consequences of the June 1967 war ensured that Israeli-Arab relations would take a central place on the agenda of Israeli intellectuals for the next three decades. To be sure, the sudden, seemingly miraculous triumph on the battlefield and quasi-messianic response to the war initially had a stagnating effect. Nonetheless, Israeli intellectuals, while not eager to resume their role as skeptics did not become conscious ideologues who uncritically rationalized existing political positions.[26] Beginning with the trauma of the October 1973 war, and gathering speed in the 1980s against the background of the Lebanon war, a far-reaching debate within Israel ensued over fundamental questions regarding nearly every aspect of the collective Israeli experience, both historically and on contemporary matters. Some of these issues, such as Sephardi-Ashkenazi tensions, both past and present, and religious-secular differences, would have surfaced regardless of developments in the Israel-Arab sphere. Israeli society itself was becoming transformed, as old elites lost steam, and newer social and political forces clamored for recognition and influence, for example, among the "Second Israel" (the broad Sephardi working and lower middle-class). The new dynamics of Israel-Arab relations after 1967

contributed heavily to societal and intellectual ferment, regarding both political issues and larger questions related to the nature of Israeli identity. By the late 1990s, centrifugal socio-political tendencies had reached such strength that one Israeli scholar decried the reduction of Israel into a series of enclaves. With no agreed-upon Israeli ethos, declared the historian David Ohanna, "Israelis are privatizing themselves into nothingness".[27] Amos Oz took an entirely different tack, however. The primary problem, he said, was not particularization, but the homogenizing influence of globalized consumer culture which, he said, was "making us all into idiots" and threatening to "delete the collective memory diskette".[28] In fact, both Ohanna and Oz had a point: the liberal-Zionist ethos which had provided the glue for a diverse, predominantly immigrant and besieged Israeli Jewish society for more than two generations was being buffeted from both global and local directions.

While Israeli society was in the process of losing its certitudes, the majority of the secular Israeli intellectual community had, by the end of the 1980s, come to see the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza as a Trojan Horse. Yehoshafat Harkabi's writings and public expressions[29] may have played a role in shaping a discourse which recognized Israel's limitations, despite its overwhelming military power, and brought Israel closer to recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as its unavoidable and legitimate interlocutor. Once the Palestine National Council endorsed in November 1988, however grudgingly, the UN 1947 partition resolution, the door for pragmatic political arrangements was opened, first in the eyes of intellectuals, and eventually for the political leadership.

Concurrently, and not entirely coincidentally, the end of the 1980s witnessed the beginning of contentious and often acrimonious debate over Israel's past, particularly the events surrounding the birth of the state in 1948. By the end of the 1990s, the reexamination of Israel's past, which was as much about the present and the future as the past, was standard fare not just in academic conferences and writings but on widely viewed TV talk shows and in the daily press. The multi-part television documentary *Tekuma* ("Reawakening"), produced for Israel's Channel One TV to coincide with Israel's 50th anniversary celebrations, was one arena for

these discussions. The program's treatment of the Palestinian *nakba* (lit. "disaster", or "calamity", the accepted term in the Arab world referring to the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and, in particular, the Palestinian defeat, dispossession and exile) and subsequent rise of the Palestinian guerrilla organizations was deemed too sympathetic by a number of critics. The debate was not merely academic: during the final two years of the peace process's fluctuating fortunes, the meaning of the past and its implications for the present, particularly regarding Palestinian refugees and their demand for a "right of return", was thrust back into the collective Israeli consciousness.

The Background to Palestinian Intellectual Life

Modern intellectual life in the Arab world emerged during the period between the two world wars, as an outgrowth of the expansion of education and the challenge of European rule. Along with the beginning of intellectual work, and the accompanying development of a self-consciousness, intellectuals in the Arab world, most of them coming from the Westernized middle stratum of society (the *effendiyya),* began to become actively committed to politics.[30] Thinker-activists, particularly those affiliated with the small but influential communist parties, defined their responsibility as leading "the masses and the proletariat" in making history through the development and dissemination of ideas. Thus, Arab intellectuals provided important underpinning for political mobilization against foreign rule, for the crystallization of a modern Arab political community and for the more radical versions of Arab nationalist ideology which swept the region during the 1950s and 1960s.[31] Beginning in the mid-1930s, the question of Palestine played a central role in the mobilization and politicization of wider sectors of Arab society, and became intertwined with the domestic politics of newly emerging Arab states and of the inter-Arab system.[32]

The trauma of 1948 was a formative event for all sectors of Palestinian society, in one way or another. In its aftermath, education became the central tool by which the younger generation of Palestinians, particularly among those 50-60% who had been uprooted and dispersed, could make their way in the world. Beirut, the growing, vibrant intellectual center of the Arab world during the tumultuous 1950s and 1960s, became a hub for young, educated Palestinians, who interacted with Arabs from other countries. Their radical nationalist politics, whether of the pan-Arab or more local, Palestinian variety, were nurtured there, as intellectual and political activities intermingled.

The failure in 1967 of radical Arab regimes to make good on their promise to defeat Israel and roll back the historical clock was a decisive moment in Palestinian history. With Arab armies prostrate, and radical, inclusive pan-Arab ideologies

discredited, there was room for a specific brand of Palestinian nationalism to develop more fully. Central also to this whole new context was that Israel was now in direct control of all of Mandatory Palestine, and with it, approximately one-half of all Palestinians. The reality of Israeli occupation, in all of its aspects, would gradually become a defining experience in Palestinian collective life second only to the events of 1948. At the same time, a handful of Palestinian intellectuals operating within the open environment of Western academia rose to prominence both in their specific academic fields and, increasingly, as intellectuals of the public sphere concerned with the Palestinian cause.

Since the very beginning of the Arab-Jewish conflict, the Zionist movement was the unwanted "Other" in Palestinian political and ideological discourse. Palestinian political and social forces across the spectrum entirely rejected the legitimacy of Zionism and the notion of Jewish rights in Palestine, and resisted it in every way possible. The failure to block Israel's establishment in 1948 and the accompanying trauma of uprooting and dispersion only reinforced their refusal to accept the claims of the "Other" and determination to eliminate Israel and replace it with a Palestinian Arab state. The Zionist claim, in Palestinian eyes, was fraudulent and illegitimate from the outset; the effort to realize it brought about untold and unjust suffering to Palestinians. The "Other", therefore, was simply the usurper, who needed to be evicted in turn, and sent back to his place of origin.

The years immediately following the founding of the PLO in 1964 witnessed no change in this absolute rejectionist stance. Indeed, the Palestinian Resistance Movement unabashedly sought to spark a general war that would ideally lead to the destruction of Israel. From 1969, images of the Israeli "Other" began to become more nuanced, as Palestinian understanding of the complex nature of the conflict, including its regional and international aspects, deepened, and the Palestinian movement officially adopted the "democratic state" formula as its strategic goal. Beginning in 1973, expanding ties with the Soviet Union influenced Palestinian political discourse.

Not entirely coincidentally, the internal ideological politics of the Palestinian left, and the evolving views of leftist Palestinian intellectuals became increasingly important. Their analyses provided Palestinian political thinking with the theoretical and intellectual framework that it needed to rationalize the existence (as distinct from legitimacy) of the Israeli/Zionist "Other" while maintaining the struggle for Palestinian self-determination. The "democratic state" concept, first tendered in 1969 by the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), contained some acknowledgement of the Jewish collective in Palestine, even as it utterly rejected the possibility of Jewish national self-realization. From the Israeli side, this program was viewed merely a propaganda exercise designed to soften the Palestinian image in the West. In the Palestinian context, however, it generated a good deal of controversy. The PLO's proclaimed goal in 1974 of establishing a "fighting national authority" on any part of liberated Palestinian soil, and its refinement in 1977 into a Palestinian state, created more internal tension, particularly among the Palestinian left. The PLO leadership explicitly characterized these steps as being part of a "strategy of phases" designed in the end to retake all of Palestine. Nonetheless, George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), after initially accepting the Palestine National Council's 1974 resolutions, subsequently suspended its involvement in the PLO's Executive Committee and Central Council for a number of years, fearing that adopting these goals would eventually lead to recognition of Israel.

Gradually, however, Palestinians on the left and Fatah-affiliated individuals, both outside and inside the official power structure, began engaging Israeli counterparts. Initially, their interlocutors were non-Zionist radical left-wingers. Later, they came to include members of the Zionist Left, who were sympathetic with Palestinian aspirations. The meetings themselves constituted bold behavior on both sides. The Jerusalem-based Musa Budeiri, one of the most independent-minded and iconoclastic academics of the Palestinian Left, goes against the common wisdom in saying that the Palestinians in these dialogues were well ahead of the Israelis in their "edging towards recognition of the other's exclusiveness and essential

separateness". To be sure, there were few immediate tangible benefits. Writing in the pre-Oslo era, Budeiri caustically analyzed the "academic dialogue" which had taken place thus far. For the Palestinian side, the aim was to both get acquainted with the enemy and to split its ranks. Israelis, on the other hand, were focused on explaining their fears to the Palestinians, in order to moderate their positions. For Budeiri, their "inappropriateness" as partners in dialogue stemmed from their "unwillingness to question", and thus help transform Israeli political culture. It was doubtful, he said, that the Palestinians had achieved any meaningful political dividend from all of the effort expended.[33]

A Contemporary Profile of Israeli Intellectuals

A rough socio-gram of Israeli intellectuals may be useful for background. The large majority, both among university faculty and men and women of letters, are of Ashkenazi (European Jewish) origin, secular, and belong to the upper-middle and middle classes. A smaller number are of Sephardi (Spanish/Middle Eastern and North African) origin, some of whom promote a specific Sephardi socio-political agenda and a radical ideological and historical critique of Israel's founding. Although there are clearly exceptions, the younger generation of scholars and writers concerned with public affairs tends to be less wedded than its elders to classic Zionist and "etatist" ideological tenets.

The majority of the Israeli intellectual community, scholars, authors and publicists, are left-of-center in political orientation, favoring a pragmatic accommodation with the Palestinian Arab community and neighboring Arab states, based on a liberal-humanist Zionist perspective. It includes senior scholars such as Shlomo Avineri, Emmanuel Sivan, Yirmiyahu Yovel, Yosef Gorni, Anita Shapira, Asa Kasher; and authors such as Amos Oz,. A. B. Yehoshua, and Sami Michael. Many have spoken up on issues related to the Arab-Israeli peace process and Israeli collective identity. Important liberal religious Zionist scholars, incorporating Jewish philosophical and religious views into their discourse include Aviezer Ravitzky and Eliezer Schweid. A smaller group of mostly younger academics and writers who have nonetheless had considerable influence in shaping Israeli intellectual discourse during the past decade, are avowedly post-Zionist,[34] favoring an at-once cosmopolitan and civic "Israeliness" over "Jewishness" as the defining feature of the Israeli state, e.g. the sociologists Uri Ram and Oz Almog, the author and critic Yitzhak Laor, the film historian Shlomo Zand, the iconoclastic commentator Meron Benvenisti. Other important scholars seem to straddle the Zionist--post-Zionist line, e.g. Ze'ev Sternhall, Menahem Brinker and Avishai Margalit.

To be sure, there are also writers and thinkers across the right of the spectrum, both secular and religious. A sampling include hard-nosed academic

critics of Oslo and the peace process, e.g. Yehoshua Porath, Efraim Inbar, and Arnon Sofer; the *Ha'aretz* commentator and former head of the Council of Settlements of Judea and Samaria Israel Harel; and the venerable author Moshe Shamir. The quarterly "national camp" journal *Nativ*, sponsored by the "Professors for National Resilience", and the Settlement's Council monthly *Nekuda* provided ongoing forums for "national camp" writers and analysts. For them, the Oslo accords were nothing less than a bankrupting of core Zionist values. Moreover, declared political scientist Martin Sherman in April 1999, the peace process actually damaged the chances for peace since it weakened Israel's deterrent, upon which the only possible peace in the region could be based. Sherman suggested a kind of damage control, namely that Israel try to cut off its destiny from the rest of the region and live by the force of arms, until the Arab world evolved towards democracy.[35] Sherman's position was part of a clear, consistent ideological stance opposing the peace process. However, advocates of "hard separation" were not limited to opponents of Palestinian-Israeli peace, and the internal Israeli debate over separation vs. integration escalated as the final status talks under the Barak government got under way.

Quite a few Israeli academics crossed over from professional intellectual life to the political and policy spheres in recent years, while others served as ad hoc consultants and informal advisers. The historian Shlomo Ben-Ami was the most ambitious of all scholars to have leaped into the political and diplomatic fray since the end of the 1980s, while continuing to seek to contribute to the broader intellectual discourse regarding the peace process. Law professor Amnon Rubenstein combined a quarter-century of political activity in the Knesset with regular writings defending the liberal Zionist ethos against the post-Zionist stream. Historian Shimon Shamir, an outspoken advocate of greater cultural dialogue between Israel and its neighbors, served as ambassador to Egypt and then Jordan.

What exactly should the contemporary role of the Israeli intellectual be? Amoz Oz notes that literature can no longer give the guiding sustenance to society as he claims it did when Zionism was in its formative, pre-state years. Since 1977,

the year when the Labor movement's hegemony over Israeli political life ended with the victory of Menahem Begin and the Likud Party, the intelligentsia returned to its natural place and natural dimensions, said Oz. It no longer was comforted by the illusion that it was central to society, or that literary gatherings, a staple in the pre-mass electronic media era, were important. What was needed in the Oslo era, he said, was that people follow developments without hysteria or euphoria. The 1993 Oslo Declaration of Principles was not a honeymoon, he explained, but a contract between two bitter enemies with a common goal - the exchange of the current reality for something better for both peoples. Israeli intellectuals, Oz cautioned, should not have immediate expectations of changing the world. In the absence of a revolutionary/gestating situation, one could only go, like Socrates, from person to person in the market, and listen to people's fears, and their objections to returning territory. The triumph of the "Second Israel" in 1977, and the virulence directed during the 1980s against Shimon Peres as the symbol of the *Ashkenazi* elite had clearly left its mark on Oz, as it had on many of his compatriots on the Left. Unlike them, however, Oz continued to be *mamlachti*, [loosely, "putting the state at the center"], an Israeli patriot unwilling to abandon those parts of Israeli society with whom he disagreed, even on core issues. "Voicing" the requirements of peace, he said, needed to be done without patronizing people or showing superiority, without the rhetoric of "expelling the darkness" so common to the Israeli left. Oz also took to task that portion of the Israeli left which viewed the Palestinians as the victims and the Israelis as the bad guys of a Western, and that believed that peace would have been attained much earlier if it weren't for Israel. People, he said, have difficulty letting go of a familiar and cliche-like stance. His hope for the conflict was that it would gradually burn out due to tiredness, the gradual erosion of ideological commitments, the fear of the price the conflict will exact in the future, and the willingness of the sides to make a deal.[36]

Like Oz, Tel Aviv University philosophy professor Asa Kasher believed it important for Israeli intellectuals to contribute to the promotion of peace. "One of the functions of intellectuals", he told an interviewer, "is to present society with critical

services, with the flower and fruits of independent thought, the branches of principled, value-centered leadership". They thus can "help create an atmosphere of transition to peace". Kasher emphasized that "we're not yet at the beginning of the peace era", but only "at the entrance to the transition era". Intellectuals, he said, can and must act FOR - for an atmosphere of going to peace, and express the resemblance and commonalties between the two reconciling sides. His view was a sober one. Quoting Maimonides, he notes that "it is impossible to suddenly switch from one opposite to the other". In the meantime, "whoever wants to understand Israel" must understand that the central ethos of Jewish Israeli society is the ethos of being pursued and persecuted". This ethos is deep-rooted, hundreds of years in the making, and will not be changed easily.[37]

Another "mainstream" scholar, Prof. Yosef Gorni, of Tel Aviv University's Land of Israel Studies department, placed great importance on the role of "public thought", as expressed by writers, rabbis, publicists and scholars in influencing public opinion, and thus on policy regarding Jewish-Arab relations. Gorni's ultimate vision of Arab-Israeli relations is an EU-type of arrangement together with Jordan, entailing a regional parliament, economy, water, and educational institutions, alongside complementing national institutions. The EU-style formula, while utterly opposed by the advocates of "hard separation", was an ideal shared by a number of Israeli thinkers and politicians during the Oslo years. One year into *intifadat al-aqsa*, Gorni had realized that this was a far-off vision at best. Israel, he declared, a state with a unique "Euro-Mediterranean" identity, should be incorporated into the EU and NATO, which would guarantee its survival as a non-Arab Muslim state in the Middle East, alongside a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as a shared capital city.[38]

As for achieving a permanent Israeli-Palestinian settlement, Yosi Beilin, the Zionist left's premier academic - turned - politician and key figure behind the original Oslo agreement, favored as rapid movement as possible towards a permanent solution. Even before the breakdown of the process in autumn 2000, Beilin concluded that the emphasis on interim arrangements was one of Oslo's major mistakes. Gorni, by contrast, emphasized that a permanent settlement could only be

durable if it deepened the two peoples' mutual confidence in one another. This could be achieved, he believed, only through a lengthy transition process, and should not entail wholesale, preemptory concessions to the Arab side. Gorni seconds Kasher's analysis regarding the deep-seated collective fear of Jews being uprooted. The fear is authentic, he says, owing to the fact that they are a minority in the region. By contrast, he says, a similar Arab fear is not based in reality, even though he subsequently states that "in history, fabrication, the lie and the myth are also real". Here, Gorni's analysis is flawed: by viewing the Arabs as a collective, with little reference to the Palestinian sub-collective, he grossly underplays the centrality of the Palestinian dimension to the conflict, let alone the Palestinian trauma of uprooting and dispersion. As to whether or not it is possible to speak of the 'end of Zionism" once peace is achieved, Gorni declares that Zionism has "reached its highest stage", with one last goal: the creation of a Jewish society which will justify all of the huge efforts involving sweat, blood and suffering, but also the web of utopian human feelings and hopes of five generations of people". [39] In this regard, Gorni's lofty thoughts ironically mirror those of Edward Said. Writing in 1994, Said called for the restoration of Palestine not simply as territory but as an idea that had previously galvanized the Arab world into thinking about and fighting for social justice, democracy and a different kind of future than the one that has been imposed on it by force and by an absence of Arab will.[40]

Ben-Ami's comments on the role of intellectuals in politics are instructive. An intellectual, he acknowledges, looks at matters from the sidelines, enabling greater understanding of his subject. At the same time, being on the sidelines means one employs less of one's "senses"/instincts, thus distancing oneself from reality. The great French scholar of international affairs, Raymond Aron, who was "too busy trying to understand matters to become engaged in politics", is most definitely not Ben-Ami's model. One must, Ben-Ami says, both understand and act. His own entry into politics, he acknowledges, was an example of gut-level urges triumphing over detachment.[41]

As he climbed toward the center of power, Ben-Ami tendered a broad public agenda for a multi-cultural, modern Zionist Israel, one which took account of "other voices" and "other narratives", both Jewish and Arab. While welcoming many of the developments that took place in Israeli society in recent years, Ben-Ami, like Ohanna, was worried about their fragmenting aspects. Moreover, he was concerned how the Arab parties would perceive them. Ben-Ami's view of the Oslo accords was also mixed. It was, he declared, a process with special historical weight.   Like Beilin, he believed that its major shortcoming was its interim, step-by-step nature, with no final, pre-determined target. This weakness was consequently exposed in bloodshed and terror, undermining the confidence-building process that was supposed to take place during the transitional period.

Ben-Ami was not unsympathetic to Palestinian needs in his book, *Makom L'Kulam (A Place for All)*. At the same time, Ben-Ami criticized the Palestinians for their actions, or lack thereof, in recent years. Particularly striking for him was the absence of positive nationalist energy focusing on development and the building of civil society, a critique which is held by many in the Palestinian left as well (see below). Ben-Ami dismissed the post-Zionist advocacy of a non-national, 'civil' state (which was eerily reminiscent of the PLO's advocacy in the late 1960s of a 'democratic, secular state' and, more recently, of Said's renewed call for a single state in all of Palestine). Ben-Ami noted that both Israeli and Palestinian societies suffer from what Freud called the "narcissism of small differences". The same disease befell the multi-ethnic society of Bosnia, he said. What is needed, he declared, is a real separation, which will be vital for the moral health of Israeli society. Such a situation would also allow Palestinian society to orient itself to the Arab world, particularly Jordan, and not be excessively dependent on Israel.[42]

As a policy-maker, Ben Ami quickly found himself at the heart of efforts to achieve a final-status agreement, based on a far-reaching tradeoff involving near-total Israeli territorial withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza, an effective division of Jerusalem and some kind of formula regarding the Palestinian refugee question which did not involve a significant return of refugees to Israel, in return for a

Palestinian commitment to the "end of the conflict". The failure to conclude an agreement, the ensuing violence and resounding electoral defeat of Ehud Barak, left Ben-Ami sober and even embittered, particularly with `Arafat whom, he concluded, was incapable of concluding a final peace treaty with Israel.[43]

Israeli advocates of far-reaching compromise with the Palestinians were often branded by their critics as post-Zionists, sometimes justly. Consequently, Yosi Beilin sought to distance himself from post-Zionist circles and, like Ben-Ami, sketched a liberal Zionist vision of Israeli society in the post-peace era. Peace, he wrote, would create a new, and challenging situation, characterized by increased materialism and individualism, and less social solidarity and motivation within the Israeli armed forces. The existing state framework was a favorite target of post-Zionist critiques. Beilin's response was that in peacetime, the state, underpinned by Israel's "national pride", could lead to the maintenance of a sense of mission, moral values, Israel's place as a spiritual and ideological center for the Jewish people, and a respectable place in the world. It was essential, he declared, to maintain collective goals, based on the message of *tikun atzmeynu* ("improving/correcting ourselves") and *tikun olam* (roughly equivalent to "improving the world", particularly in a moral and spiritual sense). Here he linked Israel's own health to that of its neighbors. Material wealth without goals, plus the very serious socio-economic, political and cultural difficulties which would plague the Arab world for the foreseeable future, was the worst possible recipe for peacetime, he said. Thus, it was essential for Israel to remain engaged with its neighbors, while avoiding a patronizing approach.[44] As the architect and embodiment of Oslo, Beilin was a lightning rod for vilification across the spectrum of the Israeli nationalist and religious right-wing. Ironically, both he and his detractors employed some of the same terminology in their discourse, e.g. "national pride", "mission", "moral values", *tikun olam*, which had become increasingly absent from the Israeli intellectual discourse and anathema in the post-modernist and post-Zionist climes. Writing at a low point in the peace process (1998**)**, he evaluated the peace camp's main mistake, which contributed to the Israeli public's turn to the right, as one of omission: "we thought that the peace would speak for itself". Thus education,

which connected peace to other positive developments, needed to be the country's central task in the future. No less vital would be a dialogue with those groups who felt that peace was a direct or indirect threat to them (echoing Oz).[45]

Two years hence, Beilin had experienced another roller-coaster ride of activities and emotions. As a minister in the Barak government, he was one of the point men in the final status negotiations with the Palestinians. Almost desperately, following the outbreak of *intifadat al-aqsa*, he sought to cobble together an agreement in February 2001 in the Taba talks, with particular responsibility for the thorniest question of all - the refugee question.[46] Even after their inconclusive end, and the smashing electoral defeat administered to Barak by Ariel Sharon, Beilin refused to accept what most other Israelis, including Ben-Ami, had by then concluded: that the Palestinians were not willing or able to conclude an agreement with Barak, or with anyone for that matter. He maintained, if a bit wistfully, that much progress had been achieved in the talks and that an agreement could have been reached if only there had been a bit more time. In a rare admission of doubt, however, he did acknowledge that his own desire for an agreement may have led him to interpret the Palestinian position on the refugee question as more flexible than it really was.[47]

In sum, Israeli-Zionist intellectuals of the central liberal-left stream were deeply engaged with both the Arab-Israeli peace process and the larger questions facing society. As "connected critics", they sought to modify existing paradigms in the face of new circumstances in order to strengthen the bases of the society's collective ethos without undermining core Zionist values. Indeed, their concern over the erosion of those values informed the thinking of quite a number of them. A successful conclusion of the peace process, particularly the Palestinian track, was deemed not only a necessary end in itself but also essential to a successful renewal of that ethos.

A Contemporary Profile of Palestinian Intellectuals

The outbreak of the Palestinian intifada in December 1987, the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, and the convening of the Madrid Peace conference in October 1991, were all dramatic developments that impacted heavily on the intellectual sphere. "Inside" secular Palestinian academics and writers, based primarily in the West Bank institutions of higher learning that had grown up during the years of Israeli occupation, played significant political and diplomatic roles for the first time. "Outside" Palestinians became engaged as well during the post-Madrid period.

Palestinian thinkers and writers belong to two broad categories: those whose intellectual work was primarily an outgrowth of their public activities as activists in political movements, and those unaffiliated from the outset. Both participated in the political discourse that emerged following the Gulf War and Israeli-PLO agreement in September 1993. Palestinian intellectuals who carry the greatest weight, in terms of their professional reputation and size of audience, are of the "outside". However, the shift of the center of gravity of Palestinian life to the "inside" placed a special responsibility on "inside" intellectuals: "principled" and "long-view" formulations were easier to formulate when one wasn't confronted with the daily Palestinian realities on the ground in the West Bank and Gaza. This did not mean, however, that Palestinians of the 'inside' were automatically, and at all times, more 'moderate' or 'pragmatic' than those on the 'outside'. Indeed, it was the "insider" Palestinian intellectuals among the negotiating team who held out for more stringent terms than those which Yassir `Arafat agreed to in Summer 1993.

The signing of the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles in September 1993 and subsequent Gaza-Jericho interim agreement in May 1994 ignited an intense debate among Palestinians in the territories over the accords' value and meaning. In general, the views of Palestinian intellectuals on the peace process reflected the political divisions within the Palestinian organizations. Publications of `Arafat's Fatah movement, for example, reflected some of the internal debates on specific issues (such as how to address the question of Israeli settlements, and how to promote the

development of civil society, democracy and human rights), but were supportive of the broad lines of `Arafat's rule. Writers such as Husayn al-Hijazi, Hasan al-Batal and `Abd al-Rahman Mar`i fully endorsed the peace process and uncritically supported and defended the Palestinian Authority in their articles. In doing so, they provided the intellectual rationale for Palestinian participation in the peace process: `Arafat deserved full support and trust and the Oslo agreements, despite their shortcomings, provided the only possible mechanism in existing regional and international circumstances to achieve Palestinian national aspirations.

Sociologist Ziyad Abu `Amr of Bir Zeit University explained the rationale for supporting Oslo: 1) it provided the first official recognition of the Palestinian people and their political and legitimate rights; 2) it initiated a process of Israeli withdrawal in favor of de facto Palestinian sovereignty, beginning with Jericho and Gaza, after the Israeli occupation was feared to have become permanent; and 3) by referring to UNSC resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for a final settlement, the agreement contained nothing explicit or implicit which prevented Palestinian statehood, thus paving the way for fulfillment of their full national rights.[48]

Among the academics who wrote in this vein and were co-opted into the Authority were Sa'ib `Urayqat (Minister of Local Government and subsequently a central negotiator vis-a-vis Israel) and Nabil `Amr, the Minister of Education. One striking example of co-option was that of the playwrite Yahya Yakhlif: in the early days of the peace process, he wrote a series of articles criticizing the Oslo agreement and pointing to the dangers awaiting the Palestinians. Once he was given a position in the Ministry of Culture, however, he abandoned his criticisms.[49] Salim Tamari, a leading Palestinian sociologist, having proclaimed `Arafat as the lesser of evils, preferable to both HAMAS and the Damascus-based Popular Front (PFLP), also assumed a formal role within the Authority and lowered his public criticism accordingly. As time went on, however, and the shortcomings of both the peace process and the Palestinian state-building project became apparent, Tamari renewed his critique, writing of the "emerging authoritarian and anti-democratic tendencies in the new Palestinian region, and the crisis of Palestinian legitimacy in

light of the PA's poor performance".[50] In 1998, he refused the offer of a Cabinet post. His initial analysis of the outbreak of *intifadat al-aqsa* includes a sharp critique of the PA's monopolization of public life, demobilization of civil society and "dilution of the rule of law and democratically elected institutions".[51]

Another academic turned public figure and spokesperson for the Palestinian cause was Hanan `Ashrawi.[52] Her difficulties in juggling principled stands regarding the need to respect civil society and human rights with active participation in the Palestinian Authority as a minister severely damaged her credibility and led her to adopt a much lower public profile for a time. Like Tamari, she eventually found her voice in opposition to both the course of the peace process and the PA's authoritarian and corrupt ways.

A more qualified initial endorsement of the peace process came from people such as the playwrite Husayn Khadir, the journalist and university lecturer Samih Shubayb, the poet Zakariyya Muhammad, and the sociologist Jamil Hilal. To these one could add the names of "party" (e.g. Fatah, FIDA (Palestinian Democratic Union), the PPP (Palestinian People's Party) and the DFLP (Democratic Front) intellectuals such as Mustafa al-Barghuti, `Abd al-Jawad al-Salah, Ghassan al-Khatib, Suleiman al-Najab, Mamduh Nawfal, `Azmi al-Shuaybi, Qays al-Samira` and Da`ud Talhami. Khalil Shikaki played a key role in illuminating Palestinian public opinion through scientific polling through his Center for Palestine and Research in Nablus. He was supportive at the outset but became more openly critical of `Arafat's regime as time went on. In general, these conditional supporters of the peace process maintained that the terms of the Oslo agreements were extremely unclear and offered no guarantees that they would ever lead to the realization of Palestinian national aspirations. They were also extremely critical of the performance of Palestinian officials in the ongoing negotiations with Israel during the interim period, particularly regarding their failure to put an end to Israeli settlement expansion. Accordingly, the settlement issue, including the removal of existing settlements, came to be seen as a key to the establishment of a just peace. This group also argued that the peace process, as it was constituted, might result in the alienation of

Palestinian society, and particularly Palestinian intellectuals, from the Arab world, especially in light of the widespread opposition of Arab intellectuals to both the peace process and normalization (see below). For reasons which were often more pragmatic than ideological, this group of intellectuals emphasized the need to continuously highlight the shortcomings of the peace process. Doing so, they believed would pressure PA leaders into attaining a better package, one that would be commensurate with the depth of Palestinian struggle and sacrifice over the past five decades. As time passed, their critique of Oslo was also linked to increasingly strident criticism of the Palestinian Authority itself, particularly its widespread corruption and its failure to foster democracy and genuine civil society. To the dismay of the bulk of the Palestinian intellectual community, the PA increasingly took on the appearance of neighboring authoritarian, corrupt Arab states; the fledgling Palestinian governmental institutions were emasculated, in terms of their ability to provide oversight of the executive branch or operate under the rule of law and proper procedures.

Jamil Hilal laid out the most systematic critique of the PA and the peace process, and linked it to earlier developments within the Palestinian community. The outbreak of the first *intifada* (December 1987) posed a critical situation for the PLO, whose leadership was far from the West Bank, and whose status was at a low ebb, regionally and internationally. Although it successfully maneuvered its way back to center stage, he wrote, it failed to strengthen democracy and society within the territories or effectively mobilize the Palestinian Diaspora on behalf of ending the occupation and for achieving independence. Accordingly, its biggest flaw was in not establishing a leadership which would provide a permanent solution to the relations between the "insiders" and "outsiders" which would be suitable for everyone while transferring the center of gravity to the territories, with all that that implied.[53] Instead the PLO established a new hegemony in the political domain, with a monopoly on the use of force/violence (`*unf*), within areas defined by the agreements with Israel, in which the "returnees" came to dominate society, taking over from the local population. Most Palestinians believed that PA institutions were corrupt, said Hilal,

and clientalism (*zibayniyya*) and intercession (*wisata*) sprung up as a substitute for an orderly "state" governed rules of fairness. Palestinian intellectuals did not fare well under this set up. A portion of them was affiliated with one or another of the various NGOs that sprung up under the PA. However, these NGOs aroused opposition within the PA, who sought to control their sources of funds, and in any case were not the harbingers of a genuine civil society and democracy, as some had hoped. Overall, Hilal declared, the Palestinian secular trend had failed miserably: Fatah neglected to promote a social agenda, while the Left failed to develop a coherent social strategy for changing politics and society. And on the national level, the changes since Oslo were mostly negative: the PA was consolidating its ever-diminishing authority *vis-a-vis* a "colonial state" (Israel) which was continuing to settle its territory, while denying the right of return to dispersed Palestinians.[54]

Few expressed their bitterness as openly as `Abd al-Jawad al-Salah, a member of the Legislative Council and lecturer at Bir Zeit University. Increasingly, however, the consensus among Palestinian secular intellectuals was that Oslo had not only failed to answer the core issues on the Palestinian agenda, it had actually contributed to the failure of the Palestinian state-building project. On 28 November 1999, the Salah-initiated "Declaration of the Twenty", a scathing critique of the PA's conduct *vis-a-vis* both their own society and the negotiations, was issued. The signatories were two former mayors, nine academics and nine members of the PLC. The petition accused the PA of systematic "corruption, humiliation and abuse", and enumerated the PA's numerous unfulfilled promises regarding the peace process, such as economic development and the promotion of human rights and democracy. Crucial unfulfilled matters from the "1967 file" included the demolishing of Israeli settlements, and the establishment of a state with Jerusalem its capital; moreover, there was also the "1948 file" to consider, namely refugee return, which was the red line for most Israeli intellectuals. The "Declaration of Twenty" concluded with a call for Palestinians to "stand together against tyranny and corruption". The PA swiftly denounced the petition as a manifestation of *fitna* (a heavily-laden term from Islamic

history meaning "sedition") and cracked down on the signatories, arresting some and intimidating others.[55]

Mahmud Darwish, the Palestinian poet laureate, stood on the border between critical acceptance and complete rejection of the peace process. Darwish's intifada-era poem calling on Israeli Jews to "live wherever you want to, but not among us/the time has come for you to get out/die wherever you want to, but don't die among us…and leave our land" had stirred passionate anger in Israel. His emphasis on the lack of the Jewish connection to the land of Palestine, and to nature in general, reinforced the enduring, widely held negative image of the wandering Jew.[56] His views on Oslo were caustic, leading him to resign his seat on the PLO Executive Committee on September 13, 1993, the day of the signing of the Declaration of Principles in Washington. He resigned, he said, 'not necessarily because he opposed it, but because he did not want to be held responsible "for this risky accord".[57] He was also extremely critical of the new Palestinian regime in the making. Upon visiting the PA areas, he declared that his exile had not come to an end, placing primary blame on `Arafat and his lieutenants for the existing state of affairs. Consequently, he called for a division of labor between the PLO and Palestinians within the territories. The PLO, he said should limit itself to being the representatives of Palestinians worldwide; while the task of negotiating the current peace should be left up to those who lived in the territories. Left unclear was the envisaged status of the Palestinian Diaspora, but Darwish was clearly concerned that an Israeli-Palestinian peace would leave the 1948 refugees residing outside of Palestine bereft of any chance of return to their homes and vulnerable to the whims of Arab regimes.[58]

For a time, Darwish withdrew almost completely from the public sphere in silent protest. However, the Palestinians' elevation of May 15th into an annual *nakba* commemoration day, as a counterpoint to Israeli independence day, gave Darwish his voice back. The renewed descent into violence in September 2000 sharpened it further. On May 15, 2001, the Palestinian media broadcast Darwish's commentary marking the 53rdst anniversary of the Palestinian *nakba*. It was, he said, a "day of

remembrance", but the *nakba* was also "an extended present that promises to continue into the future. For the "tragic and heroic story of the land and the people continues to be told in blood", thanks to the Israeli "engineers of the *nakba*". Their violence, he said, "scandalously unmasked...the mirage of their peace", which had appeared over the last decade. It also unmasked "the incompatibility of the Zionist project - so long as that project's aim of exterminating the Palestinian people remains on the agenda - with peace". The Zionists, Darwish said, had failed in their efforts to fabricate a "moral immunity" which gave the victim of the past the right to create his own victims. "There is no such thing", he declared, as a "sacred executioner".[59] To Israeli ears, these were extremely harsh words, confirming, for most, the Palestinians' utter lack of understanding of Jewish history and suffering and the underlying impulses which drove the Zionist movement. Yet, one could also argue that Darwish had not changed his position, and that he, like most Palestinians, continued to frame their discourse in reference to the desire for peace. The Palestinian intifada, he emphasized,

> *does not constitute a break with the notion of peace but seeks to salvage this notion from the injustices of racism, returning its true parents, justice and freedom, by preventing Israel's colonialist project from continuing in the West Bank and Gaza under the cover of a peace process ...emptied of any content....Our wounded hands are yet capable of extracting the wilting olive branch from the rubble of massacred groves,*

but only if Israel conceded Palestinian legitimate national rights: the familiar core demands of complete withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967, including east Jerusalem, which would become the capital of a sovereign independent state of Palestine, and the right of return of Palestinian refugees. Israel's acknowledgment of its responsibility for the *nakba* and the tragedy of the refugees, he declared was a "necessary prerequisite" for a settlement.[60]

There can be no doubt that Darwish's text articulated the dominant current in Palestinian intellectual discourse, just as Amos Oz's statements reflected the

dominant current among Israeli intellectuals. The gap between the two groups regarding territorial issues was not great with the differences over Jerusalem were narrowed to the "Holy Basin". However, the larger question of the legitimacy of the Jewish connection remained problematic; the refugee question, in both its symbolic and practical aspects, remained the one most inimical to a solution.

The secular "rejectionists" of Oslo include two of the most articulate and well-known Palestinian scholars in the West, Edward Said and Hisham Sharabi. Their argument at bottom is that the Oslo agreements contradicted the fundamental principles of the Palestinian national movement as embodied in twenty-five years of Palestine National Council resolutions. Particularly distressing, in their view, was the fact that the Oslo process marginalized and ignored the rights and needs of the Palestinian Diaspora, and therefore was committing a great injustice to the Palestinian people. The Oslo accords were, in Said's words, an "instrument of Palestinian surrender". Moreover, the fact that they were American-brokered, with Clinton "shepherding" Rabin and `Arafat "the way a medieval potentate controlled his vassals", added insult to injury. Given the existing imbalance of power between the US-backed Israel and the Palestinians, particularly after the Gulf War, the Oslo Agreement, said Said, could not be anything but a humiliation.[61] Unlike Said, Sharabi was initially optimistic after Oslo, believing that a dynamic of change had been initiated which would ultimately benefit the Palestinians, particularly the younger generation residing in the territories. Three years into the process, however, he proclaimed it to be a complete failure, a way to force Palestinians into doing Israel's bidding. `Arafat's regime was not the "democratic independent Palestine" which Palestinians had dreamed of, but a "bantustan". Palestinians, he said, had to reject `Arafat, and work for a "real peace" which would guarantee Palestinian core interests.[62] Said and Sharabi are highly respected within the territories. In terms of praxis, however, the majority of Palestinian intellectuals within the territories adhered to a more pragmatic approach, to the dismay of Said and others.

The intellectual rejectionists' attack on the supporters of Oslo was harsh. The Columbia University-based Palestinian scholar Joseph Massad fleshed out Said's critique, delivering a withering, Marxist-colored assessment of the bulk of Palestinian intellectuals in the territories who had accommodated themselves to the new realities after Oslo. In a nutshell, he said, they were "comprador intellectuals", i.e., they were acting as intermediary agents, together with the Palestinian "comprador bourgeoisie" for foreign interests, against the real interests of their own community.[63] To Massad's dismay, Palestinian intellectuals had, he said, adopted a 'modernizing,' "realist-pragmatist" discourse during the 1980s which culminated in their acceptance of Oslo, abandoning the struggle for national, anti-colonial liberation in favor of the chimera of nation building and liberal democracy.[64] Massad's critique was directed mainly at 'inside' Palestinians such as Sari Nusseibeh, Ghassan Khatib, Salim Tamari, and Hanan `Ashrawi. The insiders had argued that outside critics of Oslo were illegitimate: that they didn't live in Palestine; they were afraid of the challenges of becoming an oppositionist force within their own society, and were nostalgic for the liberation struggle. There was no alternative to `Arafat's leadership, the insiders said repeatedly, and the need to "put Palestine on the map" outweighed all other considerations. Massad was scornful toward Palestinian intellectuals who employed these arguments. Particularly noxious were those who acted to reap the benefits of a "phantasmatic" state to be by forsaking refugee rights. Massad finds the recommendations of Tamari and Nusseibeh, which would leave the bulk of Palestinian refugees outside of pre-1967 Israel, especially despicable. Tamari's membership in the Refugee Working Group created by the Madrid conference was, for Massad, conclusive proof that the PA leadership and its "comprador intellectuals" were allied in betraying the Palestinian cause. Also at fault, especially regarding the refugee question, were 'outside' Palestinian intellectuals such as Rashid Khalidi, Ahmad Khalidi, Yezid Sayigh and Nadim Rouhana, who, he said, had provided Israel with crucial ammunition in its struggle to prevent the implementation of the Palestinian right of return. In particular, he criticizes, albeit respectfully, Rashid Khalidi for using the term "attainable justice", as a Palestinian goal. London-based

Ahmad Khalidi comes in for sharper comments: his critique of `Arafat's opponents and call for the Israelis to "understand" the Palestinians was in essence, for Massad, a sugar-coating of the Palestinian defeat.[65] The only Palestinian intellectual writing on the refugee question who was untainted by the "pervasive discourse of pragmatism and realism" was the Kuwait-based Salman Abu Sitta. Abu Sitta had developed a "feasible solution" allowing the nearly 4.5 million refugees to return to their homes, with all of the other issues - Israeli sovereignty, boundaries, settlements, etc., being allowed to take their "natural course".

In their "overzeal for pragmatism", the "comprador intellectuals", said Massad, were going beyond even what the PA leadership deemed acceptable. Just to be sure that his readers realized the gravity of the situation, Massad drew a parallel between the betrayal by the 'insiders' to the alleged betrayal of European Jewry in the 1930s and 1940s by the Zionists, a standard Arab canard. Zionism's complicity with anti-Semitism in Europe, he said, was paralleled by `Arafat's co-optation of the Palestinian struggle in order to legitimate his new "vassal" regime. The desire of both Palestinian intellectuals and their leadership, he mocked, was to be accepted as "Western white people". Giving Said the last word, he states that all those who don't follow in the path of the "comprador intellectuals", who don't believe in their new God, the West, are deemed by them to be heretics, whose books must be banned and voices silenced. Only once did he present his argument against pragmatism on tactical grounds, arguing that conceding on refugee rights before negotiations began would surely snowball into numerous concessions.[66] But the entire tenor of his critique was "pure", and unencumbered by messy political realities.

As time passed, a common complaint among Palestinian intellectuals and academics in the West Bank and Gaza was that they felt marginalized. Bernard Sabella of Bethlehem University theorized that their alienation might have been related to the question of recruitment. Akin more to Shils than Said regarding his view of the societal function of intellectuals, he said that one would have expected that intellectuals would play a bridging role between elites and others, and thus provide legitimacy to the authorities. However, he declared, there was no pressing

need to use this intermediary function of academics and intellectuals in the West Bank and Gaza to win a broader base of recruits, since the PLO brought its own rank and file with it.[67] In my mind, however, the explanation for the intellectuals' marginalization is not how many supporters `Arafat brought with him from the "outside" (perhaps 2% of the population). Rather, it was his historic legitimacy as "Mr. Palestine", and the long-standing fragmentation of the Palestinian elites within the West Bank, plus the Israeli and international assent and support for the establishment of his rule. Interestingly enough, according to Sabella, in a 1995 survey among Palestinians in the territories, university professors in the West Bank and Gaza were ranked as "influential" by 90% of the sample, a sign of the prestige the position held in society.

In sum, the Oslo process created an enormous challenge for Palestinian intellectuals. Most were skeptical about the likelihood of its success. Some chose to work within the system and tone down their criticism; many preferred to highlight its shortcomings; and others, mostly from the 'outside', were withering in their rejection of the agreements and branded 'inside' critics as weak-kneed and betrayers of their people and their cause. Gradually, the "conditional", "critical" supporters became less supportive and more critical, and expanded their critique to include the Palestinian Authority's colossal failure in the state-building project. The Authority's seeming "organic" link to Oslo simply reinforced the view that the Authority's and Oslo's failure were two sides of the same coin. As for the post-peace era and the recognition of the "Other", Darwish spoke for most of them: if the peace came as a result of Israel redressing the historical injustices which they had wrought upon the Palestinians, then there could be a dialogue of some sort.

Arab Intellectuals and the Peace Process

Any discussion of Palestinian thought must include reference to the wider Arab milieu, a difficult arena for intellectuals, to put it mildly. The Egyptian writer Hasan Hanafi characterized Arab intellectual life as schizophrenic, in which intellectuals learned to live a double life, saying one thing and living on another level.[68] That being said, the majority of Arab intellectuals appear to have internalized not only the rules of the game which demanded obeisance to the ruler while allowing expression against external forces, particularly the US and Israel, but also the dominant Arab nationalist paradigm which brooked no alternatives. The bulk of the Arab intellectual class was extremely critical of the Oslo process, either on pragmatic or principled grounds, or both, and violently opposed to "normalization" (*tatbi`*) with Israel. Normalization, in their eyes, was an admission of defeat, the acknowledgement that the Arab nationalist 'project' championed by generations of thinkers and activists had failed. Moreover, 'normalizing' with Israel not only provided the precious legitimacy which Israel craved, it also served as a mirror, of sorts, reflecting back to the Arab world, by way of comparison, all of its shortcomings and failures. Their insecurity was such that they feared that normalization would result in Israeli economic and cultural domination, an absurd notion. Ironically, Palestinians in general, were less dogmatic regarding the issue, if only for pragmatic reasons, i.e. their dependence on Israel for so much of their daily life. A considerable portion of the Palestinian intellectual community, however, tended to agree with the dominant Arab discourse opposing normalization.

Still, some cracks in the anti-normalization wall did appear during the ups and downs of post-Oslo Palestinian-Israeli relations. The "Copenhagen Arabs" - those Egyptians, Jordanians and Palestinians who participated in a dialogue with Israelis and together signed a joint declaration, were vilified in the Egyptian press, but maintained their stand. Prominent Egyptian scholars such as Sa`d `Iddin (Saad Eddin) Ibrahim, and `Abd al-Mun`im Sa`id `Ali, head of the prestigious al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, practiced quiet engagement with Israelis.

The writer `Ali Salim broke convention and ignored the ensuing vilification by traveling to Israel and publishing a book about his experiences. More recently, the Egyptian writer Amin al-Mahdi published a book declaring that it was time to stop blaming Israel for all of the troubles of Arab society and that refraining from relations with Israel was both ineffective and counterproductive.[69] The quiet encouragement of the Egyptian government, culminating in the formal licensing of the "Egyptian Peace Movement" in 1999, indicated that a slow, but unmistakable widening of space for advocates of dialogue with Israel was taking place.

Hazim Saghiya, the editor of the "Ideas" page of *al-Hayat*, had courageously argued the need for this dialogue. Saghiya turned the anti-normalization argument on its head, declaring that only the Arab side will lose by failing to engage Israeli counterparts, and that the Arabs could not afford to wait until the conclusion of a peace arrangement, but needed to begin normalizing immediately. The opponents of normalization, he wrote in *al-Hayat*, had adopted the language of the Islamic fundamentalists. Moreover, their militant mentality reminded him of a chicken with its head cut off: the chicken continues to run, while its feet know that it has died. Arab intellectuals traditionally go out armed to battle with the enemy and to defend the tribe. However, in their refusal to do battle with the clerics of their own society, and in their lack of interest in "global ideas" for their own sake, they have been cowardly and reactionary. This reminded Saghiya of the anti-Dreyfus venom that poured forth from the large majority of French intellectuals at the turn of the century. What was needed, he declared, was a modus vivendi between Arabs and Israelis, in order to avoid mutual destruction. Are Arab intellectuals, he asked, ready to help bring this about?[70] There was added value to Saghiya's writings as well: some, including the above, were translated into Hebrew by Emmanuel Sivan, a leading Israeli Middle East historian, constituting another important aspect in Israeli-Arab intellectual interchange.

The breakdown of the peace process in Autumn 2000, combined with the narrowing of "democratic space" in Egypt, epitomized by the nefarious trial and conviction of Sa`d 'Iddin Ibrahim in May 2001 on trumped-up charges, effectively

froze Egyptian-Israeli contacts, and Arab-Israeli intellectual dialogue now seemed like a pipe dream. Still, even after the outbreak of the *Aqsa intifada*, there were minority voices in the large sea of anti-Israel militancy. In Saghiya's view, the main problem was that the Arab world was giving priority to confronting Israel and dealing with other such questions which belong to previous eras, at the expense of addressing the unprecedented technological and communications revolution taking place in the modern world.[71] Egyptian Peace Movement member Ridha Hilal lambasted the return to old slogans of confrontation following the failure of the peace process, reminding people that "peace", accompanied by economic progress and democracy, remained a strategic goal. `Ali Salim caustically confronted an interviewer who tried to make him recant his advocacy of peace with Israel. Amin al-Mahdi characterized the July 2000 Camp David summit as the latest of many missed opportunities for peace, and ascribed much of the blame for the renewed descent into violence to Arab political culture, which had produced authoritarian regimes aligned with fascist forces representing both nationalist and religious ideologies.[72]

Overall, the anti-normalization intellectuals in the Arab world continue to dominate the discourse on Arab-Israeli issues. Not unrelatedly, the terror and violence perpetrated by Islamist radicals against secular intellectuals in Egypt, Algeria and elsewhere in the Arab world may have had a chilling effect on some secular-modernist intellectuals. However, it also may have caused some to reevaluate the source of the main threat to Arab society.

Israeli and Palestinian Intellectuals:
A Conversation, or a Dialogue of the Deaf?

One can enumerate and analyze six different types of interaction and "conversation" between Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals:

a) Co-operative research projects in various scientific and scholarly fields;

b) Appearances in each other's institutions;

c) Participation in study groups and "track two" meetings related directly to the peace process and in dialogues and round-table discussions designed for publication, e.g. in the *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics Economics and Culture,* a unique enterprise, as indicated by the title;

d) Writings treating the broader themes of history, identity and culture;

e) Direct, often polemical exchanges;

f) Petitions.

a) Cooperative Research

A pioneering, mutually empathetic joint venture focusing directly on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the 1991 book *No Trumpets, No Drums* co-authored by Sari Nusseibeh, philosophy professor and now president of Al-Quds University and PA official, and Mark Heller of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University.[73] In the seven years between Oslo and the Aqsa *intifada*, thousands of Israelis, Palestinians, Egyptians, Jordanians and citizens of other Arab countries participated in nearly 200 joint research projects, the vast majority of which did not address the issues of the conflict per se. Two-thirds of them were undertaken between Israeli scholars and Palestinian counterparts residing in the PA areas. The vast majority was sponsored either by a) the Truman Institute at the Hebrew University, the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI; another unique joint enterprise), or c) the Bronfman Fund, which worked mostly through the Economic Cooperation Foundation (founded by the two initial Israeli academic

architects of the Oslo process, Yair Hirschfeld and Ron Pundak). The most systematic study of these interactions concluded that they "created a degree of respect, trust and appreciation that could not have emerged in the absence of personal and professional contact".[74] Obviously, it was not possible to draw broader, or longer-term conclusions from the experience.

b) Appearances in Each Other's Institutions

Many Israeli academic institutions and research centers gave platforms to Palestinian scholars during the Oslo era. By contrast, Palestinian academics and institutions in the West Bank and Gaza operated under a number of constraints: 1) the general atmosphere in the Arab world militating against any type of "normalization" with Israel prior to a peace agreement; 2) the long-standing decree of the Palestinian Council for Higher Education (Rectors Conference) banning Palestinian universities from working directly with Israeli universities, although this ban did not extend to the actions of individual scholars or those involving Palestinian research consortiums; 3) the practical difficulties of meeting their colleagues in Israel, owing to Israeli military restrictions on Palestinians' freedom of movement.[75] Overall, apart from very few exceptions, Palestinian universities have not been ready to host Israeli visiting lecturers. However, Palestinian NGOs and independent research centers like the Jerusalem-based PASSIA (Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs) did host Israeli scholars and participate in occasional joint projects.

Other forms of direct and indirect interchange came at the initiative of Israeli scholars and institutions. Some have been explicitly designed to sympathetically bring the Palestinian narrative into the Israeli discourse regarding the peace process: for example, Hebrew University anthropologist Dani Rabinovitz hosted Edward Said at the annual conference of the Israeli Anthropological Association in Nazereth in 1998. Indeed, the book supplement, opinion pages and in-depth reporting of *Ha'aretz* have become important arenas for the transmission of knowledge regarding Palestinian history, culture and politics, often by sympathetic

Israelis scholars positioned beyond the Zionist left such as Rabinovitz and Ilan Pappe.

One of the most prescient presentations by a Palestinian intellectual to an Israeli audience was that of Ghassan Khatib, speaking to a Steinmetz Center conference in mid-April 1999. It was vital for the future of the peace process, he declared, for intellectuals on both sides to develop a joint vision of the future. This would be based on the two-state solution, with appropriate solutions for the issues of the refugees and Jerusalem. But the symbol of the Palestinian state, he said, was not enough - what was more important was its essence, which appeared increasingly likely to be bereft of the means to develop as an equal partner with its powerful Israeli neighbor. Hence the cooling of support for the two-state solution among both the general public and within Palestinian intellectual circles, due to the worsening of the situation on the ground. For no less than two-thirds of the Palestinian public, according to surveys, the alternative to a failed two-state solution was NOT the bi-national single state solution (which was being promoted by Said and other opponents of Oslo on the Left), but a single, Islamic state in all of Palestine. His conclusion: there was a historic opportunity, and it was apparently being missed. The failure of the negotiations and descent into unprecedented violence in Fall 2000 seemed to confirm Khatib's dire warning.[76]

c) *Study Groups and Track-Twos*

The Joint Working Group on Israeli-Palestinian Relations, a project of the Program on International Conflict Analysis and Resolution at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, was probably the most important "track two" enterprise following the signing of the DoP in September 1993. Co-chaired by Harvard's Herbert Kelman, an American Jew, and Nadim Rouhana, a Palestinian Israeli, it was charged with preparing "concept papers" on key final status issues in advance of permanent status negotiations. Most of the participants were scholars and analysts - Shimon Shamir, Moshe Ma'oz, Gabriel Ben-Dor, Joseph Alpher, Ze'ev Schiff from the Israeli side; Ghassan Khatib, Yezid Sayigh,

Ibrahim Dakkak and Khalil Shikaki from the Palestinian side. One, Yossi Katz, was a Labor party Knesset member; another, Nabil Kassis, was appointed to be a minister in the PA just before the group's study on the refugee question was to go to press, and thus preferred to keep his name off of the document. The concept paper on Palestinian refugees and the right of return laid out and evaluated four options for addressing the subject: each side's traditional position and a compromise position of each side. It did not arrive at an agreed-upon solution - a compromise of the compromises - but highlighted the remaining gaps and suggested a formula for bridging them. The distance from the working group to the negotiating room was short: many of the ideas in the paper were floated at the Camp David and Taba talks in 2000-01.[77]

d) 'Conversations' on History, Identity and Culture

Issues related to identity and culture have underpinned the Arab-Israeli conflict from its outset. From the moment that Egypt's president Anwar al-Sadat set foot in Jerusalem in November 1977, the rallying cry of Arab opponents to the peace process has been the need to block Israel's efforts to "penetrate" and "conquer" Arab culture. As the Oslo framework changed Palestinian-Israeli realities on the ground, discussions of their cultural aspects increasingly occupied thinkers of both communities.

History, the Self and the Other

Few articulated the concerns, hopes and fears of thoughtful Israelis, and of their inextricable link with their Arab neighbors, better than Haim Guri, in many ways THE writer of Israel's "Generation of 1948" (*dor tashakh*). The Arab 'Other' was always present for Tel Aviv Jewish youth in Mandate times, he said. Jaffa was at once compelling and fear-inducing. The sense of being under siege created a mobilized community. But the price was high, as became increasingly clear from the mid-1930s. Guri tries to distinguish between a moral reckoning and the national reckoning: on the one hand expressing deep regret at having witnessed injustices

during the 1948 war and not speaking out against them, and on the other, comparing the Jewish community's behavior to shooting a bow and arrow, in which one has to close one eye in order to focus on the target. Similarly, A.B. Yehoshua reminds his readers that 1948 was a "war of aggression" launched by the Arab side, while acknowledging that there were expulsions of Arabs which had no military justification. Guri was also sensitive to the effect of the past on the present. Indeed, in his view, in "Eretz Yisrael", the past always comes back to take revenge. But Guri is also disturbed by the loss of a sense of justness of the Zionist cause, and in more pessimistic moods, fears that the Jews are "anarchic" and not able to stay in one small piece of territory. He is envious of "Ishmael" (i.e. the Arabs), who doesn't have a fear of history, and whose view of time, he stipulates, is circular, as opposed to the Jewish view of history, which is linear. This type of cultural explanation is common among novelists who also speak in the public sphere. However, it is blatantly reductionist, and begs for substantive analysis.[78]

Holding similarly pessimistic views, Guri's contemporary, Aharon Megged bemoaned that his "tribe...is becoming extinct from this land. I was a member of a group which...held the belief that it is our right to live here and that we must defend ourselves. Something happened to Israeli society, a withdrawal from the belief in this right of ours...The entire Zionist enterprise is presented [by the post-Zionist trend in Israel] as a bunch of myths...I do not accept this and it infuriates me...". [This trend represents] an appalling obsequiousness". Moreover, he declared, the country's leadership, intellectuals and the media all project weakness. As a result, the country had lost its "spirit of national pride", its "uprightness".[79] While recognizing the necessity of territorial compromise and the creation of a Palestinian state, the idea of separation, of preventing Jews from "being" anywhere in Eretz Yisrael, is anathema. Thus, he advocated open borders between Israel and its Palestinian neighbor, placing him opposite those Israelis, including compatriots on the left, who favored "hard separation" and alongside most Palestinians and other Jews less wedded to classical Zionist precepts.[80]

Historian Yigal Eilam, one of the consultants to the "Tekuma" television documentary, was disappointed by what he saw as the lack of Palestinian interest in his program and the internal Israeli intellectual debates that it touched off.[81] But his expectations for a swift Palestinian response to the series betrayed a significant lack of understanding of the Palestinian milieu, and of the manner in which the Palestinian side perceived the peace process. Nonetheless, as time passed, Palestinian intellectuals were increasingly tuned in to the internal Israeli debates, and drew strength from them. At the same time, they rejected the notion that they too needed to develop a "new history". Israel's new historians, wrote Zakariyya Muhammad, were basically penitents, who "go to the archive to reveal the truth and dispute the distortion". Palestinian historians, on the other hand, "cannot be repentant because he has nothing to confess to the priest of history". Their task, he said is to construct a different history, while opposing the fabricated history of the 'other'.[82] Muhammad's comments were reflective of the overall reaction among Palestinian circles to the various recent works of Israeli historians, which reduced them to a simple, single equation: Israel was born in sin in 1948, both ideologically and in deeds, while the Palestinians were history's victims, bearing little or no responsibility for their fate. Indeed, at a 1998 conference of Israeli and Palestinian scholars in Paris, the Palestinian participants were not concerned with establishing common ground or dialogue, but instead sought primarily to de-legitimize Israel's creation and strengthen the Palestinian negotiating position.[83] Hanan `Ashrawi, for her part, applauded the "candor and integrity" of "courageous" Israeli "new historians" for initiating the unraveling of the "mythical history" which had shaped perceptions of the conflict up until recently. "The oppressor's monopoly on the 'truth'" had begun to be broken, "and the victim's erstwhile 'propaganda'" had begun to gain credence. Moreover, she said, the Israeli discourse was changing for the better as well: "the image of the 'self' in Israel is undergoing a healthy transformation, and along with it the inevitable other side of the coin, the image of the 'other'." Within the context of a just solution, and an understanding of the "terrible price paid by the Palestinians and the need for a process of historical redemption", she suggested,

"perhaps now there can be a convergence of narratives that will lead to a common future with shared goals".[84] Eilam, Ilan Pappe and Baruch Kimmerling, among others, echoed `Ashrawi's expressed hope for a convergence of narratives from the Israeli side.

In `Ashrawi's mind, the burden of altering the images of the self and the 'other' were on Israel. But some Palestinian scholars cautiously began the parallel process, required for any genuine mutual alteration of such images, of examining Palestinian history in a more objective, critical light. Yezid Sayegh, for example, called for "deconstructing 1948...In order both to have a history and to free it (from self-interested narration or ideological homogenization by Self or Other) Palestinians must see themselves as agents in their own history..." [85] Musa Budeiri rejects the existence of a specific Palestinian national identity during late Ottoman and early Mandate times. Moreover, for him, "the question of whether or not the Palestinians have become one people has not lost its relevance", particularly since a "re-centering" was underway, in which West Bank and Gaza inhabitants were in the process of endowing Palestinian identity with its content.[86]

To be sure, Budeiri's approach goes sharply against the grain of Palestinian historiography, and has not been widely disseminated or filtered down to the popular level. Palestinians are still engaged in the construction of a mobilized collective memory, not its deconstruction.[87] By way of explanation, Rashid Khalidi explains that the long-standing Palestinian reluctance to examine the events of 1948 stemmed from a fear that their claims would be weakened as a result.[88]

One of the more interesting published exchanges between Palestinian and Israeli intellectuals was a roundtable discussion entitled "1948-1998 in the Eyes of the Two Peoples". The Palestinian commentator Nazmi Ju`beh, responding to a common criticism of Palestinians in 1948 for not accepting the UN partition plan, states that "the matter must also be seen through the eyes of the generation who lived here, which had struggled for independence at that time". Ironically, Ju'beh's call for viewing the 1948 events in their proper historical context, i.e. that the Palestinian community viewed the conflict as a zero-sum game, mirrors the Israeli

Zionist response to those who assigned the bulk of the "blame" of 1948 to the Zionist/Israeli side. Not accepting partition, says Ju`beh, was indeed a mistake.

However, he continues, it would not have made any difference, given the designs of the Zionist movement to expand Jewish control over the whole country, and given the immaturity of the Palestinian movement in 1948, which was at least 30 years behind the Zionist movement in its political planning. In any case, he declares, the *nakba* is not over and it is not fair to ask him to stop thinking about it as long as the realities of Jewish settlements in the territories and masses of refugees in Lebanon are there. Israel, he says, needs to show responsibility for the fate of 750,000 people uprooted in 1948. In response, Mordechai Bar-On, a practitioner turned writer and peace activist, denies Ju`beh's claim of a Zionist plan, noting the acceptance of the partition plan by the Jews. He also declares that Israelis should feel a moral obligation to the Palestinians, in light of the fact that the Zionist movement caused Palestinians a great evil. However, he separates such an obligation from the issue of guilt. He himself can't accept the notion of regret or guilt, because it implies that his side could have avoided it. Most Palestinians would undoubtedly find Bar-On's distinction between obligation and guilt as a piece of sophistry.[89] Most Israelis would find Ju`beh's dismissal of any Palestinian contribution, either by omission or commission, to the 1948 events, as apologist and conspiratorial.

Cultural Dialogue, Self Criticism and Visions of the Future

Some Israeli intellectuals were almost obsessed with finding a formula to promote cultural dialogue as a path to reconciliation. Their interest contrasted starkly with their Palestinian counterparts, who were largely silent regarding the whole subject. This itself was of little surprise, given the widespread association in the Arab world between "cultural dialogue" and "normalization" of relations with Israel.

A.B. Yehoshua was one Israeli writer who addressed the cultural aspects of the Arab-Israeli peace process, concurrent with his own process of rediscovering his "Eastern"/"Mediterranean" roots. Like others, particularly Sephardi intellectuals,

he finds the idea of a common Mediterranean identity appealing. When asked what Israel will get from the Arabs in a cultural sense, Yehoshua suggests that the Arab world currently does not have much to offer, unlike in medieval times, but that solving the Arab-Israeli conflict will help them "renew/restart their engine, which has been turned off and rusted. And then we'll definitely receive from them...It's very possible that with us acting as a spark, combining strong elements of Christian Europe and the Jewish addition, we can spark the Eastern world to reenergize itself and cooperate with us".[90] This view is almost hopelessly naive, and reminiscent of the utopian wistfulness of early Zionist thinkers.

Like most advocates of the *idée méditerranéen*, Yehoshua's 'Mediterranean-ness' is short on specifics. Indeed, as Tel Aviv University's Itamar Rabinovich wrote in a volume commemorating Israel's 50th anniversary, there has not been a real public debate in Israel on the issue of genuine normalization. "Does Israel really want to have open borders and unlimited contact with its neighbors? Does Israel really have an interest in the goings on/life and society in the Arab world?"[91] These questions, he notes, are intimately connected to basic, and highly contested questions regarding Israeli identity.

David Ohanna sought to answer these questions by proposing an agenda for a public dialogue to establish an agreed basis for a new Israeli ethos. The agenda resembled Ben-Ami's thinking. Among the required components were: "democratic consciousness", which would include a feeling of brotherhood among Israel's citizenry, both Jews and Arabs; "education for peace" ---"Israel is not Sparta, and is not meant to educate its citizens to eternally live by the sword in a violent, continuous conflict with its neighbors;" and a "Mediterranean connection", which would allow Israelis to maintain links with both their neighbors and the West, and "widen the Israeli profile in the direction of compromise, reconciliation and dialogue".[92] As the Israeli-Palestinian conflict descended into another round of violence in 2000-2001, which included an unprecedented confrontation between the Israeli authorities and Israel's Arab citizens, the proposed social contract sounded at best like a pious

wish. But its themes are sure to be re-articulated if and when the violence abated and the conflict is channeled into more manageable forms.

Hebrew University philosophy professor Menahem Brinker introduced a sobering note. Culture and peace are not automatically synonymous, he reminded his audience. In fact, high culture, i.e. good poetry, good music or art does not necessarily promote peace.[93] The peace currently being sought was not born of literary inspiration or vision, rather, it is a "practical", "pragmatic" peace resulting from mutual exhaustion and the realization of the conflict's insolubility, given each side's claim to absolute justice. Peace will be born in political compromise, said Brinker, not love, while psychological accommodation will only come later. Amos Oz repeatedly voiced a similar view. In the meantime, Brinker recommended that each side promote the non-selective translation of the literary works of the other side. Drawing attention to the "hardest and bitterest aspects of both peoples' literatures, he says, is preferable to stereotypes."The more we translate unselectively and give expression to all shades of thought, the more we can fight against the "metaphysication" of the Arab-Israeli conflict and work for a reinterpretation of each party by the other. The greatest enemy of the peace process, says Brinker, is the perception that there are deep metaphysical factors, making everything else meaningless, superficial and pragmatic.[94]

Sami Michael not only talked about cultural interchange, he was also instrumental in bringing about a regular monthly dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian writers predating the Oslo agreements. Both communities, he said, were experts in war, authorities in their field. By contrast, there were no experts on peace, so one must act according to one's intuition, step by step. According to Michael, those Palestinian writers who served time in Israeli prisons came to the realization that "we had a common destiny and that Palestinians would ultimately be made extinct or refugees, poor and hungry, if the state of war continued. To an extent, "both they and we are strangers in the Middle East region", and "the stranger of stranger is a relative/neighbor".[95]

By and large, though, few Palestinian writers were ready to go public in advocating cultural dialogue and many rejected it outright. One exception was Said, who came to believe that "the only real avenue open for reconciliation is culture, not politics or economics". This could begin, he said, through invitations of each other's intellectuals to Israeli and Arab universities, specifying that he was referring to Israelis "who share our goals, that is, self-determination for two peoples in Palestine".[96] His friend Daniel Barenboim, the world-famous pianist and conductor (and Israeli citizen) agreed; his piano recital at Bir Zeit went forward in the face of considerable opposition. But Said's call was sure to leave Israeli Zionists unsatisfied. Engaging Israeli Jews, he said, was the way to get to the contradiction at the core of Zionism, and undermine its foundations. Both Said and Iyad al-Sarraj, a Gaza-based mental health professional and commentator, referred repeatedly to the South African model, in which peace and democracy for both peoples, based on a concept of citizenship would apply. We must acknowledge, Said wrote, that the Jews are not simply "ordinary colonialists", and that we must assure them, as Nelson Mandela did to South African whites, that "we want them to stay and share the same land with us on an equal basis". Elsewhere, however (see below), Said acknowledged that Israeli Jews would be a minority within the future state of Palestine, evoking for Israelis the traditional *dhimmi* status of protected minorities under Islamic rule.[97]

Sarraj was among the most original and forthright of Palestinian thinkers, and was consistently critical of the cultures of both his own community and Israel. Palestinians needed to address their collective taboos: their sense of dependency, their self-indulgent image of the victim, their own cycle of violence and oppression, the conflict between their religious and secular identities, and even what he called the "erosion of national identity". Speaking of the need for a "culture of peace", he was honest about having grown up in Gaza "in a culture that hates everything Jewish". Israelis, for their part, had "cultivated a culture that has become entrenched in fear edging on paranoia", in which racism had taken root and which favored the dehumanization of the enemy. In an extremely rare expression among Arab and

Palestinian intellectuals, Sarraj suggested an acknowledgement of Israel's right to exist within secure borders if Israel acknowledged the origins of Palestinian suffering. In December 2000, Sarraj touched directly on the "right of return" taboo. Israel, he stated openly, would not accept right of return to Israel of large numbers of Palestinian refugees and the PA knew it. Palestinian rejection of an agreement which would limit, in practice, the right of return to a Palestinian state "means keeping us in the whirlpool of resistance and violence indefinitely. Besides, there is no hope of achieving a decisive victory over Israel in the forseeable future".[98] On the right of return, Sarraj's was a lone voice. According to `Abd al-Jawad al-Salah, there was "unanimity among Palestinians that any leader who compromises on the right of return will be signing his own political death certificate".[99] (For Sari Nusseibeh's later expression on the subject, see below).

But when it came to the bottom line, Sarraj, like Said, gave little comfort to Israel's mainstream intellectuals. Establishing real peace, he said, meant not only the democratization and modernization of Palestinian life, but also that "Israel and Israelis would need to re-examine their identity and to venture beyond Zionism and stretch into the wider identity away from the confines of the ideology of the chosen people".[100] "Chosen people" was a term used repeatedly in Arab discourse as an indicator of Israeli and Jewish racism. For Israeli Jews, and Jews in general, use of the term was odious, connoting the worst forms of historical anti-Semitism. Sarraj's own form of post-Zionism already placed him in the mainstream of Palestinian and Arab thinking, which left-Zionist Israeli intellectuals could only regret, given his particular moral standing. Sarraj's use of the term indicated the degree of the continuing abyss between the two communities.

The Holocaust and the Conflict

In 1999, the Jerusalem Van Leer Foundation published a special issue, "50 to 48", of its journal, *Theory and Criticism (Tey'oriya U'Bikoret)*, a central platform for Israeli post-Zionists. Contributors were asked to challenge the "existing order" (e.g. "ruling ideology", "cultural hegemony", "consensus") with regard to Israel's history

after fifty years of independence. Sociologist Baruch Kimmerling sought to fulfill the editor's dictum to "write about the achievements of the Zionist enterprise from the point of view of those who paid, and continue to pay, the price of those achievements".[101] He begins his article, "*al-Nakba*", with a discussion of the name of his Jerusalem suburban community, *Mevaserret*, which Palestinian workers in his home call *Qalunya*, on the site of the pre-1948 Arab village of that name. His knowledge of the history of the village, going back to Biblical and Roman times, was gleaned from Palestinian professor Walid Khalidi's *All That Remains* (1992), documenting 360 pre-1948 Palestinian villages and neighborhoods most of which either no longer exist or were repopulated by Israeli Jews. The book, Kimmerling says, serves as a kind of Palestinian *Yad Va'shem* (Israel's national Holocaust Memorial Museum). The association of the Holocaust with the *nakba* has been frequent among Palestinians and Arabs; the use of it by an Israeli is sure to disturb most Israeli readers. Kimmerling acknowledges this, but insists that the Palestinian *nakba* was, and remains the defining experience in their history, containing both energizing and paralyzing elements, just as the memory of the Holocaust does for the Jews.[102]

Kimmerling says he nevertheless seeks to place the events of 1948 in their historical context. The results, he writes, were not guaranteed ahead of time, and the chances were just as likely that the "Jewish immigrant-settler society" would have collapsed and been destroyed. Kimmerling's prescription, now that, according to him, "a revolution has taken place in Palestinian political thinking acknowledging Israel's existence", is that Israeli society acknowledge the story, collective memory and suffering of the Palestinians, and accept it as part of "our story", just as "we are part of 'their story'. Doing so, he states, is vital for the maturation and health of Israeli society. Kimmerling's call for a mental fusion of the two communities' "stories" puts him well in front of the Israeli collective curve, even among intellectuals, let alone the Palestinian side.

The Palestinian-Jordanian commentator Rami Khouri, whose weekly columns were syndicated by *Ha'aretz* for a time, links the Holocaust and the Palestinian *nakba* in an attempt to jog both sides into a "re-humanization that acknowledges the brutality and criminality of past deeds". He suggests the construction of a memorial to the victims of the 1948 Deir Yasin massacre, at the site itself, which is visible from Yad Vashem. For, "just as Deir Yasin is visible from Yad Vashem, so is Yad Vashem visible from Deir Yasin. Only Palestinians and Arabs whose humanity has been returned to them can truly see Yad Vashem - not just see it physically, but absorb its enormous moral and historical meaning, which most Arabs refuse to do as a conscious political act".[103] Khouri's linkage, if I understand it correctly, is designed to promote re-thinking of one's own narrative, as well as of the other side's. For most Israelis, however, any mention of such a linkage, in whatever context, is utterly scandalous, for it somehow puts the Holocaust on the same moral plain as all other massacres and other greater and lesser crimes, not to mention its linkage with Israel's very founding and triumph.

To reiterate, for most Israelis and Jews, any conceptual, let alone historical linkage between the Holocaust and the *nakba* was considered not only historically fallacious but nothing short of heretical. For most Palestinians and Arabs, even the acknowledgement of Jewish suffering was difficult. Indeed, the dominant Arab discourse regarding the Holocaust has been characterized by a combination of denial, obfuscation, and relativization, fitting in neatly to a larger 'conspiratorial' world view which makes the Holocaust part of the larger Western and Zionist plot to deprive Arabs of their rights.[104]

More recently, the treatment of the Holocaust, and the prominence given in the Arab world to Holocaust "myth debunkers" such as Roger Garaudy and John Irving, have generated considerable debate. Edward Said bemoaned the "nasty wave of anti-Semitism and hypocritical righteousness" which was becoming increasingly prevalent in the Arab world. Recognizing the realities of the Holocaust had both moral and instrumental value. It should be seen, he wrote, "not as a blank check for Israelis to abuse us, but as a sign of our humanity, our ability to

understand history, our requirement that our suffering be mutually acknowledged".[105] Said's principled stance could hardly be faulted even by his numerous Israeli detractors.

But most of the rare Palestinian acknowledgements of the Holocaust appeared to Israelis to be double-edged. Witness Darwish's declaration on the 50th anniversary of the *nakba*:

If it is our moral duty to accept the **Jewish account** [my emphasis] of the Holocaust as it is without entering into discussion about the statistical aspect of the crime, and to intensify our expression of sympathy for the victims, then it is also our right to ask the children of the victims to recognize the position of Palestinian victims and their right to life, liberation and independence.[106]

Israeli ears attuned to the discourse of Holocaust denial are rendered uncomfortable by the ambiguity inherent in this statement: the "Jewish account" of the Holocaust, the obligation to avoid discussion regarding "the statistical aspect of the crime", and the underlying seeming reluctance to address the issue at all. The harsh reaction from among Palestinian academics and writers to the expressed interest by a PA official in introducing the Holocaust to the Palestinian curriculum highlighted the historical and emotional abyss still prevailing. Ziyad Abu `Amr was opposed to "programming" Palestinian children by teaching all Jewish history, and not just the Holocaust, until such time as Palestinians had recovered their rights. In this, he mirrored Israeli opposition to introducing Darwish's poetry into the high school literature curriculum.[107] But his statement that "people who studied the history of the Holocaust in the past have come to very different conclusions" belies the underlying skepticism regarding the magnitude of the event itself. Abdallah Hourani, a veteran, Tunis-based Palestinian writer and activist, was more blunt, speaking of the "so-called", and "false story" of the Holocaust, which was being increasingly challenged "in the international arena and among leading European intellectuals".[108]

e) *Mutual Recriminations Amidst Renewed Violence*

As Shlomo Avineri's caustic open letter to Edward Said demonstrated, the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue was often harsh. For Palestinians, Israelis identified with the Zionist left such as Amos Oz and Shlomo Ben-Ami were special targets for criticism even before the breakdown of the peace process and renewed descent into violence in September 2000. Musa Budeiri was scornful of Israeli's "security discourse", and the uproar caused by the poems of Darwish. He also castigated Ben-Ami and other members of the Israeli elite for celebrating Israel's multi-culturalism in the face of "the reality of apartheid".[109] Hisham Sharabi pointed to the inability of "even Oz" to acknowledge Israel's having been born in sin as an indicator of how hopeless it was to expect genuine reconciliation to ever take place. (Oz had accompanied Sharabi on a visit to his childhood abode, Jaffa, for a BBC television documentary.)[110]

Said's long interview to *Ha'aretz* in August 2000 occasioned a caustic exchange between him and Meron Benvenisti. Characterizing himself as "the last Jewish intellectual", Said repeated his belief in the guilt born by Israel for the *nakba*, and that the bi-national solution was the only proper one. Within such a framework, he acknowledged, the Jews would become a minority: their subsequent likely fate, he stated, was something that disturbed him. Benvenisti responded by accusing Said of manipulating the guilt feelings of the younger generation, represented by his interviewer, instead of confronting someone like him, Benvenisti, who was his contemporary and shared the same experiences in their Jerusalem Talbieh neighborhood. Unlike his own family, said Benvenisti, Said's, and the bulk of the Palestinian elite, fled to higher ground, leaving the masses to their fate. The Palestinian elite's failures to struggle meant that Palestinians, as individuals and as a collective, shared responsibility for their fate, and were not just passive victims. And he, Benvenisti, rejected the idea that he should feel guilty for his side having won the conflict. At bottom, said Benvenisti dismissively, Said's involvement in Arab-Israeli affairs was the kind which carried no personal danger.

Said's reply was swift and jagged. He belittled Benvenisti's intellectual credentials, particularly "the sheer awfulness of his writing;" suggested that Benvenisti was jealous that he, Said, had been the subject of the interview and not Benvenisti himself; and accused him of using debased and defamatory material about Said's past. Substantively, the issue was simple for Said: the imperative of the Palestinian right of return, which none of Benvenisti's "ranting" about Palestinian responsibility for their dispossession could undermine. Benvenisti's response to the "gutter language of the Fatma Gate stone thrower" (Said had recently been photographed throwing a stone across the Lebanese-Israeli border at an Israeli army position) was that Said "continues to this day to flee from any involvement in the process of conciliation". Said, he said, was well aware of Benvenisti's own acknowledgement of Israel's partial responsibility for the Palestinians' calamity. No manipulation of his (Benvenisti's) "guilt feelings" would make him drop the demand for Said to admit to the contribution of the Palestinians to their plight, particularly their launching of the war that brought about their ruination.[111]

The Benvenisti-Said exchanges truly reflected the "narcissism of small differences". They took place notwithstanding their common belief in the non-viability of the "separation" option advocated by so many Israelis, and some Palestinians as well. Both Benvenisti and Said favored greater emphasis on the concept of citizenship and equality, at the expense of nationalism. But Benvenisti was not ready to accept Said's underlying premise. The tone and tenor of Benvenisti's views seemed much closer to Musa Budeiri's, who was willing to look critically at the Palestinian past and at the constructed aspects of his community's collective identity, just as Benvenisti was willing to do so towards his. Budeiri and Benvenisti mirrored each other in another way: the presence of their respective "Others" in Palestine/*Eretz Yisrael* were an integral, indispensable part of the "their" mental landscape.[112] Dispensing with them was inconceivable.

The outbreak of Palestinian-Israeli violence in September 2000 laid bare the deep gaps in understanding between the two communities, including their intellectuals. Israelis, by and large, were shocked and angered, and blamed Yasir

`Arafat and the Palestinian Authority for responding to what they understood to be Ehud Barak's far-reaching offer at Camp David with violence. As he had so often done, Amos Oz articulated the reaction of the majority of the Israeli Jewish intellectual community. If Barak's proposals were rejected, and the Palestinians insisted on both the 'right of return' and the negation of the Jewish connection to Jerusalem, even as Israel acknowledged the Islamic connection to the city, then peace was unachievable now, and the most that could be achieved was a temporary truce. Justice in `Arafat's eyes, Oz said, meant that "Palestine belongs to the Palestinians and Israel does too. Justice according to which the Islamic holy places belong to Islam while the Jewish holy places were nothing but a forgery".[113]

The Palestinians, by contrast, were unanimous in blaming both Barak for offering the Palestinians what they viewed as an unacceptable package deal and Ariel Sharon for his provocative visit to the Temple Mount that lit the fuse of rebellion. From that point on, the spiral of violence continually reinforced the negative views of one side toward the other. Ben Ami's statements that `Arafat had orchestrated the Aqsa intifada angered Bir Zeit's Rema Hammami and others.[114] Oz, A.B. Yehoshua and the Israeli Left in general were castigated repeatedly by Palestinians for their "betrayal" of universal principles of justice in the face of what they termed Israel's brutal repression.[115] Budeiri addressed the Israelis directly: writing in *Ha'aretz* in late October 2000, he sarcastically confirmed that "the Palestinians are indeed not who the Zionist peace camp thought they were". Palestinian perceptions of a peace settlement, he said, "do not stem from the needs and requirements of Israeli security or the ever-lasting debate over the Jewish character of the state". Nor are the Israelis the peace-oriented people that Palestinians had hoped for.[116] The problem he opined, was that Israelis had rendered Palestinians invisible, not because of their opposing religious belief but because of the Israeli Jews' tribal sense of identity. Most of the Palestinian leadership subscribed to Iyad al-Sarraj's belief that the Israelis had set the Palestinians up: they had planned from the outset to make the Palestinians appear to be the obstacles to peace by making them offers they'd have to refuse, and then incited them to violence so that Israel could be seen as the

victim.[117] The tragedy, in Sarraj's view, was that "the Palestinians have reacted always as Israel demands [with violence] as they could not see another, non-violent alternative".[118] Said, Sharabi and others picked up on the need for non-violent resistance, putting it in broader perspective. It would be the demographic and cultural struggles, said Sharabi, which would be the main themes for the next 10-15 years, during which time the present balance of power would become irrelevant and violence recedes in importance.[119] Sharabi's emphasis on the centrality of the demographic and cultural factors in the coming years was shared by an increasing number of Israelis, particularly following the outbreak of *intifadat al-aqsa* and the concomitant traumatic, violent confrontation between the Israeli authorities and Israel's Arab citizens.

In Sari Nusseibeh's eyes, Israel had misread the historic opportunity of reconciliation being offered after Oslo, and failed to use the interim period to engage in real confidence building. Rejecting the "grand design" explanations for the breakdown prevalent on each side, he leaned toward viewing the renewed violence as a negative dynamic in which each side pulled the other down through miscalculation, misreading of other's intentions and misrepresentation. However, he ascribed the preponderant responsibility for the situation to Israel, as the stronger, organized side. Palestinians, he said, had simply gone as far as they could, only to receive a slap in the face.[120] Indeed, said Khalil Shikaki, the peace process had lost its legitimacy in the eyes of the Palestinians, and the Sharon visit was simply the spark that lit the fuse. According to Shikaki, if the peace process is de-legitimized, then so too will be the PA, the peace process's legitimate son".[121] Initially, at least, this proved not to be the case: the violence restored to the PA much-needed legitimacy.

f) Ping-Pong Petitions and Declarations

In February 2000, nine months **prior** to the outbreak of *intifadat al-aqsa*, a group of nearly 130 Palestinian intellectuals from within the territories and beyond - academics, writers, artists and activists addressed a "message to the Israeli and

Jewish public", first and foremost to those Israelis "who believe in the values of justice and equity", in order to clarify Palestinian thinking on the peace process. Not by chance, it came just two months after the "Declaration of the Twenty" towards the PA (see above). Together, the two declarations constituted a "red alert" from the Palestinian intellectual community that the Oslo process was, in essence, on its deathbed, and that without radical measures to resuscitate the patient, the consequences for both communities would be severe. The majority of Palestinians, they declared, "believed that peace would be based on two principles: justice and the requirements of a common future". However, the reality, they said, was that the Israeli side believed that it was able to "impose a humiliating agreement" on the weaker, Palestinian side. Such a settlement, they stated, would be a fragile one, "bearing within it the seeds of its own destruction". History, they warned, was full of such examples. It was thus up to the Israeli side to choose which path to take. As for the specifics of a just settlement, the message stated, there were only two solutions: 1) the establishment of a Palestinian state with complete sovereignty in all of the West Bank and Gaza, with Jerusalem as its capital, "the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and the recognition by Israel of the historic injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people: and 2) a single, "democratic bi-national state for the two peoples on the historic land of Palestine". The equal validity accorded to the single-state bi-national solution appears in part to be an attempt to present a unified face vis-a-vis Israel, and to avoid internal disagreements which could weaken the Palestinian position. Unquestionably, its appearance in the message was also a strong indicator of the secular Palestinian intelligentsia's disillusionment with the Oslo process, and its renewed contemplation of a long-preferred, ideal option.

The February declaration drew a favorable response from c. 200 scholars and activists associated mainly with post-Zionist and anti-Zionist views. The Israeli signatories declared their readiness to work together with their Palestinian counterparts to bring about a Palestinian-Israeli peace based on a historic compromise according to the values expressed in the Palestinian message.[122]

Not surprisingly, the Palestinian missive largely fell on deaf ears among the bulk of Israel's intellectual and academic community. For most, the statement's insistence on the "right of return" and recognition of the "historical injustice" inflicted on the Palestinians as part of the two-state solution effectively ruled it out as a document worth embracing, for it sounded suspiciously like the PLO's 1974 "strategy of phases".

Yosef Gorni reflected the Israeli mainstream's view. The most positive aspect of the Palestinian message, he said, was its public nature, particularly its explicit acknowledgement that in certain conditions the Palestinians were willing to recognize the legitimacy of the Jewish national entity, within the framework of recognizing the national rights of both peoples. However, in his view, the principles on which they were conditioned cancelled any chance at historical reconciliation at the outset. On what basis, individual or national, must the Jews recognize the injustice done to the Palestinians, as the Palestinian petition demanded, Gorni asked. If on the individual basis, then everyone had to feel for the suffering of individuals and aspire to compensate them. But if the reference was to the suffering of the Palestinians as a nation, then it ignored the fact that it was their own national leadership which led them to a war directed at destroying the Jewish national entity. As for the "right of return", Gorni expressed surprise that his Jewish colleagues who supported the declaration did not put the "sin" into any historical context, particularly the precedent of the post-World War I settlement which mandated population exchanges, not the return of refugees to their homes. He also expressed astonishment that the bi-national state idea was tendered as one of the two possible solutions, since it was a concept that had failed everywhere. The two-state solution was the most realistic one, he said, but given the impossibility of total separation, it needed to be accompanied by constructive confederal arrangements.[123]

Six weeks into *initifadat al-aqsa,* over 120 Palestinian academics and activists, representing the bulk of the secular intellectual "critical supporters" of the Oslo accords, nearly all from the West Bank and Gaza (almost half were Bir Zeit University faculty members), addressed another "Urgent Statement to the Israeli

Public". Approximately one-quarter of the signatories had affixed their name to the February 2000 declaration as well. The "critical situation" facing both peoples, they declared, was the inevitable outcome of the Israeli leadership's (Likud and Labor both) delusion that Israel's superior force could compel `Arafat to conclude a "deeply unjust agreement", which he was then expected to force Palestinians to accept. Israel's failure to address the root causes of the conflict, and attempts to crush the uprising with overwhelming military force, they declared, would not succeed in the long run, and "condemn us to revisit the current crisis again and again". They firmly believed in an "equitable and just negotiated peace", they said, but they had lost all hope in resolving the "current inequities" within the framework of the Oslo agreements and the exclusive American "brokerage" of the process. Equitable negotiations, they said needed to be based on 4 principles: ending the occupation of all the lands taken by Israel in 1967; establishing Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem; Israeli "recognition of its responsibility" for the creation of Palestinian refugees, a prerequisite to a solution "in accordance with relevant UN resolutions"; and guarantee of access to each other's spiritual and historical sites within their own territories. There was no mention of the single-state bi-national option, which had received equal billing in the February declaration. The appeal concluded with an expression of hope that "out of the tragedies of recent weeks, we can find this new and fair vision of peace" and "coexistence between our two peoples". A sprinkling of Israelis were among the "international supporters" who subsequently affixed their names to the declaration.[124]

Putting together the petition was clearly no small task, as attested to the various meanings ascribed to it by different Palestinian signatories. For Salim Tamari, the statement contained some balance, as befitting the special role which intellectuals needed to play, namely seeing beyond the official line and going beyond the sentiments of the masses. To do so required them to maintain contact with the other side. `Isam Nassar and Islah Jad both emphasized the Palestinian need to address Israeli public opinion in general, and the Israeli left in particular, in order to demonstrate the Palestinian commitment to peace was widespread. Rema

Hammami, on the other hand, denied that the statement went beyond general sentiment. Tamari was also concerned that the religious message of the intifada, which, he said, was deeply rooted in Palestinian and Arab political culture, was diverting attention from the national character of the conflict, and perhaps even being superseded by it. Barak, he said, also shared the blame for the phenomenon. Hammami insisted, on the other hand, that even the Islamic forces were basically in favor of a two-state solution, while Jawad viewed the religious slogans of the intifada as a self-defense mechanism.[125] These latter views smacked of blatant apologetics and rationalizations, a not uncommon phenomenon among secular thinkers confronted with the apparent power of a religious message.

One week after the Palestinian appeal, 24 Israel Jews - some of the country's preeminent authors, including Oz and Yehoshua, university professors and a sprinkling of ex-officials - responded with their own urgent public appeal, "Stop the Deterioration". In the main, it was directed at the Israeli public, and forcefully expressed the position of the Zionist Left. "The end of Israeli rule over the West Bank and Gaza and the establishment of a stable and prosperous Palestinian state", the signatories declared, was in Israel's vital interest, no less than that of the Palestinians. The border of June 4, 1967 could be the only basis for mutual recognition and peace between the two communities. As such, most settlements would have to be evacuated: "ten million Israelis and Palestinians must not be held hostage by the settlements". In an obvious riposte to a disillusioned Israeli public, the statement declared that the Palestinians had accepted this border. Moreover, they explained to their skeptical public, the Palestinians had shown a readiness to demilitarize their state of heavy weapons, and accepted the annexation of Israeli suburbs ringing Jerusalem and the necessity of other border modifications based on mutuality and the concept of land swaps. The statement concluded with a call upon the Palestinian leadership "to announce its readiness to settle the conflict not by violence, but by negotiations aimed at peace and full coexistence".[126]

This last statement, for Palestinians, was unacceptable, for it placed primary blame for the latest round of violence on their side. As such, it provided them, rightly

or wrongly, with one more confirmation of their belief that the bulk of the Israeli left had been put to the test and had failed, supporting its own government's repressive policies rather than taking the side of the victim.

As for the refugee issue, the absence in the Israelis' declaration of any mention of the 1948 'file' - the refugees 'right of return' and Israel's "historic responsibility" for the plight of the Palestinians - constituted a response, as it were, to the Palestinian appeal two weeks earlier. The Israelis, in effect, were signaling to the Palestinian side that this was their red line, and that the only way out was to focus on the 1967 'file', a position that was, of course, unacceptable to the Palestinians. Their decision not to complicate matters further by adopting a 'benign neglect' approach of the refugee issue was similar to a similar, subsequent approach taken by Palestinians in July 2001 (see below).

By contrast, one week later, c. 225 Jewish and Arab Israelis, mostly identified with the non-Zionist left, issued a declaration of unqualified support for the Palestinian initiative.[127] In early May 2001, many of the same group, organized under the banner of Gush Shalom, again crossed the line of the conflict in "solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for freedom:" nearly 350 Israeli academics, intellectuals and others called for an immediate deployment of an international peacekeeping force in the territories in order to "end the daily killing, wounding and suffering of civilians, including children and old people, and to facilitate the resumption of talks". Israeli settlements, they declared, constituted an "ongoing act of aggression against the Palestinian people", and Israel had used excessive force "in order to impose its rule against growing Palestinian resistance". Thus, while they "totally condemned acts of terror against civilians", they regarded the Palestinian revolt against "colonial occupation" as legitimate, emphasizing that "there can be no moral and military symmetries between occupiers and occupied".[128]

With no end to the violence in site and guided by an almost desperate sense that the two communities were approaching the abyss, Israelis and Palestinians held a meeting in Ramallah in July 2001. Prominent Israeli intellectuals from the Zionist left who participated included Yirmiyahu Yovel, Menahem Brinker, Oz and

Yehoshua, as well as Meretz and Labor party figures such as Yair Tsaban, Haim Oron and Beilin and veteran Peace Now activists. The Palestinian side was made up of officials, led by Minister of Culture and Information Yasir `Abd Rabbu, and public figures and academics such as Hanan `Ashrawi, whose institute hosted the meeting, Sari Nusseibeh, Salim Tamari and *al-Hayat al-Jadida* editor Hafiz al-Barghuti. Tamari functioned as a bridge, of sorts, to the large secular community of Oslo and PA critics who were not present. The meeting attested to the awareness on both sides of the importance of restoring the thread of dialogue that had been ripped apart during the previous year. A small core group then laboriously drafted a joint declaration, published in both Hebrew and Arabic, which was signed by approximately 20 persons from each side. The tone of the text was desperate, pleading for an end to violence, recognition of each other's humanity and the return to the path of a negotiated peace heartfelt. In terms of specifics, the Palestinians studiously avoided any mention of the "right of return", being well aware that insistence on its inclusion would scuttle the whole idea of a joint declaration. The issue was subsumed by delicate phrasing: "solutions can be found to all outstanding issues that should be fair and just to both sides", which, in a further concession to the Israeli side, "should not undermine the sovereignty of the Israeli and Palestinian states. What was most problematic in the discussions was the Israeli side's insistence that the two states embodied the aspirations of the Jewish and Palestinian peoples to political independence. The Palestinian side was extremely reluctant to adopt language which affirmed the core value of Zionist Israel. However, it ultimately acceded. Interestingly, that particular phrasing was left out of the English version published in the Palestinian *Jerusalem Times* weekly. But the correct, agreed on version, was published in Arabic in the Palestinian press.[129] Tawfiq Abu Bakr wrote approvingly that the agreement had undermined the Israeli right wing's claim that the Palestinians were bent on destroying Zionist Israel through a wholesale right of return.[130] Nusseibeh subsequently published an op-ed in both Israeli and Palestinian newspapers calling for both sides to display sanity before it was too late and articulating the principles of peace, reconciliation and mutual recognition.

The July joint statement drew condemnation from Israeli opponents of Oslo, including Yehoshua Porath and Martin Sherman. The meetings, they said in a newspaper ad, merely served to "legitimize `Arafat". Negotiations, they emphasized, should be conducted by the Government of Israel, and no one else.[131] There was no lack of Palestinian critics either. The end of occupation and the right of return, wrote Israeli Palestinian author Salman Natur, were the only basis for any possible dialogue. Were Israeli intellectuals, he asked rhetorically, ready to acknowledge the reality of its continuing domination and usurpation of Palestinian land for more than a half century, and to discuss the right of return of Palestinian refugees?[132]

Conclusions

At the end of the day, did the public discourse of Palestinian and Israeli intellectuals have any measurable salutary effect on the course of Israeli-Palestinian relations during the Oslo era? None that can be discerned. Was the breakdown of the process somehow connected to their activities? In some small, secondary way. Was their 'conversation' on the larger themes of identity, history and vision for the future a meaningful one or a dialogue of the deaf? Perhaps a bit of both.

It is clear that the Israeli-PLO Joint Declaration of Principles in September 1993 inaugurated a new era in Palestinian-Israeli relations, challenging intellectuals on both sides to address both immediate and longer-term issues related to the future of their respective societies and the relationship between them. It is also clear that secular left-liberal intellectuals on both sides paid considerable attention to each other. In doing so, personal friendships were sometimes formed. More importantly, their differences over what was deemed to be an acceptable final settlement narrowed substantially. Nonetheless, with regard to the "liberal Zionist" intellectual mainstream in Israel and the secular liberal-left stream among the Palestinians, their underlying assumptions, and ultimate visions, remained far apart

It would be absurd to place the onus on one, or both sides' intellectuals for the breakdown of the peace process. Nonetheless, they did make certain 'contributions' to that end. Palestinian intellectuals were extremely timid in their discussions of the Israeli-Jewish "Other", making little or no effort to explain to a skeptical or ignorant public the Jewish connection to the land and to holy places. This became especially apparent during the discussions on the final status of Jerusalem's the "Holy Basin", with Palestinian scholars and negotiators alike mocking Jewish historical claims of the existence of the ancient Jewish Temples on that site. Their timidity, their continued de-legitimization of anything that smacked of Jewish roots in Palestine, and their almost exclusive focus on the injustices, past and present, being perpetrated by the Israeli side meant, at bottom, that Palestinian intellectuals did not educate their public for peace. In addition, their analyses of the shortcomings of the

Oslo process consistently ignored the negative, dynamic effects of Palestinian terror attacks on Israeli civilians.

Israeli intellectuals from the Zionist left, for their part, failed to sufficiently explain how their own side's actions on the ground, particularly the continued building of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, were feeding the conflict and eroding Palestinian belief in Oslo's viability. They ignored repeated warnings from the Palestinian side that the Oslo framework was being endangered by its non-implementation, operating, apparently, under the mistaken assumption that Israel's preponderance of power would be enough to ensure Palestinian acquiescence. Moreover, they failed to convey to the Israeli public the crucial fact that the lives of many Palestinians had materially worsened in the Oslo years.

No less problematic was that Israeli intellectuals were slow to recognize the centrality of the Palestinian refugee experience and the demand for the "right of return". Instead they assumed that since it was not "realistic" to expect Israel to concede on the issue, the matter would be solved by Palestinian acquiescence to existing power realities, aided perhaps by a bit of verbal finesse. The fact that some Palestinian liberals were thinking along these lines may have also led Israelis to overestimate the weight of their Palestinian counterparts within their society. More generally, many of them were overly enthusiastic about Oslo, and seemed to take its outcome for granted. There were of course exceptions. Emmanuel Sivan, for example, rejected in 1996 the idea that some kind of "permanent determinism etched in stone" fixed that the Oslo process had reached the point of no-return, and warned that the road ahead would surely be twisted, with more suffering on both sides.[133]

But the cautions of the likes of Sivan, Oz and Brinker were lost in the hubbub. Shimon Peres' vision of a "New Middle East"[134] was a related complicating factor. To be sure, the notion was deemed by most Israeli scholars of the Middle East as mere pie in the sky, not to mention the fact that it added fuel to the fire of the opponents of normalization in the Arab world. Nonetheless Israeli intellectuals, on the whole, were probably reluctant to frontally take on Peres, the patron of Oslo, and thus failed to explain the distinction between what Oslo really was – an imperfect but vital

beginning – and Peres' vision. (Ben-Ami, a strident political foe of Peres within the Labor Party for most of the decade, was an exception.) Consequently, Israeli intellectuals, as a whole, may have unwittingly helped to sow exaggerated initial expectations among the public that were then shattered at the first sign of difficulty, weakening not only the public backing necessary for a continuation of the peace process but their standing within Israeli society as well. Sami Michael's caustic attack on the Israeli left for being alienated from the sensibilities of the ordinary, mostly Sephardi "amcha" (roughly, 'working-class "masses"') may be relevant here, for most average Israelis quickly sensed the "new Middle East", which they deemed synonymous with Oslo, was an empty vessel.

Differences between the particular approaches of Palestinian and Israeli intellectuals, and the milieus in which they operated, were substantial. Israeli intellectuals were overly eager to move onto broader discussions regarding the preferred nature of the state and basis of community in the post-peace era, although their various conceptions (EU-type frameworks, a new Middle East, Mediterranean identity), were only skeletal. Even after the descent into violence, thoughtful Israeli critics of the peace process remained believers in the inevitability of eventual political compromise with the Palestinians. However, their faith in Palestinian good will and intentions, and belief that an agreement would bring an end to the one hundred-year-old conflict between Jews and Arabs in Palestine, had eroded significantly. Liberal Zionists had gradually developed considerable empathy for the Palestinian predicament, and generally favored a "warm peace". The collapse of the peace process and ongoing violent confrontation since September 2000 caused much soul-searching among left-Zionist intellectuals, creating a far more somber, pessimistic view of their neighbors, and of the available possibilities. No one articulated this in greater detail, and with the authority and passion of having been an insider whose hopes had been rudely dashed, than Ben-Ami.[135]

Palestinian secular intellectuals, for their part, were primarily occupied with the practical aspects of the Oslo accords, and particularly their shortcomings. The large group of "critical supporters" of a peaceful outcome to the Palestinian-Israeli

conflict was also, not coincidentally, among the sharpest critics of the Palestinian Authority's heavy-handed, authoritarian ways, and strongest advocates of the building of civil society based on law and democracy. Neither supporters nor opponents of Oslo expended much effort to develop empathy with the "Other". Nor did they articulate broader visions of the future in a post-peace world. Their degree of genuine understanding of the Israeli-Zionist narrative appeared to be minimal. Understanding and articulating such an understanding would require a fundamental modification of the Palestinian collective's core principles, as well as hard talk to the bulk of the refugees who would not be eligible to return to their lost lands and homes. Even where a degree of genuine, empathetic understanding of the Zionist ethos exists, expressing it in current circumstances would be an act of uncommon courage, if not foolhardy. In the long run, most Palestinian intellectuals, whatever their attitudes to Oslo, hope to see an evolution of the Israeli state in the direction advocated by the post-Zionists.[136] One cannot conceive, at this stage, of a comparable "de-nationalization" trend among Palestinian intellectuals. For the bulk of them, a return to the PLO's "secular democratic state" in all of Palestine was a means to achieve majority status, and thus power. The Palestinian Israeli scholar Asad Ghanem was a lone voice in calling for a "civic" solution, which, he said, represented "the inevitable termination of the Palestinian national project".[137]

The July 2001 declaration offers evidence that secular-liberal thinkers (and political figures) on both sides understood that an alternative to the Clinton parameters for a settlement was a collective, joint leap into the abyss. Sari Nusseibeh followed up on the declaration by calling for the return to "logic" and "rationality", which in his view meant a two-state solution based on the June 4, 1967 lines with Jerusalem as the capital of both states, and a Palestinian renunciation of the right of return. His call, published simultaneously in *Ha'aretz* and *al-Quds*, was a unique Palestinian voice.[138] Ten years after his groundbreaking book with Mark Heller, Nusseibeh again stood out from his Palestinian colleagues. The fact that he had just been appointed by `Arafat to the post of PLO minister in charge of Jerusalem affairs gave Nusseibeh's expression added importance, and made him

especially controversial within the Palestinian community. Nonetheless, eight years after the signing of the DoP, the bulk of the Palestinian and Israeli intellectual communities appeared to be profoundly alienated from one another. The great challenge ahead for intellectuals on both sides would be to contribute to the terms of public discussion in ways which would help pull their societies back from the abyss of perpetual mutual brutality into which they were staring. With the achievement of a genuine historical reconciliation between their societies a long way off, the tasks facing the secular left-liberal intellectuals on both sides - helping to advance the successful management of the conflict, humanizing the "Other", and remaining "connected critics" of their own societies - remained both formidable and worthy. The task promised to be difficult enough in Israel; in the Palestinian milieu, it would be nothing short of herculean.

Notes

[1] Amos Oz, *Israel, Palestine and Peace* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1994), p. ix.

[2] Rashid Khalidi, " Truth, Justice and Reconciliation: Elements of a Solution to the Palestinian Refugee Issue," in *The Palestinian Exodus 1948-1998*, Ghada Karmi and Eugene Cotran, eds. (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1999), pp. 222-25.

[3] Shlomo Avineri, *Jerusalem Post*, October 22, 2000

[4] Edward Said, *Peace and its Discontents* (NY: Vintage books, 1996), p. 7.

[5] For a penetrating analysis of " philotyranny" in the 20th century, and the deeper internal forces which drove it (and will continue to exist), see Mark Lilla, " The Lure of Syracuse," *The New York Review of Books*, September 20, 2001.

[6] Quoted in Jeremy Jennings and Tony Kemp-Welch, " The Century of the Intellectual," in *Intellectuals in Politics-From the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie*, Jeremy Jennings and Anthony Kemp-Welch (eds.) (London: Routledge, 1997,) p. 12

[7] Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals* (London : Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988) p. 342.

[8] Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (NY: Vintage, 1996), pp. 11, 88-9.

[9] Cited by Shlomo Zand, *Intellectuals, Truth and Power* (in Hebrew), (Tel Aviv: `Am `Oved, 2000), p. 39. For a more general discussion on the intellectual as creator of a collective image, particularly in times of historical flux or crisis, see Israel Gershoni and James P. Jankowski, *Egypt, Islam and the Arabs: The Search for Egyptian Nationhood, 1900-1930*(NY: Oxford UP, 1986), pp. 77-81.

[10] Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992, second edition), pp. 12-13.

[11] Remarks made at the Jerusalem Van Leer Institute, spring 1999.

[12] Edward Shils, " Intellectuals and Responsibility," in *The Political Responsibility of Intellectuals*, Ian Maclean, Alan Montefiore, Peter Winch (eds.), Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990) p. 257.

[13] Cited by Zand, *Intellectuals, Truth and Power*, p. 37.

[14] For one interpretation of their dispute, see William D. Hart, *Edward Said and the Religious Effects of Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), pp. 1-16, and Appendix B, 187-199.

[15] Cited by Jennings and Kemp-Welch, 'The Century of the Intellectual," p. 16, and George Cotkin, " the Tragic Predicament: Post-War American Intellectual Acceptance and Mass Culture," p. 249, in Jennings and Kemp-Welch (eds.), *Intellectuals in Politics*.

[16] Martin Hollis, 'What Truth? For Whom and Where?, in Jennings and Kemp-Welch, pp. 291-3; Said, *Representations*, p. 16.

[17] Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1988), pp. 142-73.

[18] Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1995).

[19] M. Naim, *Le Monde* May 20, 1994, cited by Jennings and Kemp-Welch, fn. 45.

[20] Michael Keren*, The Pen and the Sword: Israeli Intellectuals and the Making of the Nation-State* (Boulder : Westview Press, 1989) p. 3.

[21] Laurence J. Silberstein, *The Post-Zionism Debates* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999) p. 44.

[22] Yosef Gorni, *The Arab Question and The Jewish Problem* (Hebrew), (Tel Aviv: `Am Oved, 1985), p. 403.

[23] Eric Cohen, " Israel as a post-Zionist Society," in David Ohanna and Robert S. Wistrich, eds. *Myth and Memory: Transfigurations of Israeli Consciousness* (Jerusalem: Van Leer Institute and Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1997, in Hebrew), pp. 156-58.

[24] Keren, *The Pen and the Sword*, pp. 35-36.

[25] Michael Keren, *Ben-Gurion and the Intellectuals: Power, Knowledge and Charisma* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois UP, 1983). For a different view, which views The Hebrew University-centered intellectual opposition to Ben-Gurion as nothing less than a nefarious attempt to undermine the Zionist foundations the state, see Yoram Hazony, *The Jewish State, The Struggle for Israel's Soul* (NY: Basic Books, 2000).

[26] Keren, *The Pen and the Sword* p. 77-80.

[27] David Ohanna, *The Last Israelis* (in Hebrew), (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1998), p. 9.

[28] Speech at President's House reception, October 1999.

[29] Harkabi's earlier hard-nosed analyses of Arab and Palestinian ideology conferred upon him considerable credibility, even though his later writings emphasizing the limitations on the effectiveness of force and advocating far-reaching political compromise aroused considerable controversy. His return to Jewish history, particularly his withering critique of the near-mythical, albeit failed Bar Kochba rebellion against Roman rule, was an unusual effort at using the remote past to advocate policies in the present. Harkbai's earlier writings, include the collection of articles in *Bayn Yisrael l`Arav* (" Between Israel and the Arabs") (Tel Aviv: Ma'arachot, 1968); *Palestinians and Israel* (Jerusalem, Keter, 1974); *Arab Attitudes to Israel* (translated from Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Keter, 1976); and *The Palestinian Covenant and its Meaning* (translated from Hebrew) (London : Vallentine, Mitchell, 1979). His later writings include *BeTokef Hametzi'ut (* " Facing Reality"), (Jerusalem: Van Leer, 1981); *Hazon, lo Fantasia: Lekehey Bar Kochba Ve'Realism BeMediniyut BeYamaynu* (" Vision, No Fantasy: Realism in International Relations"), (Jerusalem: Domino, 1982); and *Israel's Fateful Hour* (translated from Hebrew)(NY: Harper and Row, 1989).

[30] For a succinct review of the *effendiyya* phenomenon, and its application in Iraq, see Michael Eppel, " The Elite, the Efendiyya, and the Growth of Nationalism and Pan-Arabism in Hashemite Iraq, 1921-1958," *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* Vol. 30, No. 2 (May 1998), pp. 227-250.

[31] Albert Hourani, *Arabic thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (London : Oxford University Press, 1970); Marwan R. Buheiry, *Intellectual Life in the Arab East, 1890-1939* (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1981).

[32] Yehoshua Porath, *In Search of Arab Unity, 1930-1945* (London: Frank Cass, 1986); Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System, 1945-1954* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse UP, 1993).

[33] Musa Budeiri," The Palestinian Israeli Dialogue: From Intifada to Negotiations"

(Majallat al-Dirassat al-Filastiniya, n.12, autumn 1992), (*http://www.musabudeiri.freeserve.co.uk/dialogue.htm)*.

[34] "Post-Zionism" became an extremely widespread term in the 1990s. Its meaning, however, was amorphous, and was applied to views ranging from the principled anti-Zionism associated with the radical left, to those which held that Zionism's historic role had concluded with the creation of the Jewish state.

[35] *Integration or Separation*? (in Hebrew), Tamar Herman and Efraim Yaar (eds.), (Tel Aviv: Tami Steinmetz Center, 1999), p. 42.

[36] Amos Oz, in *Thinking it Over: Conflicts in Israeli Public Thought* (in Hebrew), Yona Hadari-Ramaj (ed.) (Ramat Efal: Yad Tabenkin, 1994), pp. 396-97. For Oz's searing description of the virulent hatred of Peres and the Ashkenazi elite among working-class 'Mizrahim' in the town of Beit Shemesh, see his *In the Land of Israel* (London: Fontana, 1983), pp. 27-48.

[37] Asa Kasher,in *Thinking it Over*, Hadari-Ramaj (ed.), p. 336.

[38] *Ha'aretz*, October 3, 2001.

[39] Yosef Gorni, in *Thinking it Over*, Hadari-Ramaj (ed.), pp. 162-66.

[40] Said, *Peace and Its Discontents* 1994, pp. xxxiii.

[41] Shlomo Ben-Ami *A Place for All* (in Hebrew), (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1998), pp. 49-50.

[42] Ibid, pp. 100-175.

[43] Interview in *Ha'aretz* weekend magazine ('Musaf'), 14 September 2001; interview in *Ma`ariv*, April 6, 13 – Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), Special Dispatch No. 207, April 20, 24 2001.

[44] Yosi Beilin, *Touching Peace* (in Hebrew),(Tel Aviv: Yedi`ot Aharonot, 1997,) pp. 224-25, 229.

[45] Ibid, pp. 308-9.

[46] For Beilin's " private" , " non-paper" on the refugee question presented to the Palestinians at the Taba talks, see *Le Monde Diplomatique*, September 2000 (http://www.en.monde-diplomatique.fr/focus/mideast/tabaisraeliresponse).

[47] Interview in *Ha'aretz* weekend magazine ('Musaf'), June 15, 2001.

[48] Quoted by Elie Rekhess," Palestinian Affairs," in *Middle East Contemporary Survey (MECS)*, Vol. XVII (1993), p 218.

[49] Communicated to me by Nadim Mseis.

[50] Salim Tamari, " Fading Flags: The Crisis of Palestinian Legitimacy," *Middle East Report*, May-June/July-August 1995.

[51] Rema Hammami and Salim Tamari, " Anatomy of Another Rebellion," *Middle East Report*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Winter 2000), pp. 2-15.

[52] Hanan Ashrawi, *This Side of Peace* (NY: Touchstone Books, 1995).

Notes

53 Jamil Hilal, *Al-Nizam al-Siyasi al-Filastini Ba`da Oslo* (" The Palestinian Political Order After Oslo" (Beirut: Institute of Palestine Studies, 1998), p.55-56.

54 Ibid, pp. 77, 84, 87-88, 106, 124-125, 132.

55 Elie Rekhess, "The Palestinian Authority," in *MECS*, Vol. XXIII (1999), p. 479-80.

56 Ami Elad-Buskila, " Praising the Holy City: The Myth of Jerusalem in the New Arab Literature," in *Myth and Memory*, Ohanna and Wistrich (eds.), pp. 255-56.

57 Darwish, *Memory For Forgetfulness* (Berkeley, CA: U. of California Press, 1995), p. xiv.

58 " My Opposition to the Terms of the Accord is a Measure of My Attachment to Real Peace: An Interview with Mahmoud Darwish," *Middle East Report*, 25.3/4 (1995).

59 *Al-Ahram Weekly*, May 10-16 2001.

60 Ibid.

61 Said, *Peace and its Discontents*, p. 7.

62 Quoted in Fouad Ajami, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs* (NY: Pantheon Books, 1998), p. 268.

63 Salim Tamari, whom Massad is especially critical of, spoke of a similar phenomenon, although in less harsh, more ironic terms, in which well-funded " visiting scholars" (a sarcastic term) were " able to dictate the terms in which Palestinian discourse is packaged and presented," while Palestinian scholars, having been offered much for than their local salaries, serve a " proletarian function." " Tourists with Agendas," *Middle East Report*, September-October, 1995, p. 24.

64 Joseph Massad, " Political Realists or Comprador Intelligentsia: Palestinian Intellectuals and the National Struggle," *Critique,* Fall 1997, pp. 21-35.

65 Ibid.

66 Joseph Massad, " Return or Permanent Exile? Palestinian Refugees and the Ends of Oslo," *Critique*, Spring 1999, pp. 5-23.

67 Bernard Sabella, " Political Trends and the New Elites in Palestine," in *Palestine Jordan Israel* (Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1997), pp. 233-242.

68 Quoted by Judith Miller, " The Embattled Arab Intellectual," *New York Times Magazine*, June 9, 1995.

69 Ali Salem, *A Drive to Israel: An Egyptian Meets His Neighbors (*The Dayan Center Papers, Number 128, Tel Aviv: 2001; originally published in Arabic in 1994, translated by Robert Silverman). The book was previously translated into Hebrew, under the title *Masa Le-Yisrael*. (Jerusalem: Keter, 1995). Amin al-Mahdi, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Crisis of Democracy and Peace* (in Arabic; Cairo: Dar al-Arabiyya Lil-Nashr, 1999). This too was translated into Hebrew, under the title *Hade`a Ha'aheret* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2001).

70 Hazim Saghiyya, " Geographic Compromise Instead of Guaranteed Historical Compromise: The Role of 'The Politics of Culture' (in Hebrew), *Meykarov*, No. 2 (Summer 1998), pp. 115-21.

71 *Al-Hayat*, February 28, 2001 MEMRI, No. 198, March 27, 2001).

[72] *Al-Ahram* (n.d.); *al-Ahram al-`Arabi,* Oct. 21, 2000; *Al-Hayat* December 6, 2000 (MEMRI, no. 145, October 31, 2000; No. 169, December 29, 2000; No. 198, March 27, 2001.

[73] Mark A. Heller and Sari Nusseibeh, *No Trumpets, No Drums: A Two-State Settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1991).

[74] Paul Scham, " Arab-Israeli Research Cooperation, 1995-1999: An Analytical Study," *MERIA Journal*, Vol 4, No. 3 (September 1999), (*http://meria.biu.ac.il)*.

[75] Ibid.

[76] *Integration or Separation?* Hermann and Ya'ar (eds.), pp. 8-10.

[77] Joseph Alpher/Khalil Shikaki, concept paper, " The Palestinian Refugee Problem and the Right of Return," *Middle East Policy*, Vol. VI, No. 3, Feb. 1999, pp. 167-89.

[78] Interview in *Ha'aretz* Weekend Magazine ('Musaf'), May 3, 2000.

[79] Aharon Megged, part one of interview in *Ha-'Umma*, Summer 2000, quoted in MEMRI, no. 123, September 6, 2000.

[80] *Ibid*, part two, MEMRI, no. 124, September 7, 2000.

[81] Yigal Eilam, *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*, Vol. V, No. 2 (1998), p. 21.

[82] *Al-Ayyam*, November 4, 1999 (MEMRI, November 11, 1999).

[83] *Al-Quds*, May 27, June 15, 1998 (MEMRI, No. 1, " The Palestinians and the Post-Zionists: The Limits of Historic Debate," July 20, 1998).

[84] Hanan Ashrawi, "Myths, Legends and Propaganda: Setting the Historical Record Straight as a Prerequisite for Peace" December 13, 1999 *(www.miftah.org)*.

[85] Yezid Sayegh, " Reflections on al-*Nakba*" *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Autumn 1998), pp. 19-23.

[86] Budeiri, " The Palestinians: Tensions Between Nationalist and Religious Identities" , in James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni (eds.), *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East* (NY: Columbia UP, 1997), pp. 195-98; Budeiri's review of Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (Columbia UP: NY, 1997), in *Majallat al-Dirassat Al-Filastiniyya*, 1998 (*http://www.musabudeiri.freeserve.co.uk)*.

[87] Meir Litvak, " A Palestinian Past: National Construction and Reconstruction," *History and Memory*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Winter 1994), pp. 24-56.

[88] Rashid Khalidi, " Truth, Justice and Reconciliation: Elements of a Solution to the Palestinian Refugee Issue," in Karmi and Cotran (eds.), *The Palestinian Exodus 1948-1998*, p. 230.

[89] " 1948-1998 in the Eyes of Two Peoples: A Roundtable Discussion," in *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*, Vol. V, No. 2 (1998), pp. 25-27.

[90] A. B. Yehoshua, in *Thinking it Over*, Hadari-Ramaj (ed.), pp. 279-80.

[91] Itamar Rabinovich, " A Half-Century of Conflict, A Quarter-Century of Peace Process: Israeli-Arab Relations in the 50th Year of the State," in *Independence, the First 50 Years* (in Hebrew), Anita Shapira (ed.), (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 1998), p. 427.

[92] Ohanna, *The Last Israelis*, pp. 26-27.

[93] The angry odes of the recently deceased Arab poet laureate Nizar Qabbani and of Darwish as well, attest to the truth of Brinker's cautionary dictum. On Qabbani, see Ajami, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, pp. 112, 279-80, 304; Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, " Inter-Arab Relations," *MECS*, Vol. XXII (1998), pp. 91-92.

[94] Menahem Brinker, " Thoughts on Culture and Peace," *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*, Vol. V, No. 1 (1998), pp. 112-15.

[95] *Integration or Separation*, Herman and Ya'ar (eds.), pp. 37-41.

[96] *Al-Ahram Weekly*, April 9-15, July 16-22, 1998.

[97] See interview in *Ha'aretz*, Weekend Magazine (*'Musaf'*), August 18, 2000.

[98] *Al-Quds*, December 20, 2000 (internet version; Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Washington D.C).

[99] *Al-Ahram Weekly*, June 22-28 2000.

[100] Eyad al-Elsarraj (Iyad al-Sarrai), " Shaping a Culture of Peace," *Palestine-Israeli Journal of Politics Economics and Culture*, Autumn, 1994 (http://www.gcmhp.net.eyad/shaping.htm).

[101] `Adi Ofir," Preface" , " 50 to 48" , a special issue of *Theory and Criticism* (in Hebrew); nos. 12-13 (Tel Aviv: Van Leer Jerusalem Foundation and Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1999), pp. 9-10.

[102] Baruch Kimmerling, " Al-*Nakba*," in *ibid,* pp. 33-39.

[103] *Remembering Deir Yassin: The Future of Israel and Palestine*, Daniel McGowan and Marc H. Ellis, (eds.), (NY: Olive Branch Press, 1998), p. 77.

[104] The forthcoming research of Meir Litvak and Esther Webman treats this in detail.

[105] *Al-Ahram Weekly*, June 4-10 1998.

[106] *http://www.inrs-telecom.uquebec.ca/users/amer/darwish/*

[107] For an exchange between two prominent Israeli scholars of the Middle East, Yehoshua Porath and Sasson Somekh, regarding the question of whether or not Israeli high schools should teach the works of Darwish, see *The Jerusalem Report*, April 10, 2000.

[108] *Al-Istiqlal*, April 20, 2000 (MEMRI, No. 187, February 21, 2001).

[109] *Ha'aretz*, October 24, 2000; " Defeat and Victory: Thirty Years Since the 1967 War,in H.Gordon (ed.), *Looking Back At The June 1967 War* (Westport, Connecticut: Praegar, 1999; *http://www.musabudeiri.freeserve.co.uk/67anniv.htm)*.

[110] *Al-Ahram Weekly*, May 14-20 1998.

[111] *Ha'aretz*, August 18, 25, 31, 2000.

[112] Budeiri, " Fragments on the Occasion of Yet Another Anniversary Celebration," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 109, Vol. 28, No. 1 (autumn 1998), p. 34; Meron Benvenisti, *Sacred Landscape* (Berkeley, CA: U of California Press, 2000), pp. 1-9.

[113] Yedi`ot Aharonot, August 29, 2000; Feburary 7, 2001 (MEMRI, no. 128, September 20, 2000; no. 185, February 7, 2001).

[114] *Al-Ahram Weekly*, December 7-13 2000.

[115] For a sampling, see MEMRI, no. 164, December 13, 2000.

[116] *Ha'aretz*, October 24, 2000.

[117] Rema Hammami and Salim Tamari, " Anatomy of Another Rebellion," *Middle East Report,* No. 217, Winter 2000, pp. 5-6.

[118] Amin.org, April 30, 2001.

[119] Hisham Sharabi, " Palestinians 50 Years On," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, May 14-20 1998.

[120] *Palestine-Israel Journal*, Vol. VII, No. 3&4, pp. 32-33.

[121] *Ibid*, p. 9.

[122] For the text of the Palestinian message and supportive Israeli response, see *Ha'aretz*, March 24, 2000.

[123] *Ha'aretz*, April 24, 2000.

[124] For the text of the petition and list of signators, see *Ha'aretz*, November 10, 2000, and *http://arabrights.org.*

[125] Amira Hass, " Without Guns or Stones," *Ha'aretz*, November 17, 2000.

[126] For the text of the petition, see *Ha'aretz*, November 17, 2000, and *Palestine-Israel Journal,* Vol. VII, No3&4, p. 146.

[127] *Ha'aretz*, November 24, 2000.

[128] Press release, May 6, 2001 *(www.gush-shalom.org*).

[129] *The Jerusalem Times, al-Quds, al-Hayat al-Jadida*, July 27, 2001.

[130] *Al-Ayyam*, August 1, 2001.

[131] *Ha'aretz*, July 16, 2001.

[132] *Al-Quds*, July 31, 2001.

[133] Emmanuel Sivan, Assassination in Paris, Assassination in Tel Aviv," in Charles S. Liebman, ed., *Political Murder: The Murder of Rabin and Political Murders in the Middle East* (in Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: `Am `Oved, 1998), pp. 31-32.

[134] Shimon Peres, with Arye Naor, *The New Middle East* (New York: H. Holt, 1993).

[135] See Ben-Ami's interview in *Ha'aretz*, Weekend Magazine ('*Musaf*'), September 14, 2001.

[136] See. e.g., the article by Bir Zeit political scientist`Ali Jarbawi, in the "2020 Vision" Series published in *Ha'aretz*, 7 October 1999, and other newspapers around the region.

[137] *Al-Ahram Weekly*, July 23-29 1998.

[138] Sari Nusseibeh, *Ha'aretz, al-Quds*, September 24, 2001.