Israelis and Palestinians

Seeking, Building and Representing Peace.

A Historical Appraisal

Ed. by *Marcella Simoni*

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Editors

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Issue n. 5 of *Quest* presents ten papers on the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Rather than focusing on its dynamics through its well-known calendar of wars, retaliations and violent confrontations, or through the parallel history of diplomatic negotiations - failed at one point or another with the exception of Camp David (1979) and of the Israel-Jordan peace treaty (1994) – this issue offers a different perspective: it does not look at the so-called hundred years war of the Middle East through the lenses of opposed nationalisms, of questioned borders and of contested land, of ethnicity or of citizenship issues. Instead, it examines and discusses the theoretical standpoints and/or the practical experiments of coexistence devised at different historical moments by some Israeli and/or Palestinian individuals, groups, associations or later non-governmental organizations (NGO) from the 1930s to the present. The approach has been interdisciplinary, as the category of 'conflict' is not a purely historical and political one, but one that also pertains to the individual and the communities involved. In this respect we have tried to put Israeli-Palestinian conflict in perspective, taking into account also its representation, to help deconstruct the idea that the conflict is inevitable, permanent and all-pervasive. In brief, our focus has been on some of the alternatives that from below tried to transform the conditions of a "medium-intensity protracted conflict" (alternated by periods open warfare) that Palestinians and Zionists/Israelis experienced since the times of the British Mandate (1922-1948).[1]

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[1] The Israeli-Palestinian conflict falls into the definition of "medium- intensity protracted conflict" in the categorization of John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace. Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997).

Civil Society

One of the most obvious keys to read the papers collected in this volume is that of civil society activism. Civil society is a much used and abused term. As it is central to this work, I would like to give here a concise theoretical framework. Definitions of civil society usually make reference to two common usages of the term. The first is a spatial one, broad and relatively value-free, intended to cover all those activities, associations, institutions and relations which neither belong primarily to the domestic sphere, nor to that of the state. The second is more narrowly normative, intending to distinguish between 'civil' and 'uncivil' society. Normative content has differed greatly over time, and that which distinguished Adam Ferguson's 'civil society' in late 18th century Scotland is not the same as that of the 'Centre for Civil Society' at the London School of Economics at the beginning of the 21st century. Nonetheless, they have a common point of contact in their insistence that civil society usually consists in a network of associations organized by active citizens who take an interest in public affairs.[2] The strength or weakness of the two great institutions which lie on either side of civil society - the family and the state - obviously exercise a great influence upon it. Over-powerful families and kinship networks can suffocate the possibility of civil society, based as it is on the free meeting of individuals.[3] As for the state, it can either aid civil society, offering it meeting places, resources and encouraging its activities, or else it can work to undermine it, stunt its growth, or simply destroy it.[4] At the end of this introduction, we will encounter one such attempt. I would also like to stress that civil society cannot be understood without emphasizing the transient character of many of its manifestations, and the possible conflict between them.

This framework calls into the picture four factors that most literature on civil society - and on its history - has attributed to it: shared values, horizontal linkages of participation, boundary demarcation and interaction with the state.

   A. **Shared values** These are usually progressive values of reform and/or construction, and lie at the heart of a community's identity. They can reflect collective anxiety about possible disruption.[5] They can emerge

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[2] Helmut K. Anheier, Marlies Glasius, Mary Kaldor, "Introducing global civil society," in *Global Civil Society 2001*, eds., Id, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001): 15.

[3] Marcella Simoni, "Israel and Palestine through Family, Civil Society and State. An Overview," in *The Golden Chain. Family, Civil Society and the State*, eds. Jürgen Nautz, Paul Gisnborg and Tom Nijhuis, (New York, Oxford: Berghan, 2013): 219-239.

[4] Paul Ginsborg, *History of Contemporary Italy, Society and Politics 1943-1988*, (London, New York: Penguin Books, 1990): 141-185.

[5] As in the case of the *yishuv*. See Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness, State, Society and the Military*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001): 91.

out of a process of political and/or armed resistance.[6] They can represent the needs of a group of individuals and/or private institutions engaged in the public sphere.[7] There can also be a conservative model of civil society within which tradition is defended.[8] Among the values upheld by the civil society discussed in this issue, one finds nonviolence, at times conceived as a collective political strategy, at times seen as a personal lifestyle. One also finds, in varying degrees, a refusal of nationalism, of nationalist narratives and of its founding political myths, as well as an emphasis on the recovery and elaboration of individual and collective historical memory. Last but not least, one also finds the recognition of the suffering, history and of the rights of the Other, together with the acknowledgement of the conditions of asymmetry that have characterized the relations between Israelis and Palestinians at least since 1967. In all cases, the values of civil society are forged through horizontal linkages of participation.

B. **Horizontal linkages of participation**: Participation leads to the construction of a network that regulates the organization of the social structure. The network is more than an admixture of various forms of association.[9] It is founded on shared/homogenous values that perpetuate the identity of civil society. Networks can be 'dense' when they are structured in a territorially compact mode. They can be 'loose' when they are spread in society.[10] Looking at Israel alone, there never was a hierarchical relation between groups engaged in peace-building. In the 1980s, 'Peace Now' was possibly the best known group; since then, it was flanked by a myriad of other Israeli, Palestinian and joint organizations, in correspondence with the exponential growth of civil society activism in local and international politics since the end of that

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[6] As in the case of post-1945 Italy for example, or of post-1967 Palestine. Claudio Pavone, *Una guerra civile. Saggio storico sulla moralità nella Resistenza*, (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1991); Dag H. Tuastad, *The social capital of Palestinian refugees*, Paper presented at the Third Mediterrenean Social and Political Research Meeting, EUI, RSC, 2002.

[7] R. D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). For civil society formation and the interests of donors see D. Williams and T. Young, "Governance, the World Bank and Liberal Theory" *Political Studies* 42 (1994): 84-100, 87. See also Peter R. Davis, J. Allister McGregor, "Civil society, international donors and poverty in Bangladesh" *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 38/1 (2000): 47-64; Rob Jenkins, "Mistaking 'governance' for 'politics': foreign aid, democracy, and the construction of civil society," in *Civil Society: History and Possibilities*, eds. Sudipta Kaviraj and Suni Khilnani, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001): 250-268.

[8] As, for just one example, the controversial case of Algeria in all its complexity. See Cathie Lloyd, *Multi-causal Conflict in Algeria: National Identity, Inequality and Political Islam*, Queen Elizabeth House Working Paper Series – QEHWPS104, 2003.

[9] *Civil Society in the Middle East*, ed. Augustus R. Norton, (Leiden New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995): 11.

[10] *Reti: L'analisi di network nelle scienze sociali*, ed. Federica Piselli, (Roma: Donzelli, 1995).

decade.[11] The acknowledgment of the post-1967 asymmetry in the relations between Israelis and Palestinians is in this case a precondition for the creation of those horizontal links that allow Israelis and Palestinians to take part to shared activities in a civil society framework.[12]

C. **Boundary demarcation**: Civil society does not represent the whole of society of a given historical or political context; it only includes that section which shares its values and which is perceived as culturally compatible. As Ernst Gellner has argued, this "modularity of men for each other" (or their "substitutability") is what allows the growth of civil society.[13] Cultural homogeneity – or at least compatibility - demarcates the cultural, social and political space of civil society.[14] Clearly, the values of an Israeli conscientious objector in the 1950s were not identical to those of a Palestinian embracing nonviolence in 1987 or in 2000. The message of dialogue and coexistence promoted in 'Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam'[15] is not exactly the same as the one promoted by the Sulha Peace Project.[16] The kind of education received in the NSWAS schools was – and still is - different from that promoted in the schools of 'Yad b'Yad' or in other educational peace programs. Consider, just for three examples, the cases of the NGO 'Windows-Halonot,' of the 'Israeli Palestinian Center for Research and Information' (IPCRI), or of 'Peace, Research Institute in the Middle East,' (PRIME), the collective author of the famous textbook translated as *The History of the Other* in dozens of other languages.[17]

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[11] See at least, Benjamin Gidron, Michal Bar, Hagai Katz, *The Israeli Third Sector between Welfare State and Civil Society*, (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers , 2004); see also the webpage and the publications of the Ben Gurion University 'Center for Third Sector Research' and the publications therein presented, http://web.bgu.ac.il/Eng/Centers/ICTR accessed 13 June 2013. Shany Payes, *Palestinian NGOs in Israel. The Politics of Civil Society*, (New York: Taurus Academic Studies, 2005).

[12] See Marcella Simoni, "Sul confine. L'attivismo congiunto israelo-palestinese," in *Quaranta anni dopo. Confini, barriere e limiti in Israele e Palestina (1967-2007)*, eds. Arturo Marzano and Marcella Simoni, (Bologna: Il Ponte, 2007): 72-88.

[13] Ernst Gellner, "The importance of being modular," in *Civil Society, Theory, History, Comparison*, ed. John A. Hall, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995): 32-55 and 43-50.

[14] Cultural affinity within a community is also considered one of the main factors for the development of popular sovereignty within democracies. See Oren Yiftachel, "Homeland and Nationalism," *Encyclopedia of Nationalism*, Vol. I, (Boulder CO: Academic Press, 2001): 359-383, 366.

[15] As spelled on their website www.nswas.org, accessed 10 June 2013

[16] http://www.sulha.com, accessed 10 June 2013.

[17] http://www.handinhandk12.org; www.win-peace.org; www.ipcri.org; http://vispo.com/PRIME/, all accessed 10 June 2013. The first edition of the famous textbook *Learning Each Other's Historical Narrative* is now fully available online. See http://vispo.com/PRIME/narrative.pdf, accessed 10 June 2013. For a history of these and other joint Israeli-Palestinian NGOs, their motives behind their foundation, the funding they receive, their programs and their aims see Simoni, "Sul confine."

Some of these cases are analyzed in the papers presented in this issue. There could be hundreds of examples. Even if the values of each of these (and other) organizations do not exactly coincide, they are all compatible in a broader cultural and political framework informed by the values mentioned above. Internal cultural compatibility is essential for civil society, for its internal functioning, for determining its boundaries and to render effective its transformative potential.

D. **Interaction with the state**: Civil society creates its own representative institutions and ultimately represents itself. It however needs a dialectical (and political) counterpart with which it can negotiate its political advancement and its attempt to transform the political reality. As in the Gramscian model - where civil society represents a space of conflict and negotiation where hegemony is contested[18] - the dialectical and political counterpart of civil society is generally embodied by the state.[19]

Shared values, an extended network, cultural homogeneity/compatibility, boundary delimitation and a dialectical counterpart are by no means the only elements which make a society civil. Nor are they the only elements that can turn civil society into a political process, and often into a transformative one. However, they represent the necessary and sufficient conditions for it to be considered as such. The individuals, groups and associations analyzed in the following pages are part of this framework.

Historiography

The second interpretative key for this volume is historiographical. Most of the large historical production on the Arab-Israeli conflict has focused on the various aspects that have made it a Gordian knot, by definition impossible to untie. The focus has thus been on the limitation of land and resources, on the clash between two opposed nationalisms and the long-term influence of their founding myths, the widespread militarization of society, the claims of ethnicity and religion, the history of failed diplomacy, the role of terrorism, the

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[18] Norberto Bobbio, *Saggi su Gramsci*, (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1990).
[19] For an approach which sees the relationship between civil society and state as reciprocal and therefore overall balanced, see Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). For a view which sees the growth of civil society as a result of the weakness of the state see Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore: John Hokpins University Press, 1996). Here civil society is presented as the space where cooperation is at work and where opposition to the state is built. In this sense the model of Linz and Stepan represents a simplified version of that of de Tocqueville where civil society is considered, among other things, also as the antechamber of political society.

ongoing occupation, the pouring of foreign funding as an instrument of conflict perpetuation; all these are just a few examples of a vast academic and cultural production framed in the terms of the inevitability of conflict and of its transmission. This extensive literature did capture how the conflict originated and developed, but it has not been able to escape – in its analysis and proposed narrative - from the paradigm of conflict that the conflict itself has perpetuated and continues to spread.

This issue of *Quest* intends to advance the perspective proposed by Zachary Lockman in *Contending Visions of the Middle East*[20] which raised some of the questions that feature in this volume too: how have different theories, models or modes of interpretation shaped the kind of questions scholars have asked about the Arab-Israeli conflict? (And therefore, what answers they have come up with?) What methods and sources have they used, and what meaning have they given to the results of their inquiries? One of the starting points of this issue is therefore the concept of 'politics of knowledge,' i.e., the idea that the way we acquire and transmit knowledge is essentially political. This issue also connects to a previous work by Zachary Lockman, his seminal *Comrade and Enemies*,[21] when he pointed to the need for a 'relational history,' i.e. a history that by acknowledging how the identity of the parties in conflict is shaped by their interaction, is also able to avoid the paradigm of conflict in its analysis. Thus, this issue looks at some intellectual production, at some theoretical debates and at some case studies that, in the 20th century, aimed peace-building between Israelis and Palestinians. The Authors who have contributed to this volume evaluated these efforts not only for their actual success or failure, but also for their effectiveness in changing the overall narrative from one of conflict to one of dialogue. At least two other collections of essays, edited by Sandy Sufian and Mark LeVine, and by Elisabeth Marteu, preceded this issue on this very same route.[22]

The existing historiography on peace-building in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be divided into three broad categories: first, historical studies on the Israeli peace camp, with a special (and limiting) focus on 'Peace Now'; these also include a large body of autobiographical writings by peace activists.[23] Second, a

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[20] Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East. The History and Politics of Orientalism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[21] Id., *Comrades and Enemies. Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine 1906-1948*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996).
[22] *Reapproaching Borders. New Persepctives on the Study of Israel-Palestine*, eds. Sandy Sufian, Mark LeVine, (Lanham, Bourled, New York: Rowman & Littlefiled Publishers, 2007); *Civil Organizations and Protest Movements in Israel. Mobilization around the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, ed. Elisabeth Marteu, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009).
[23] David Hall- Cathala, *The Peace Movement in Israel 1967-1987* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990); Mordechai Bar-On, *In Pursuit of Peace: a History of the Israeli Peace Movement* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996), Tzaly Reshef, *Peace Now: from the Officers' Letter to Peace Now* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1996), (Hebrew); Norell Magnus, *Democracy and Dissent: the*

vast production of studies on the post-1993 situation, when civil society was entrusted with the task of conflict transformation, an effort at peace-building from below meant to integrate the peace-making from above which governments had signed in Oslo. This kind of literature is very often based on theoretical models drawn from the political sciences, as in the works of John P. Lederach and Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, just to quote two examples.[24] An important influence is that of Johan Galtung who established peace studies as a discipline and as a method and whose bibliography is extensive.[25] Third, a number of studies which, by using a comparative perspective with other contexts where ethnic and/or religious conflict has been/is rife, aimed at deconstructing the uniqueness often attributed to the Israeli-Palestinian case.[26]

Case of the Israeli Peace Movement Peace Now (London: Frank Cass, 1998); for the numerous publications of Tamar Hermann on 'Peace Now' and the Israel peace movement see http://www.openu.ac.il/Personal_sites/tamar-hermannE.html#a05, accessed 15 June 2013. At the end of the decade into the following one Michael Feige broadened the perspective, contextualizing the rise of left- and right- wing civil society grassroots activism in a more complex political picture, with two well-known articles and a monograph. Michael Feige, "Peace Now and the Legitimation Crisis of 'Civil Militarism'" *Israel Studies* 3/1 (1998): 85-111; Id., "Rescuing the Person from the Symbol: 'Peace Now' and the Ironies of Modern Myth," *History and Memory* 11/1 (1999): 141-168; Id., *One Space, Two Places. Gush Emunim, Peace Now and the Construction of Israeli Space,* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2002), (Hebrew). For some examples of texts written by activists who responded to the urge of making sense of their involvement in the peace camp by writing about their experiences see Bassam Abu-Sharif and Uzi Mahnaimi, *Best of Enemies: the Memoirs of Bassam Abu-Sharif and Uzi Mahnaimi* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1995). Michel Warschawski, *À contre-choeur: les voix dissidentes en Israël,* (Paris: Textuel, 2003); *Creating a Culture of Peace*, eds. Gershon Baskin and Zakaria al-Qaq, (Jerusalem: IPCRI, Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information, 1999). *Live from Palestine: International and Palestinian Direct Action against the Israeli Occupation*, eds. Nancy Stohlman and Laurieann Aladin (Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, 2003); *Tears in the Holy Land. Voices from Israel and Palestine*, eds. Deanna Armbruster and Michael Emery, (Portland: Arnica Publishing, 2004). We find the same need to offer a testimony among politicians and diplomats, for instance Shlomo Ben-Ami and Menachem Klein, Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Quel avenir pour Israël?* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2001). See Menachem Klein, *A Possible Peace between Israel and Palestine: an Insiders' Account of the Geneva Initiative*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

[24] *Building peace* and Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, *Israel and the Peace Process, 1977-1982: in Search of Legitimacy for Peace* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

[25] See *Johan Galtung: Bibliography, 1951-90*, ed. Magne Barth, (Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, 1990). See also Johan Galtung, *Essays in Peace Research*, (Copenhagen : Ejlers, 1975); Id., *Peace and World Structure*, (Copenhagen : Ejlers, 1980); Id., *There are Alternatives! Four Roads to Peace and Security*, (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1984); Id., *Choose Peace. A Dialogue between Johan Galtung and Daisaku Ikeda*, (London and Chicago: Pluto Press, 1995); Id., *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996); Id., *Transcend and Transform : an Introduction to Conflict Work*, (Bolder, CO, Paradigm, 2004).

[26] The most frequent comparisons are with Northern Ireland and South Africa. While up to 2000, the comparative perspective emphasized factors of conflict, the new century delivered a number of works on comparative peace-building. Roy Uprichard, *The Cycle of Conflict in Israel and Northern Ireland,* (Belfast: Dept. of Politics, Queen's University of Belfast, 1990); Harman Akenson, *God's Peoples. Covenant and Land in South Africa, Israel, and Ulster,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); Thomas G. Mitchell, *Native vs. Settler. Ethnic Conflict in Israel/Palestine, Northern Ireland, and South Africa,* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), belong to the first group. Among the second, Colin Knox, *Peace Building in Northern Ireland, Israel and South Africa.*

As mentioned above, the aim of this issue is different; we intend to show the existence of another narrative, a 'minority report,' so to speak, which challenges the generally accepted discourse on the Middle East in terms of conflict alone. As we shall see below, in the past twenty years, such a representation has been one of the cornerstones of a mainstream narrative that turned the political and historiographical discourse on the Middle East *in loco* and abroad into a "single thought" or, according to the definition of Michel Foucault, into a "regime of truth." It is to this last point that I now turn.

The single thought

The aim of this issue is thus not only to look at the history of peace-building in Israel and in the oPt through the prism of civil society, or to re-insert bottom up activism into the historiography on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There is also a critical aim, which is ultimately political. In particular, the case-studies seen here – that together cover a long-term period, from the 1930s to the present – attest to the existence of pieces of history that seem to have vanished from the standard (hegemonic) narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

While in the 1990s the notion of hegemony, its implications and the ways in which it was displayed, were extensively debated in the academia,[27] this question appeared in a different guise in 1995, when journalist Ignatio Ramonet published an article on *Le Monde Diplomatique* entitled *La pensée unique*. He opened his piece with very strong words:

> Stuck. In contemporary democracies, more and more free citizens feel stuck, blocked by a sort of vicious doctrine that, imperceptibly envelopes, inhibits, paralyzes, and eventually suffocates all rebel

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Transition, Transformation and Reconciliation (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); *Mobilizing for Peace: Conflict Resolution in Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine, and South Africa,* eds. Benjamin Gidron et al., (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Guy Ben-Porat, *The Failure of the Middle East Peace Process? A Comparative Analysis of Peace Implementation in Israel/Palestine, Northern Ireland and South Africa,* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[27] The notion of hegemony, its relation with power on the one hand, and with subalternity on the other, as well as the idea of a hegemonic narrative, have been discussed at length both in the theory and through numerous case studies. Here is a very brief list of titles dealing with the subject; Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*, (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1998); Benedetto Fontana, "The democratic philosopher: Rhetoric as Hegemony in Gramsci" *Italian Culture* 23 (2005): 97-123; Alberto Moreiras, "A Thinking Relationship: The End of Subalternity. Notes on Hegemony, Contingency, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left" *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101/1 (2002): 97-131; *Challenging Hegemony: Social Movements and the Quest for a New Humanism in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, ed. Nigel Gibson, (Trenton, NJ and Asmara: Africa World Press, 2006).

reasoning. This doctrine is the single thought, the only authorized by an invisible and omnipresent opinion police.[28]

Ramonet described the single thought as a catechism of neoliberal economic principles supported by major economic and financial institutions, legitimized by mainstream economic press, and propagated by university and research centers. This article referred to Europe's post-1989 transformation into a continent with a single currency, whose leading institutions gave scarce, if any, attention to social and labor policies in support of unification, in part as a result of the recent collapse of socialist ideals.

Is this framework of any relevance to the Israeli-Palestinian context? Is there any connection between the development of such a single thought in Europe in the mid-1990s, as Ramonet describes it, and the post-Oslo context in Israel and the oPt?

Discussing the post-Oslo years, contemporary historiography described the mid-1990s in optimistic and hopeful terms.[29] However, as it is well known, this period generated one of the most violent phases that the conflict had known until then; the outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000 brought suicide bombers to Israel on the one hand, and led to the reoccupation of entire Palestinian areas previously evacuated by the IDF. "Rebel reasoning" is maybe too much to ask for in the midst of such violent, traumatic and threatening times for both Israelis and Palestinians. Still, the essays presented in this volume (and, as mentioned above, elsewhere too), show a thread – a continuity - of alternative thought and action – theoretical, practical and political - that kept running even during the bleakest times of the conflict, indeed the times that helped the emergence of the 'single thought'.

This consolidated around the themes of fear and security, control and technology, military threats and military reactions, strength and training, closure and separation. Indeed, these are some of the keywords that historiography has also used to describe this period, mainly in reference Israeli society and state.[30] As for Palestinian society and politics, the dominant

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[28] Ignacio Ramonet, "La pensée unique" *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Archives, Janvier 1995, http://archive.wikiwix.com/cache/?url=http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/1995/01/RAMONET/1144&title=«%C2%A0La%20pensée%20unique%C2%A0», accessed 16 June 2013. See also Ignacio Ramonet, *The Geopolitics of Chaos. Internationalization, Cyberculture & Political Chaos,* (New York: Algora Publishing, 1998).

[29] See for instance Nathan Brown, *Palestinian Politics after the Oslo Accords. Resuming Arab Palestine* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2003) and Ben-Porat, *The Failure of the Middle East Peace Process?*

[30] Just for four examples among the many possible, see Sylvain Cypel, *Walled. Israeli Society at an Impasse* (New York: Other Press, 2006) esp. from ch. 10; Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land. Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, (London, New York: Verso, 2007); *The Power of Inclusive Exclusion. Anatomy of Israeli Rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*, eds. Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni and Sari Hanafi (New York: Zone Books, 2009); Juliana Ochs, *Security and Suspicion. An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Israel*, (Philadelphia, Oxford: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

thought at the times precluded any open condemnation of violence against the Other, with some exceptions, as discussed in the following pages. One of the ways the single thought finds an expression in the oPt today is the consistent refusal of research centers, departments and even individuals to participate to any initiative that sees the presence/participation of an Israeli counterpart.

Other factors might have helped the gradual consolidation of the single thought in Israel in the mid-1990s. In 1996 Benjamin Netanyahu won the country's first direct election for prime minister on a 'Likud'-'Gesher'-'Tzomet' ticket. The 'National Religious Party,' 'Yisrael B'Alyiah,' 'United Torah Judaism' and 'The Third Way' supported his government. As it is well known, under this leadership, Israel embraced a neoliberal socio-economic and political stand, a foreign policy and a security doctrine that, at the turn of the century, developed within a neo-conservative political framework.[31] In part for economic reasons, in part for the ways in which security concerns were addressed in Israel, the feeling of general insecurity and precariousness that Ramonet had seen developing in Europe started to spread in Israel too.[32] In turn, these generated a widespread demand for more military or strategic security, the construction of the separation barrier being a case in point. The outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000 - and the dramatic four years that followed – helped nurture and fulfill some of the assumptions of that approach.

By gradually asserting itself as dominant, the single thought turned into a single narrative that excluded other narratives – some of which are examined in the pages that follow - and obscured their political potential, to the extent of marginalizing, if not erasing, them from the public debate, cultural or otherwise. The single thought functions both as events unfold, and retroactively, causing the fall of segments of history that could still carry some transformative potential and relevance even decades after.[33] According to Michel Foucault, this is the process that ultimately leads to the construction of a "regime of truth," i.e. a historically specific mechanism producing discourses which function as true in particular times and places. Zachary Lockman

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[31] See Uri Ram, *The Globalization of Israel: McWorld in Tel-Aviv, Jihad in Jerusalem*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2008). Guy Ben-Porat, "Netanyahu's Second Coming: A Neoconservative Policy Paradigm?" *Israel Studies* 10/3 (2005): 225-245 and Dani Flic, *Political Right in Israel: Different Faces of Jewish Populism*, (Florence KY: Routledge, 2009). See also Myron Joel Aronoff, "The Americanization of Israeli Politics and Realignment of the Party System" *Israel Studies* 5/1 (2000): 92-127.

[32] This is also connected to the lack of political claims and contents of the protest movement that occupied the squares and the parks of Tel Aviv in the Summer of 2011. See Yoel Marcus, "The comatose state: why Israel needs a Tahrir Square," *Haaretz*, 4 July 2013 and Daniel Monterescu and Noa Shaindlinger, "Situational Radicalism: The Israeli "Arab Spring" and the (Un)Making of the Rebel City" *Constellations* 20/2 (2013): 1-25

[33] Consider Yeshayahu Leibowitz; for a recent view on his thought, politics and life see the documentary by Uri Rosenwaks and Rinat Klein, *Leibowitz: Faith, Country and Man*, 2013.

addressed the complexities of such constructions by looking at how the convergence of certain social, economic and political interests at the turn of the 21ˢᵗ century helped the emergence of a single thought – and indeed of a "regime of truth" - in reference to Middle Eastern studies in the US.[34]

The ten essays presented here show that, historically, there never was a single thought among Israelis and Palestinians; on the contrary, they tell of the liveliness, endurance and constant presence of civil society initiatives, bottom-up experiments and attempts to build dialogue and coexistence far away from the spotlight of media and of the failed attempts of diplomacy.[35] At the same time, they also confirm that there exists a single thought today, that tries to thwart the efforts of civil society in various ways: through legislation, funding cuts, individual expulsion and through cultural policies choices.

This could be in itself the subject of research; for reasons of space and opportunity, I will just mention a few examples: on a political level, passing the bill (still under discussion) proposed by MKs Ofir Akunis and Faina Kirshenbaum during the 18ᵗʰ Knesset, and recently revived by MKs Ayelet Shaked and Robert Ilatov, would imply the dismantling of that network of NGOs – local and international - that represent the most vibrant part of the civil society that operates today between Israel and the oPt.[36] More practically, Israeli and Palestinian activists are more and more frequently detained/harassed/hindered; consider what happened to Israeli activists of NGO 'Zochrot' for distributing - on Israel's independence day - leaflets listing

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[34] Zachary Lockman, "Critique from the Right. The Neo-conservative Assault on Middle East Studies" *CR: The New Centennial Review* 5/1 (2005): 63-110.

[35] Many such attempts have been documented in movies and documentaries. See for example Ronit Avni, *Encounter Point*, 2006; Julia Bacha, *Budrus*, 2009; Julia Baha and Rebekah Wingert-Jabi, *My neighbourhood*, 2012; Rebekah Wingert-Jabi, *Homefront. Portraits from Sheikh Jarrah*, 2012; see also http://www.ted.com/talks/julia_bacha.html and the website of 'Just Vision' for portraits of Israeli and Palestinian leaders in the peace camp, www.justvision.org, accessed 12 June 2013. See also the numerous films and documentaries featured on the Ruth Diskin Films catalogue, http://www.ruthfilms.com/films/docs/politics-and-conflict.html accessed 12 June 2013.

[36] This second version of the bill would forbid an NGO from receiving more than NIS 20,000 from "foreign entities" if that organization, its members, employees or anyone related to it does one of the following explicitly or implicitly: calls on Israeli soldiers to stand trial in international courts, calls for a boycott of Israel or its citizens, denies Israel's right to exist as a Jewish and democratic state, or incites racism (illegal) or calls for an armed struggle against Israel (illegal). Furthermore, the "softened" bill includes the clause that makes an NGO liable for the "sins" of its members and employees. The bill's previous version treated each NGO as a corporation, while this time an NGO would be in violation if just one member, manager or employee were found doing something that explicitly or implicitly contradicted the thought police's rules. See Jonathan Lis, "Knesset revives attempt to restrict foreign funding of left-wing NGOs," *Haaretz*, 10 July 2013; [n.a.], "Ignorant of democracy, extreme right is after NGOs once again," *Haaretz*, 15 July 2013; Amir Fuchs, "The return of McCarthyism - in Israel," *Haaretz*, 15 July 2013.

the names of Palestinian villages evacuated and/or destroyed in 1948;[37] or to those protesting settlement in Sheikh Jarrah.[38] On a different plain, NGOs like 'Machsom Watch,' 'Zochrot,' 'Breaking the Silence' and others face increased logistical and political hindrances when they organize tours in the West Bank, in Hebron, along the Separation Barrier, or on former Palestinian villages.[39] As a final example, consider the recent restrictions imposed on European aid agencies in response to the EU's new guidelines blocking scientific and financial cooperation with Israeli institutions linked to the settlements.[40] Dismissing the history of those who, apparently, always remained on the wrong side, is yet another means to make the single thought advance.

Organization of the volume – From the call for papers to the issue

This volume presents ten essays that the board of *Quest* and the editor have selected among the many received following an international call for papers entitled *Israelis and Palestinians seeking, building and acting peace*. This was first circulated in January 2012 and it found an echo in the Italian daily newspaper «Corriere della Sera» a few months later.[41]
The ten essays included here discuss different aspects of the history of peace-building in Israel and among Palestinians, and all relate one to the other. They certainly do not exhaust the many, manifold and quite exciting research possibilities that exist in this field. The volume is organized as follows: the first three essays (Daniele, Rioli, Pouzol) take a long-term perspective: they start their examination in, or before, 1948 and carry it on to the present through various historical turning points. The five essays that follow (Simoni, Calabrese, Simons, Norman, Dyer) focus on more specific case studies on the history or the experience of either Israelis or Palestinians. The last two essays (Michel, Nets) have been grouped together at the end of the volume for three reasons: because they once again return to a perspective that includes Israelis and Palestinians; because they both deal with issues of representation; and because both essays maintain a twofold frame of reference, national/local and international.

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[37] Jack Khoury, "Israeli left-wing activists held indoors by police during Independence Day event," *Haaretz*, 26 April 2012. See http://zochrot.org/en, accessed 15 June 2013.
[38] Nir Hasson, "15 arrested protesting Jewish takeover of East Jerusalem," *Haaretz*, 22 January 2010; Orly Noy, "Beware of mayors with 'new policies,'" *Haaretz*, 22 January 2010; Nir Hasson, "Author David Grossman: Settlers abuse Palestinians," *Haaretz*, 29 January 2010.
[39] Anat Rosenberg, "Tourist tip #72 / Alternative tours," *Haaretz*, 22 October 2012.
[40] [n.a.], "A childish retort to the Europeans," *Haaretz*, 29 July 2013.
[41] The call is available at https://www.facebook.com/notes/quest-issues-in-contemporary-jewish-history/call-for-papers-israelis-and-palestinians-seeking-building-and-acting-peace/247345022001210, accessed 14 June 2013; Stefano Jesurum, "Israeliani e palestinesi visti da "Quest." Un nuovo modo di capire l'altro," *Corriere della Sera*, 6 Aprile 2012.

Part I

Giulia Daniele examines from a critical point of view some prominent intellectual debates and historic examples that challenged a reality of conflict with the Other. In the first part of her essay, she analyses some aspects of the thought of Martin Buber, Gershom Scholem, Hannah Arendt and of Edward Said. Daniele presents their ideas on nationalism, binationalism and coexistence as fertile ground that generated in time an overall political perspective that allowed various political initiatives in later years. These could be joint strikes or demonstrations, the foundation of joint NGOs or more lasting experiences like 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam' ('oasis of peace') established by Father Bruno Hussar in 1969. Indeed, the second essay, by Maria Chiara Rioli, focuses specifically on 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam'. This essay starts with an analysis of the personal, religious and political biography of Bruno Hussar and then analyzes the transformations of his creature, the 'oasis of peace,' the place where Hussar and his group experimented a direct form of coexistence between Jews, Christians and Muslims in Israel; the history of 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam' *per se* is not unknown, but Rioli based her work on new and hitherto unpublished primary sources. The final parts of her work consider the political strives that marked the more recent history of that community. The third essay by Valérie Pouzol analyzes women's involvement in peace activism from 1948 to the present. The article shows how Israeli and Palestinian women played a vital role in building, and often in restoring, dialogue, often organizing away from the spotlight. This essay discusses one of the most durable legacies from women's peace activism: the formulation of new political discourses which defined peace in terms of a global concept that links gender and national oppression, and thus creates an alternative discourse strongly opposed to violent and militarist options.

Part II

The essays that follow are ordered chronologically and all deal with peace-building from below from various perspectives on the background of the region's main turning points. The fourth essay by Marcella Simoni focuses on the 1950s, one of Israel's most militaristic decades, to draw a social and political portrait of the first group of war resisters and of their association, 'War Resisters International – Israel Section' (est. 1947 as an affiliate of War Resisters' International, WRI, est. 1921). The essay examines the implications of being a conscientious objection in Israel in the 1950s in terms of world-view, political stand, international contacts, as well as in terms of the military and social consequences of this choice. From the fifth essay onwards, the historical turning points specifically referred to are 1967, the first (1987) and the second Intifada (2000). Essay n. 5 by Cristiana Calabrese and essay n. 6 by Jon Simons should be mentioned together, at least considering the well known

conceptual framework elaborated by Michael Feige that discusses how the Israeli political space of the 1970s was contended by two actors, 'Gush Emunim' and 'Peace Now.'[42] While the essay by Jon Simons deals with 'Peace Now,' that of Cristiana Calabrese inserts a new actor in the field, i.e. the Jewish orthodox peace movements that were established to monitor and oppose 'Gush Emunim.' Among them, 'Oz Ve Shalom,' 'Netivot Shalom,' 'Meimad,' 'Shomrei Mishpat/Rabbis for Human Rights' and 'Eretz Shalom,' all founded between 1975 and 1988. They did not have the same political relevance of 'Peace Now' and 'Gush Emunim;' still, they are examined here in a cohesive way that presents them as a possible third presence in Israeli public space at the time. The sixth essay by Jon Simons focuses on the activism of 'Peace Now' in the period 1987-1993. In particular, Simons conceptualized the advocacy by 'Peace Now' as public relations activity that promotes images of peace, communicating its ideas by means of slogans in the form of material signs which were figured graphically in print media, on posters, flyers, placards and stickers. Relying on these and other sources, the essay discusses some of the contradictions and ambiguities of the messages that 'Peace Now' transmitted through images. Maintaining a historical perspective through its emphasis on memory, essay n. 7 brings us closer to the present. Relying on field work and on a vast array of interviews conducted during the second Intifada, Julie Norman discusses to what extent did first Intifada memories and experiences influence nonviolent activism in the second Intifada. As it is well known, historiography has conceptualized the first Intifada largely as a non violent resistance movement,[43] but this essay discusses the limitations of using memory for mobilization in the face of new challenges, arguing that nostalgia for past eras can be a double-edged sword in motivating participation in later attempts at nonviolent struggle. Essay n. 8 by Erin Dyer analyses the specific case study of the 'Holy Land Trust' (est. 1998) an NGO that serves to empower the Palestinian community in Bethlehem through a commitment to the principles of nonviolence, and to mobilize the local community, regardless of religion, gender, or political affiliation, to resist oppression in all forms, so as to build a model for the future based on justice, equality, and respect. Both the essays by Norman and by Dyer make extensive reference to the existing literature of nonviolent action, in particular to the works of Gene Sharp.

Part III

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[42] Feige, *One Space, Two Places*. See also Ehud Sprinzak, *Fundamentalism, Terrorism and Democracy: the case of Gush Emunim Underground*, see http://www.webcitation.org/query?url=http://www.geocities.com/alabasters_archive/gush_ underground.html&date=2009-10-25+12:14:47, accessed 16 June 2013.

[43] Mary Elizabeth King, *A Quiet Revolution: The First Palestinian Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance*, (New York: Nation Books, 2007) and Souad Dajani, "Nonviolent Resistance in the Occupied Territories: A Critical Reevaluation," in *Nonviolent Social Movements*, eds. Stephen Zunes, Lester R. Kurtz, and Sarah Beth Asher, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999): 52-74, 58. See also Andrew Rigby, *Living the Intifada*, (London: Zed, 1991) and Wendy Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

The two final essays discuss the potential of peace building through issues of representation, looking at both local and international influence, although in very different ways: essay n. 9 by Chantal Catherine Michel looks at artistic and creative representation through a small, but constantly expanding sub-genre: comics and graphic novels about the Arab-Israeli conflict. Michel discusses the value of comics as educational and peace-building tools, analyzing the works on the conflict by both local and international authors; she focuses more in depth on the comics by Israeli and Palestinian authors Uri Fink, Galit and Gilad Seliktar, and Samir Harb. This essay shows how comics can, under the condition that the concerned groups can access them, contribute to peace building. Rafi Nets-Zehngut, the author of the tenth and final essay, also deals with issues of representation, although of a different kind. His essay discusses the apparent contradiction between the rough times on both the political and military levels of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the summer of 2000 and the flourishing of one type of collaboration between the two parties, i.e. addressing the historical narratives of the conflict. Nets-Zehngut examines for the first time nine such collaborations of Palestinians and Israeli-Jews, conducted both *in loco* and abroad, amongst themselves and with international partners. This essay on narratives has been placed at the end of this issue for two reasons: first, because it explicitly remarks the importance of bottom-up initiatives, which are by their very nature less conservative than institutional projects, a theme which runs through the whole volume. Second, because one of the keys for a more hopeful future lays indeed in the deconstruction of national narratives, and of the political myths that support them. Their filtering down from academia into public opinion and consciousness represents one of the true antidotes to the spreading of the single thought.

Firenze, 20 July 2013.

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Challenging National Narratives in Palestine/Israel: Interconnections between Past and Present

by *Giulia Daniele*

Abstract

Taking account of the original meaning of 'inextricability' among Arabs and Jews, Palestinians and Israelis, the paper aims at exploring whether joint Palestinian and Israeli Jewish viewpoints should be considered as a feasible scenario. With the purpose of deconstructing conventional approaches towards resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the leitmotiv of the study is centered on the critical examination of the most prominent intellectual debates and historic examples that have challenged a daily reality developed around fear and hostility directed against the so-called Other. In this way, whilst recognizing a number of failures experienced by the majority of joint initiatives, I suggest how this type of political perspective has made it possible for potentially useful initiatives to emerge within the worsening context of military occupation and conflicting narratives.

- Introduction
- Alternative Prospects from Jewish and Palestinian Intellectual Debates

   A. *The Earliest Ideas of 'Binationalism'*
   B. *Martin Buber's Commitment to a Joint Arab-Jewish Future*
   C. *Hannah Arendt and a Shared Scenario between Jews and Palestinians*
   D. *Edward W. Said's Request for 'Coexistence' as the Only Alternative*

- Shared Daily Realities: *Pre* 1948

   A. *Workers' Joint Struggles under the British Mandate*
   B. *The Influence of the Communist Party on Joint Politics*

- 'Binationalism' *Post* 1948 and its implications

   A. *'Coexistence' in Palestine/Israel: What Does It Mean?*
   B. *The Case of 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam'*

- Current Status of Joint Initiatives: Overcoming the Demise of the Oslo Accords
- Conclusion

Introduction

With the purpose of deconstructing the mainstream approaches related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the core of the paper is concerned with the increasing influence of the conflicting national narrative identities, and in particular on the criticism directed against the Zionist one. Although the emergence of more and more boundaries among the contrasting ethno-national communities who live in the territory of Palestine/Israel has been observed, I aim nevertheless at examining alternative pathways, which have the potential to be applicable both at the theoretical level and in terms of practical activities on the ground. It is via these pathways that it becomes possible to gain a better understanding of the original meaning of 'inextricability', following Edward Said's belief in the importance of close historic Arab-Jewish interrelations.

Within such a deeply engrained conflict,[1] worsened by a long-lasting military occupation, Palestinian and Israeli Jewish histories have constituted mutually exclusive as well as closely interconnected narratives in which each side has provided comprehensive explanations and justifications for collective group actions, including violence towards the so-called Other.[2] Taking into account this theoretical framework and focusing mainly on the writings of Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt, and on Edward Said's literature, I will consider some deep-rooted examples of shared politics between Palestinian Arabs and Jews, examples which date both from before and after the establishment of the state of Israel. I will commence with the most significant working-class struggles led by Palestinian Arab and Jewish workers during the British Mandate, as well as I will question 1948's consequences, examining the case of the village of 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam.'[3] I will attempt to suggest a thread which runs between a theoretical examination such as this and the historical cases I will take into consideration, in order to underline some diverse political alternatives of Jewish-Palestinian cooperation and shared peace-building. In the final part of the paper, I will discuss the present

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[1] I use the term 'settled conflict' since I believe the issue of 'settler colonialism' in

[2] On deconstructing juxtaposed narratives as a peace-building tool, see the essay by Rafi Nets in this volume, pp. 212-232.

[3] Unless spelled differently in the sources used, the editor has opted for the spelling 'Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam,' as it appears in http://nswas.org, accessed 28 June 2013.

By using what has been defined as the 'relational history approach' in order to tell the collective history of people and social groups in Palestine, the historian Zachary Lockman has dealt with the necessity of overcoming the dual paradigm of 'Jews against Arabs' in "Railway Workers and Relational History: Arabs and Jews in British-Ruled Palestine" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 35/3 (1993): 601-627. The work of Zachary Lockman has reconsidered the whole complexity of the Palestinian question, trying to uncover its historical roots starting with the late Ottoman era. Lockman's work will be referred to again in the central part of this paper.

deadlock status of the majority of Palestinian-Israeli joint projects that seem to have become entrapped within an ongoing decline in the last decade, and ask whether some of the examples of cooperation and peace building I have highlighted can offer alternative paths towards conflict resolution.

Alternative Prospects from Jewish and Palestinian Intellectual Debates

Commencing in the 1920s under the British Mandate, a few Jewish academics and thinkers started to express a critical viewpoint on the preliminary steps of the Zionist political movement,[4] and more specifically concerning the validity of its claim to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. In the following pages, a historical-philosophical digression will focus on the earliest published works that attempted to question the centrality of national narrative identities for future egalitarian relationships between Jews and Palestinian Arabs. In addition, I will illustrate the political proposal suggested by the leading Palestinian intellectual Edward W. Said in relation to the foundation of a binational Israeli-Palestinian state.

Though proposing singular points of view and experiencing different historical events, the relevant voices I have decided to take into consideration have all expounded critical frameworks regarding this central issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In stating this I have in mind not simply their common emphasis on the importance of creating a broader consciousness on the question of Palestine, but also their anti-essentialism in extending and deepening their positions.

A. The Earliest Ideas of 'Binationalism'

In the spring of 1925 a number of Jewish intellectuals, who originated mostly from Central European countries, began to express the conviction that historic Palestine belonged to all the people who wanted to live there, and to advocate the creation of a multinational state. One group expressing such views founded 'Brit Shalom' (Covenant of Peace),[5] as an intellectual circle rather than a

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[4] On Zionism and its initial steps, two main books, *Auto-Emancipation* (1882) by Leo Pinsker and *The Jewish State* (1896) by Theodore Herzl, were considered to constitute the founding pillars of the idea of Zion and the so-called 'Promised Land,' concerning the special relationship between the Jewish people and the land of Palestine. Among the most contemporary literature related to such issues, see Georges Bensoussan, *Une histoire intellectuelle et politique du sionisme,* (Paris: Éditions Fayard, 2002).

[5] For an English-language bibliography regarding the historical and political prospects of 'Brit Shalom' see the occasional papers entitled "The Statutes of Brit Shalom" *Jewish-Arab Affairs*, (Jerusalem: Brit Shalom Society, 1931) and "Memorandum on an Arab Policy for the Jewish Agency" *Jewish-Arab Affairs* (Jerusalem, Brit Shalom Society: 1930). In addition, in relation to 'Brit Shalom''s major policy positions, refer to the following contributions: Susan Hattis Rolef, *The Bi-national Idea in Palestine During Mandatory Times*, (Haifa: Shikmona, 1970); Hagit Lavsky, *German Zionists and the Emergence of Brit Shalom* in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, eds. Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira, (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 648-670; Shalom Matzabi, *Between Zionism and Judaism: The Radical Circle in Brit Shalom, 1925-1933*, (Boston and Leiden:

political party, and this circle included the head of the Palestinian branch of the 'Zionist World Organization' Arthur Ruppin, the historian of the Kabala Gershom Scholem[6] (considered to be a leading proponent of the 'binational' approach, together with the philosopher Hugo Bergman), the historian Hans Kohn, the agronomist Chaim Kalvarisky, and the philosopher and pedagogue Ernst Simon. The group was joined later by the philosopher Martin Buber, contributing to the disparate nature of the backgrounds of the members of this group, which ranged from veteran Jewish residents of Palestine to *Mizrahi* Jews and liberal Zionists.

In opposition to the design of a Jewish state in Palestine proposed by the vast majority of the Zionist movement, 'Brit Shalom' underlined that the real achievement of Zionism[7] was to develop a fair relationship and mutual recognition between the two peoples.[8] Although they emphasized the key position of the Jewish-Arab question in political as well as moral terms, this passionate voice in support of mutual cooperation in Palestine has never been regarded as leading among those who are in opposition to the traditional Zionist politics and working towards a unitary state for all its citizens. One deficiency of this group was its failure to involve enough Palestinian partners in their common struggle. However, they did initiate a few direct personal relationships with some Arab leaders, such as Jamal Husayni, Auni Abdul-Hadi and Mussa Alami, and in addition they recruited Fawzi al-Husayni.[9] On the other hand, they failed to consider the increasing role of the national aspirations of the Jewish and the Palestinian populations at that time.

A few years later, in 1942, a further initiative called 'Ihud' (Union) emerged, sharing the aim of promoting a socio-political and cultural reconciliation for a political project founded on the binational idea.[10] It included people belonging

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Brill, 2002); Yfaat Weiss, "Ethnonationalism and Zionist Binationalism" *Jewish Social Studies* 11/1 (2004): 93-117.

[6] Gershom Scholem was one of the foremost representatives of the German-Jewish intellectuals who created an alternative to Herzlian Zionism by advocating complete civic equality between Jews and Arabs in a binational state in which both peoples would enjoy equal political, civil and social rights. In common with other members, Scholem believed Jews needed the land, but Eretz Israel should not tie to particular political boundaries or institutions. In detail, see Walter Benjamin, Gershom Scholem, *Briefwechsel* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1980).

[7] A few Jewish thinkers - such as the ones I will deal with in the following pages - were critical of mainstream Zionism. Whilst suggesting different viewpoints and resolution proposals, their attitudes can be described in terms of a humanistic vision addressing alternative forms of society in Palestine. Although such perspectives did not triumph, they offered challenging debates within Zionism itself.

[8] Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, *Exil et Souveraineté: Judaisme, Sionisme et Pensée Binationale*, (Paris: La Fabrique, 2007), 175-183.

[9] Ilan Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 115.

[10] In its declaration published on the 3rd September 1942, 'Ihud' stated its binationalist ideas in order to refute all misconceptions about itself and to cooperate with other organizations such as the 'League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement.' For information about 'Ihud' and its political proposals see Norman Bentwich, *For Zion's Sake: a Biography of Judah L. Magnes, the First*

to different parties, independents and academics (some of them who were already involved in 'Brit Shalom') such as Martin Buber, Chaim Kalvarisky, Judah L. Magnes, Moshe Smilansky and Henrietta Szold, who was also the founder of the 'American Women's Zionist Organization' called 'Hadassah.'

After more than eighty years, including the period of disillusionment with the Oslo process, a small group of activists have recently re-launched a similar political project under the banner 'Brit Shalom 2012.' Whilst proposing a six-point plan to create a regional confederation in order to allow full political and individual rights to all citizens, they have criticized both the original 'Brit Shalom' and 'Ihud' as failing to take into account the geopolitical reality along with the national aspirations of both peoples.[11]

B. *Martin Buber's Commitment to a Joint Arab-Jewish Future*

The binational statement was at the centre the political approach of 'Ihud', which was based on the idea of an inclusive state, and took into consideration the need for a process of recognition that was necessary in order for Jews to live with the Palestinian Arab population who had inhabited that land for hundreds of years.[12] The core of this challenge was firstly analyzed by one the most prominent intellectuals of the association, Martin Buber, who through all his political thought proposed two critical foundations necessary for an active cooperation between the two peoples. The first of these dealt with their historical common origins, languages and traditions which both come from their Semitic lineage, whilst the latter focused on their strong relationship to their homeland.[13]

Buber examined the prospect for the establishment of a new Jewish society in Palestine, acting as a bridge between Western and Eastern Jewish experiences, so that

> the return to Eretz Israel, which is to take place in the form of an ever-increasing immigration, is not intended to encroach upon the rights of

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Chancellor and First President of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1954); *Palestine, a Bi-national State*, eds. Martin Buber, Judah L. Magnes, Moshe Smilansky, (New York: Association of Palestine, 1946); *Towards Union in Palestine: Essays on Zionism and Jewish-Arab Cooperation*, eds. Martin Buber, Judah L. Magnes, Ernst Simon, (Jerusalem: IHUD Association, 1947); *Dissenter in Zion*, ed. Arthur A. Goren, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1982); Susan Hattis Rolef, *The Bi-national Idea in Palestine during Mandatory Times*; *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs*, ed. Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).

[11] Elhanan Miller, "What Would Buber, Scholem and Arendt Say Today?," *Times of Israel*, July 27, 2012, http://www.timesofisrael.com/what-would-buber-scholem-and-arendt-say-today/ accesed 10 June 2013.

[12] Martin Buber, "The Bi-national Approach to Zionism," in *Towards Union in Palestine,* eds. Martin Buber, Judah L. Magnes, Ernst Simon, 7-13.

[13] Martin Buber, "Two Peoples in Palestine" (1947), in *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs*, ed. Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, 196-198.

others. Its sense is the constructive work of free people on a common soil.[14]

Looking towards the prospect of a joint future, Buber urged that success in the struggle for self-determination should be guaranteed to both peoples not through the foundation of separate states (one Jewish and one Arab) but within a joint binational socio-political entity set up on a basis of economic cooperation, equality of rights for all citizens, and joint sovereignty.[15]

C. Hannah Arendt and a Shared Scenario between Jews and Palestinians

Another foremost Jewish philosopher, Hannah Arendt, questioned the Zionist mainstream together with its emerging policies towards the native Palestinian Arab people. Although she supported in her writings the formation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, which constituted a fundamental hope for Jews all over the world, she never identified with Zionism.[16] She made a sharp distinction between the creation of a Jewish homeland and the significance of establishing a Jewish sovereign state founded on the 'nation-state' concept. This latter proposal was completely rejected by Arendt, who instead preferred the idea of a mutual understanding between Palestinian Arabs and Jews.

Arendt criticized the main political aspirations of the Zionist movement pointing out the paradox of socialism and nationalism,[17] as being contradictory to their original principles and dangerous for the Jews themselves who, in her belief, could not ignore the presence of Palestinians in that land. Her bitterest criticism was derived from the fact that Jews in Palestine, after more than fifty years had elapsed since the first *alyiah*, had completely removed the Arab-Jewish relationship issue from their public discourse.

In two of her most famous essays, *Zionism reconsidered*[18] and *The Jew as Pariah: a Hidden Tradition*[19], she foresaw the tragic reality that happened after the

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[14] Susan Hattis Rolef, *The Bi-national Idea in Palestine During Mandatory Times*, 28-30.

[15] Martin Buber, "Two Peoples in Palestine," 199.

[16] Richard J. Bernstein, *Hannah Arendt and the Jewish Question*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 101-103.

[17] In the Zionist movement, the combination of socialist-revolutionary ideologies and national aspirations has created repeated internal tensions between different viewpoints. Related to this issue, among selected writings on the creation of the Israeli Jewish narrative see Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: the Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*, (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle: Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism from Nordau to Jabotinsky*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001); Zeev Sternhell, *The Founding Myths of Israel: Nationalism, Socialism, and the Making of the Jewish State*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots Collective Memory and Making of Israeli National Tradition*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1997).

[18] Hannah Arendt, "Zionism Reconsidered" (1944), in *Hannah Arendt: the Jewish Writing*, eds. Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman, (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 343-374.

[19] Hannah Arendt "The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition" (1944), in *Hannah Arendt: the Jewish Writing*, eds. Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman, 275-297. It has represented the expression that Arendt used to describe the status of Jews in Europe, going beyond their condition of most oppressed people. In her writing, she quoted Bernard Lazare, as the first Jewish

foundation of the Jewish state, without resolving the Jewish problem and, further, creating a scenario which was the opposite of the 'binational' solution. Just two options were presented to the Palestinian Arabs: either forced migration or acceptance of a minority status allowing the Jewish population to keep and expand their national aspirations.

In 1950, another celebrated piece of writing about the Palestine question emerged. This was entitled *Peace or Armistice in the Near East*[20], and it highlighted the necessity of achieving Arab-Jewish negotiations in order to produce a real mutual cooperation in the Middle East. The creation of a common economic structure in the Near East Federation was seen from this viewpoint as particularly beneficial for the Jews integrating themselves into the new social configuration. Arendt, in considering which alternative should succeed between federation and balkanization, warned of the conflict between the concepts of national sovereignty and national survival in these words:

> national sovereignty, which so long had been the very symbol of free national development, has become the greatest danger to national survival for small nations. In view of the international situation and the geographical location of Palestine, it is not likely that the Jewish and Arab peoples will be exempt from this rule.[21]

D. Edward W. Said's Request for 'Coexistence' as the Only Alternative

Following a belief in the inevitability of a shared future between Arabs and Jews, Palestinians and Israelis, the intellectual contribution of the leading Palestinian scholar Edward W. Said remained focused in this direction. He fought strongly for the fulfillment of aspirations for a binational future in Israel/Palestine where each person could be considered a citizen with equal rights and freedom. Defining himself through the surprising image of Jewish-Palestinian and moreover as the last Jewish intellectual,[22] Said criticized the equidistant representations of the conflict, through which Palestinians and Israeli Jews have been portrayed as equals and symmetrically balanced, and he pointed out that such equilibrium has never existed. In his opinion, they are "not interchangeable, morally equal, epistemologically congruent" because of the central belief of Zionism, which is the complete denial of the Palestinian

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intellectual who was able to translate into political terms the position of Jews within the European culture.

[20] Hannah Arendt, "Peace or Armistice in the Near East?" (1950), in *Hannah Arendt: the Jewish Writing*, eds. Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman, 423-450.

[21] Hannah Arendt "Federation or Balkanization?" (1950), in *Hannah Arendt: the Jewish Writing*, eds. Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman, 450.

[22] Ari Shavit, "'My Right of Return': an Interview with Edward Said," *Haaretz*, August 18, 2000.

narrative, and because, in addition, Israeli Jews have continued to ask for concessions from Palestinians with nothing given in return.[23]

In the debate about the interaction of diverse narrative identities, Said put emphasis on the concept that:

> Israelis and Palestinians are now so intertwined through history, geography, and political actuality that it seems to me absolute folly to try and plan the future of one without that the other (…). Everywhere one looks in the territory of historical Palestine, Jews and Palestinians live together."[24]

In order to achieve a mutual reconciliation and a fair peace, Said suggested three basic pillars: the first of these is linked to the secular dimension of a possible resolution of the Palestine question; the second highlights the imperative of overcoming structures of exclusion; the third focuses on the need for political engagement concerning the issue of justice inside the region.[25] In disagreement with the mainstream viewpoint that has supported the peace process started in Oslo in 1993 as being the only instrument to have the potential to bring about the end of the conflict, Said's political proposal was founded on the development of an Israeli-Palestinian state, and moved beyond the common idea of irreconcilability between the opposite narratives. Following such a pathway, he pursued a sincere belief in the inextricability of narratives as the only future for that land and its inhabitants.

Shared Daily Realities: *Pre* 1948

In grouping theoretical reflections and political proposals elaborated in different historical times and backgrounds, I am aware of the challenge of such a comparison in the direction of exploring a wide range of topics and their varying tensions. I argue, however, that this rich variety of valuable contributions can add a critical perspective to the discussion of current philosophical and political issues, along with those empirical concerns related to significances of equality, pluralism and justice for the Other. Despite not being the majority in terms of number of organizations, as well as of internal public opinion both in Palestinian and Israeli societies, these voices have, from the 1920s up to the present time revealed the existence of alternatives to the hegemonic narrative by reframing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In order to understand the meaning of the earliest episodes of socio-political interaction among Palestinian Arabs and Jews living in historic Palestine, it is

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[23] Edward W. Said, "The Burdens of Interpretation and the Question of Palestine" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 16/1 (1986): 33.

[24] Edward W. Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place" *Critical Inquiry* 26/2 (2000): 191-192.

[25] Edward W. Said, "The Burdens of Interpretation," 36-37.

of critical importance to avoid considering the two narratives into unchanging frameworks, and also to avoid regarding the subjects of these narratives exclusively as separated communities which are in violent opposition.

A. Workers' Joint Struggles under the British Mandate

Since the time of the British Mandate, Palestinian Arabs and Jews have participated in joint action and struggle on the basis of mutual collaboration within a number of trade unions. These actions have taken place in response to the necessity of reacting to occupational crises, anti-government sentiments and natural disasters, and have attempted to transcend deep-seated ethno-national identities.[26] In particular, joint strikes have represented the most complex contexts in which economics and politics were combined within national and labor movements. The earliest instances where this issue came to the fore within the working-class movement happened during the 1920s, when for the first time the 'Jewish Railway Workers' Association' (RWA) started to raise questions regarding joint actions between Palestinian and Jewish railway workers.[27]

Although only a small number of academic studies have specifically dealt with historical women's joint initiatives,[28] the sociologist Hannah Herzog has written:

> some women were among the first who identified emerging and intensifying social boundaries between Jews and Arabs and groups within the Jewish community, which in days to come would cause huge conflicts and struggles. From these early stages women not only discerned the boundaries, they also recognized the arbitrariness,

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[26] Ilan Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine*, 108-116.

[27] Railway workers in Haifa were one of the earliest and most significant examples of interaction between Palestinian Arabs and Jews. They applied fundamental principles of cooperation and unity in their everyday lives: it was possible to speak about 'integral unity' of their experiences, rather than simple cooperation between separate trade unions. See Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906-1948*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

[28] One of the main difficulties of conducting research on such issues has been finding accessible resources, due to the lack of studies on these themes. Because of their challenges to ethno-nationalist boundaries, representations of women's joint groups have not prevailed; on the contrary, similar women's narratives have usually been ignored by their respective accounts. Nevertheless, the significance of women's cooperation before 1948 has been proven by a few analyses regarding interconnections between Jewish and Palestinian Arab women who struggled for equal rights and fair salary in their domestic life as well as in labour movements. In relation to Palestinian and Jewish women's joint actions see the following studies: *Pioneers and Homemakers: Jewish Women in Pre-State Israel*, ed. Deborah Bernstein (Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 1992); Sheila H. Katz, *Women and Gender in Early Jewish and Palestinian Nationalism*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003); Janet M. Powers, *Blossoms on the Olive Tree: Israeli and Palestinian Women Working for Peace*, (Westport: Praeger, 2006); Elise G. Young, *Keepers of the History: Women and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992). For a historical overview of women's joint struggles from 1948 onwards see the essay by Valérie Pouzol in this issue, pp. 50-72.

discrimination and injustice embodied in delineation, and therefore called for the subversion of these restrictions.[29]

Looking at the inextricable linkage between Palestinian and Jewish narratives prior to 1948, the daily interactions of some women during this period constituted a de-facto attempt to challenge the male-dominated nationalism that was based on separation and hostility between opposite populations. By exchanging reciprocal support, they developed everyday relationships which were in contrast with the conventional nationalist policies in play among their population groups, and they called attention to socio-political and territorial consequences related to the waves of Jewish immigration to the historic Palestine.

Like a "story of missed opportunities" as Lockman stated,[30] an examination of Arab-Jewish cooperation in the Mandatory Palestine should start with the contrasting efforts that were developed by several Palestinian Arab and Jewish workers, activists, and common people through mutual solidarity. Although joint strikes and cooperation initiatives (involving women as well as men) have not changed the course of historical narratives, intertwining relationships arising from these activities have introduced alternative understandings of the past and, at the same time, future proposals for overcoming the boundaries of identity, at least at the theoretical level.

B. *The Influence of the Communist Party on Joint Politics*

The *Palestine Communist Party (Palestiner Kumunistishe Partie - PKP)*, which was established in 1919, was one of the earliest significant examples of a party which was in strong opposition to the Zionist settlements in the historic Palestine and, at the same time, to the Jewish mainstream labor policies. Although only Jewish members were involved in the party during its initial phase, it has been considered as one of few examples of unity between Palestinian Arabs and Jews, and placed emphasis on agreed strategies and a shared program. As regards their worsening relationships with other initiatives arising from workers and leftist minorities, one of their most substantial political efforts was the proposal to unify several communist organizations within one single party. In this frame, Palestinian Arab and Jewish Communists had to promote their political projects by diverging from their national backgrounds. Since the beginning, Jewish Communists had to face most Jews who accused them of being traitors towards Zionism, and expressed disapproval of their ambivalent interaction with Arabs.

The main turning point was represented by the dramatic consequences of the 1948 war when, on the one hand, Palestinian Arab nationalism and, on the other, the establishment of the Jewish state created an inextricable internal

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[29] Hannah Herzog, "Redefining Political Spaces: A Gender Perspective of the Yishuv Historiography," in *Gender and Israeli Society: Women's Time*, ed. Hannah Naveh, (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003), 16.

[30] Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906-1948*.

dispute about the legitimacy of the future state of Israel and its Zionist presumptions.[31] As a consequence of pressure from the clashing nationalisms, the Communist Party split into 'Maki' (*Miflagah Communistit Yisraelit*) in which most of the Jewish members remained, and 'Rakah', which was joined by the majority of Arab members.[32]

A decade later, during the 1960s and especially in consequence of 1967 war, a Trotskyite group called 'Matzpen' (compass) emphasized its opposition to Zionism and the military occupation of the Palestinian territories (oPt). Additionally, by enlarging its consensus among non-Communist Palestinians and non-Zionist Jews, the 'Democratic Front for Peace and Equality' ('Jabhah' in Arabic and 'Hadash' in Hebrew), founded in 1977, has represented another significant joint political experience with the purpose of making one of the weakest socio-economic minorities of Israeli society, the Palestinian Arabs, active within the national politics.[33]

By considering their ethno-nationalist trends,[34] Israeli Communists have been committed to fundamental socio-political attitudes and behaviors, although their public consensus has been rather marginal. Whilst their advocacy of social equality and economic justice could have the potential to put forward essential pillars for the resolution of conflict, opposite narrative identities have in practice frustrated every chance to provide sustainable perspectives.

'Binationalism' *Post* 1948 and its implications

In exploring the heterogeneous societal frameworks within the state of Israel, the relational dichotomy between Israeli Palestinians and Jews has reflected deep-seated narrative identities. On the one hand, the Palestinian minority has been required to show a dual loyalty, as citizens of the state of Israel as well as participants within their own national self-determination struggle, while, on the other hand, Israeli Jews have continued to assert their hegemony over Palestinians by representing the powerful majority.[35] The main focus of this

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[31] Since the 1930s most members of 'Mapai' (the dominant left-wing political party until the emergence of the Labour party in 1968) supported the idea of partition in order to end Arab-Jewish struggles. This helped enable Jews to obtain the majority of sovereignty on the greatest part of the territory. See Rael J. Isaac, *Party and Politics in Israel: Three Visions of a Jewish State*, (New York: Longman, 1981), 104-106.

[32] Ibid., 176.

[33] Ilan Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine*, 225.

[34] Ilana Kaufman, *Arab National Communism in the Jewish State*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997), 32-38.

[35] Since the foundation of the Israeli state a hierarchical situation in society has produced internal instability as well as conflict within Israeli society in which Ashkenazi Jews have been in the dominant position, followed by *Mizrahi* Jews, Palestinian citizens of Israel, and other more recent minority groups. In this way, the concept of 'coexistence' between majority and minority citizenships is rooted on the ground by day-to-day confrontations and societal fractures. In addition, among Israeli Jews the issue of mutual cooperation and integration is radically differentiated within the political panorama that includes a spectrum ranging from

section is on analyzing the contradictions and criticism occurring due to the lack of egalitarian conditions between Palestinians and Jews, providing evidence of how Israeli Jewish dominance has obstructed Palestinians from active participation, inhibiting their achievement of a complete involvement and an opportunity to go beyond dehumanized perceptions of the Other.

A. 'Coexistence' in Palestine/Israel: What Does It Mean?

The 'equality' pattern has become the most critical boundary, since Palestinians have recognized the majority of joint initiatives as being supportive of the prevailing *status quo* under military occupation and of the promotion of a condition of 'normalization'[36] within the asymmetrical power relations structured by the Israeli side.[37] Adverse expectations from both sides have caused the reality of the situation to be viewed through a distorting mirror, and this distorted view has implicated social, economic and political inequalities perpetuated not only by the military occupation policy, but also from within Israel.

The diversity of the different understandings of the notion of 'coexistence' provides an illustration of the mutual interrelations between the Palestinian Arab minority and the Jewish majority within the state of Israel. Nowadays, the word 'coexistence' signifies "the peaceful existence of two peoples, Jewish and Arab, living side-by-side within Israel." This is seen through different frames

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ultra-orthodox to left-wing parties, see Sami S. Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel: White Jews, Black Jews*, (London and New York: Routledge); Ella Shohat, "The Invention of the Mizrahim" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29/1 (1999): 5-20. On the other hand, the so-called '1948 Palestinians' - Palestinian citizens of Israel, who amount to over one million (about twenty per cent of the Israeli population), continue to be marginalized and excluded mainly in occupation income, education and political power. On this problematic issue read Oded Haklai, *Palestinian Ethnonationalism in Israel*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel's Control of a National Minority*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); Ilan Peleg, Dov Waxman, *Israel's Palestinians: The Conflict Within*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Nadim N. Rouhana, *Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997).

[36] Even though the term has been used in common language following the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979, during the 1990s it has taken on negative connotations. In the last decade, cooperation projects and joint struggles between Palestinians and Israeli Jews have been considered feasible only through professing strong commitments against the military occupation and the 'normalized' *status quo*. In detail, see "What is Normalization?" ed. Mohamed A. Salam, *Bitter Lemons-International* 42/5 (2007), see www.bitterlemons-international.org/previous.php?opt=1&id=203, accessed 7 June 2013.

[37] About joint programs, their potential as well as their struggles, see *Bridging the Divide: Peacebuilding in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, eds. Edy Kaufman, Waled Salem and Juliette Verhoeven, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006); Daphna Golan, "'Separation,' 'Normalization' and Occupation" *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 2/2 (1995), 99-102; Ifat Maoz, "Peace Building in Violent Conflict: Israeli-Palestinian Post-Oslo People-to-People Activities" *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 17/3 (2004): 563-574; Bernard Sabella, "Reconciliation with Separation: Is it Possible in the Palestinian-Israeli Case?" *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 12/4 (2005/6): 55-57; Salim Tamari, "Kissing Cousins: A Cautionary Note on People-to-People Projects" *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 12/4 (2005/6): 16-18.

of interpretation, through which the majority of Jews underline social and interpersonal relations, while most Palestinians evidence political, civic and inter-group interactions.[38] With reference to the main challenges inside Israel, mutual relationships have usually continued to be asymmetrical, and firmly linked to the sense of victimhood concerning past histories and national narratives.

The aim of developing a shared common ground between Jews and Arabs within Israel started to manifest itself with projects such as that known as 'Givat Haviva', founded by the 'Kibbutz Artzi Federation' in 1949, which had the purpose of conducting mostly educational initiatives such as the 'Jewish-Arab Centre for Peace' and the 'Institute for Arabic Studies', and also the largest Arab-Jewish community centre 'Beit haGefen', established in Haifa in 1963 in order to reduce the hostilities and misinterpretations caused by antagonistic narratives[39]. With the passing of time, Palestinian and Jewish citizens of Israel have increased their involvement in different kinds of joint programs, peace organizations and research institutes. Among these are 'Nitzanei Shalom'/'Bara'em Al-Salam' (Interns for Peace)[40], 'Hand in Hand' (Center for Jewish Arab Education in Israel)[41], 'Netivot Shalom' (Paths for Peace)[42], 'Shutafut-Sharakah' (Partnership)[43], the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute[44], and the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement

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[38] See *Arab-Jewish Coexistence Programs*, eds. Rachel Hertz-Lazarowitz, Tamar Zelniker, Cookie W. Stephan and Walter G. Stephan, (Oxford: Wiley, 2004).

[39] See http://www.givathaviva.org.il/english/info/about.htm and http://www.beit-hagefen.com/index.php?lang=en, both accessed 7 June 2013.

[40] Founded in 1976, it is an independent, non-profit, non-political, educational program training professional community peace workers. See *American Jewish Year Book*, ed. David Singer (New York, The American Jewish Committee, 1996).

[41] Founded in 1997, it is a network of schools where Jewish and Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel can study together following the idea of "learning together, living together" in order to increase peace, coexistence, and equality. Refer to their website http://www.handinhandk12.org, accessed 9 June 2013. On this program, similarities and differences with 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam,' see the essay by Maria Chiara Rioli in this issue, pp. 22-49.

[42] In reaction to the founding of *Gush Emunim* in 1975 and later to the Lebanon war in 1982, a group of young Zionist-Orthodox activists established a separate peace movement advocating tolerance, pluralism and justice. See Mordechai Ban-Or, *In Pursuit of Peace: a History of the Israeli Peace Movement* (Washington, Institute of Peace Press, 1996). More information is available from the website www.netivot-shalom.org.il, accessed 9 June 2013. On this and other Orthodox Jewish movements for peace see the essay by Cristiana Calabrese in this issue, pp. 101-123.

[43] It includes a group of ten major Israeli organizations committed to the increase of a shared, democratic and equal society for all Israeli citizens, based on the mutual respect for each national community and towards a real partnership between Jews and Arab Palestinians. For more details see the website of the forum www.shutafut-sharakah.org.il/eng, accessed 9 June 2013.

[44] Founded in 1959, the main mission of the Institute is based on the vision of Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people and as a democratic and egalitarian society for all its residents. For research programs, publications and aims see the website www.vanleer.org.il/en, accessed

of Peace.[45] Nonetheless, in the last decade joint encounters have produced controversial and asymmetric results, as the following examples will demonstrate.

B. The Case of 'Neve Shalom/ *Wahat al-Salam*

Among such shared realities in Israel, one of the earliest well-known examples has been the cooperative village named 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam' ('Oasis of Peace'), founded in 1972 and settled six years later midway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Since that time, fifty-five Palestinian Arab and Jewish Israeli families, in an approximately equal number, have been full members of this community. This project is considered by most of the Israeli and international peace theorists as being unique among effective joint models for resolving conflict. This is the reason why I have decided to give prominence to it as being an expression of a move towards a binational solution working within Israel. Despite a number of obstacles and challenges, the primary aim of the community remains to promote the significance of cooperation and living together in their daily routine, and this is connected to:

> the possibility of coexistence between Jews and Palestinians by developing a community based on mutual acceptance, respect and cooperation. (…) *WAS-NS* gives practical expression to its vision through various branches: *Primary Bilingual and Binational School*, *School for Peace*, *Doumia-Sakinah* (*Pluralistic Spiritual Centre*), *Nadi al-Shabibah-Moadon Noar* (*Youth Club*) and humanitarian aid field.[46]

In a binational community such as this, the expression of 'coexistence' has also implied a controversial internal debate between the theoretical level and the common everyday reality: the literal meaning indicates that two parts exist together, but it is not enough to reach equality in superficial terms. In this frame, the Palestinian spokesperson Abdessalam Najjar has explained that:

> coexistence is an expression and people use the same expression with different meanings. Here if you ask about coexistence, what it means for the Jews is not the same of what it means for the Palestinians. (…) Here, we do not use the term coexistence a lot; if we use it we mean coexistence in equality, both sides of the conflict are making a dialogue and negotiations from equal positions. We are trying to create a coexistence reality based on free participation of both sides, Jews and

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9 June 2013. For some examples of the Institute's programs, especially on the front of deconstructing contrasting narratives, see the essay by Rafi Nets in this issue, pp. 232-252.

[45] Established in 1965 at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem its research activities include a specific focus on mutual dialogue by organizing joint seminars for Israelis and Palestinians. Consult the website of the Institute at www.truman.huji.ac.il/index.html, accessed 9 June 2013.

[46] On the establishment and history of 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, and on Father Bruno Hussar see the essay by Maria Chiara Rioli in this issue, pp. 22-49.

Palestinians, and to explore together what are the conditions that should exist to call this reality a joint peaceful reality."[47]

Similarly, Michal Zak, one of the Jewish founders of the 'School for Peace', has expressed her perplexity about the significance of 'coexistence' stating that:

> I have not used it for a long time for two reasons: this word is becoming meaningless; it does not say anything, what kind of coexistence? But also because it becomes a word to describe this 'peace industry', I do not want to be associated with it. I think that many other words are becoming like this, for instance 'peace education', it has become not enough."[48]

In these terms, the general idea of 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam', and in particular of the 'School for Peace', has identified the linkage between theory and action, enabling the re-narration of the conflict and its possible resolution in terms of reciprocal awareness among former enemies. Current interactions between opposite sides have aimed to give opportunities for changing the reality from within and, at the same time, advancing analytical debates about the issue of the Other in relation to the concept of daily coexistence.

In reality, after October 2000 and with the beginning of al-Aqsa Intifada, such examples have found achieving success more difficult than ever, failing to achieve the majority of joint goals and to provide the opportunity to change common understandings that would allow overcoming national struggles. The deepest controversy within the community has continued to be represented by asymmetric power relations and mistrust, with these being centered on the role of national identity and its influence towards the Other.[49]

By calling 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam' into question as a model to share with other analogous frameworks, Michal Zak has stressed the efforts needed to conduct such encounter works through effective participation and awareness of unequal power relations. She has configured a gap between the optimistic wish of ending the internal Israeli discriminatory asymmetry and the current reality that has strongly continued to legitimize it.[50]

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[47] Interview of the A. with Abdessalam Najjar, 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam,' Doar Na Shimshon, 23 November 2009.

[48] Interview of the A. with Michal Zak, 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam,' Doar Na Shimshon, 23 November 2009.

[49] *Israeli and Palestinian Identities in Dialogue: the School for Peace Approach*, ed. Rabah Halabi, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 76-78.

[50] Interview with Michal Zak, 'Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam,' Doar Na Shimshon, November 23, 2009.

Current Status of Joint Initiatives: Overcoming the Demise of the Oslo Accords

In the period between the Oslo process in the early 1990s and the re-emergence of violent fighting in late September 2000 with the upsurge of the al-Aqsa Intifada, several joint initiatives emerged from the Palestinian-Israeli political background, with the aim of challenging the *status quo* of military occupation. These initiatives, also described as 'People-to-People' projects,[51] have claimed alternative politics as a means to end the conflict and move towards a sustainable and peaceful resolution. During the first stages of their involvement (or, at least, in their initial statements), a great number of participants in joint meetings, extending from youth to academics, from professional to humanitarian organizations, have declared the intention of transforming mutual attitudes. They also seek to challenge some stereotypic perceptions concerning the other side, in order to prevent the worsening of violence in the everyday life of both societies.[52]

A. Networking Joint Politics: Alternative Perspectives and Challenging Obstacles

In the last decades other forms of grassroots joint activism have taken place in diverse ways (ranging from more informal structures to official coalitions), demonstrating the richness and the variety of such realities as political alternatives to the ongoing conflict, both inside Israel and between Israelis and Palestinians from the oPt. Founded on the urgency of ending military occupation, which has been considered as the source of the oppression between Palestinians and Israeli Jews, powerful cases of solidarity and resistance have included: the protection of human rights as carried on by the organization 'Physicians for Human Rights-Israel' (PHR)[53] in association with several Palestinian medical committees inside Israel and in the West Bank; the non-violence practice supported for instance by the recent joint initiative called 'Combatants for Peace;'[54] the struggle for socio-economic rights mostly

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[51] This term was used for the first time in Article 8 of Annex VI of the Interim Agreement (also called Oslo II in September 1995), which was produced under Norwegian sponsorship and with the participation of the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority, and the support of the international community. See the Annex VI named *Protocol Concerning Israeli-Palestinian Cooperation Programs of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip*, see http://www.acpr.org.il/publications/books/44-Zero-isr-pal-interim-agreement.pdf, accessed 7 June 2013.

[52] Shira Herzog and Avivit Hai, "What Do People Mean When They Say 'People-to-People'? Origins, Definitions, Goals and Methods" *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 12/4 (2005/6): 8-15.

[53] As reported in their statement of principles in 1988, it is "an independent organization that uses the integrity of medicine and science to stop mass atrocities and severe human rights violations against individuals." More details are available at www.physiciansforhumanrights.org, accessed 15 July 2012.

[54] This is one of the most remarkable joint non-violent groups, established in 2005 by former Israeli and Palestinian combatants who have renounced the use of violence in the direction of

represented by the 'Palestinian and Israeli Coalition Against House Demolitions' (including ICAHD and JCSER – 'The Jerusalem Centre for Social and Economic Rights.')[55] Other significant joint examples of political cooperation have arisen between the 'Palestinian Popular Committees' against the expansion of the Wall and of illegal Israeli settlements established inside the West Bank[56] and several Israeli activist groups such as 'Anarchists Against the Wall'[57] and 'Ta'ayush - Arab Jewish Partnership.'[58]

Within the women's and feminist movements, and as mentioned in the previous chapter, Jewish and Palestinian women have been building up a number of everyday practices of cooperation since the time of the British Mandate. Commencing at a time immediately following the establishment of the Jewish state, the historically well-known 'Movement of Democratic

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ending the military occupation. Their primary goal is to make dialogue possible towards the Other, commonly considered only as the opposite side of the conflict, the enemy. By abandoning violence, they have initially tried to explore alternative perspectives in joint meetings and mutual understanding, and later on they have started to inform their own people about the main reasons of their political choice. Their website is available at www.cfpeace.org, accessed 6 June 2013.

[55] Founded in 1997, the 'Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions' (ICAHD) is a human rights and peace organization. As underlined by ICAHD's co-founder and director Jeff Halper, their main mission is "to liberate both the Palestinian and the Israeli people from the yoke of structural violence and to build equality between their people by recognizing and celebrating their common humanity." The 'Jerusalem Centre for Social and Economic Rights,' also established in 1997 and working in parallel, is a Palestinian non-governmental human rights organization that aims at "providing legal assistance and representation to Palestinian residents of occupied Jerusalem subjected to discriminatory policies by the Israeli authorities." See the websites of both organizations and their common work at www.icahd.org and www.jcser.org/, both accessed 6 June 2013.

[56] One of the most recent researches regarding non-violent resistance to the Israeli military occupation that have included Palestinian-Israeli joint initiatives has been conducted by Maxime Kaufman-Lacusta, *Refusing to Be Enemies: Palestinian and Israeli Nonviolent Resistance to the Israeli Occupation*, (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2010). Kaufman-Lacusta is aware that direct cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli Jewish activists needs to be analyzed by way of a complete awareness concerning the different degrees of working together and the internal dynamics of effective shared actions.

[57] Since 2003 the group has played a crucial role in non-violent resistance against the Israeli military occupation. Their website includes this strong declaration: "it is the duty of Israeli citizens to resist immoral policies and actions carried out in our name. We believe that it is possible to do more than demonstrate inside Israel or participate in humanitarian relief actions. Israeli apartheid and occupation isn't going to end by itself - it will end when it becomes ungovernable and unmanageable. It is time to physically oppose the bulldozers, the army and the occupation." For more details see www.awalls.org/ accessed 6 June 2013.

[58] Starting from its literal meaning 'living together,' 'Ta'ayush' has been one of the main joint grassroots organizations founded after the upsurge of the second Intifada in the fall of 2000. As stated in their founding declaration, they have jointly aimed at struggling physical and mental walls that have been constructed between Arabs and Jews, Israelis and Palestinians, who live on the same land. More details are available at www.taayush.org, accessed 6 June 2013.

Women in Israel' ('Tandi') has continued to strive to promote a just peace in the region, with coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis.[59]

Only at the beginning of the 1990s did both Palestinian and Israeli Jewish women decide to take up again the advocacy of political alternatives, a development exemplified by the emblematic experience of the coalition 'Jerusalem Link,' founded by the 'Jerusalem Center for Women' (JCW) - the Palestinian non-governmental women's center based in Beit Hanina (East Jerusalem), together with 'Bat Shalom' (the 'Jerusalem Women's Action Center') - the foremost Israeli Jewish women's feminist organization. The emergence of these organizations and their subsequent experiences has been considered to be both one of the major outcomes of the Oslo Accords and also to provide one of the most discouraging pictures of its demise.[60]

In the analysis of the majority of these initiatives and projects it is necessary to elaborate the predominant attitudes that have affected mutual perceptions of the other side, and in particular that have shaped different roles implemented by both individuals and collectivities. On the one hand, active Israeli participation in joint projects has impressed the Palestinian partner, but, on the other hand, a number of misunderstandings and political mistakes have created further cleavages between the two sides. Along these lines, the building up of relationships based on mutual trust has become a crucial step in the process of increasing Israeli awareness concerning the military occupation and its consequences for everyday Palestinian life, but the reality on the ground has taken another direction.

As a result, in the *post*-Oslo era, the increase of physical barriers between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, and specifically the impossibility of travelling freely,[61] and the escalation of political-psychological tensions, mainly due to the lack of trust towards the Other, have influenced such joint politics on the ground negatively. The persistence of the military occupation has been one of the main causes of the failure to recognize equality as a basic principle within joint initiatives.

Furthermore, from a financial point of view, the extensive spread of similar projects has created joint-ventures which have often been sustained only by international funding, rather than joint peace proposals. Several cases have revealed the predominance of the Israeli partnership, which has received the

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[59] Janet M. Power, *Blossoms on the Olive Tree*, 104. On feminist and women's activism see the essay by Valérie Pouzol in this issue, pp. 50-72.

[60] For detailed analyses and critical opinions on joint projects led by Palestinian and Israeli Jewish women, see *Women and the Politics of Military Confrontation: Palestinian and Israeli Gendered Narratives of Dislocation*, Nahla Abdo, Ronit Lentin eds., (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2002); Cynthia Cockburn, *The Space Between Us: Negotiating Gender and National Identities in Conflict*, (London: Zed Books, 1998); Tami A. Jacoby, *Women in Zones of Conflict*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005); Simona Sharoni, *Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: the Politics of Women's Resistance*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995).

[61] In particular, Palestinian participants have encountered major troubles in obtaining permits in order to attend meetings inside Israel, creating further tensions and discussions about politically-structural impediments to planning joint peace initiatives.

greater part of economic aid from international donors, violating the primary conditions of joint initiatives and producing controversial changes in the attitude of the Palestinian subjugated counterparts, who have been frequently silent.

In contrast to the original objectives of establishing "dialogue and co-operation on the bases of equality, fairness and reciprocity,"[62] the current evidence has shown how such examples have often produced the risk of building up a potential 'peace industry.'[63] In detail, the academic Salim Tamari has underlined the way through which these projects, also labeled with the anecdotal expression of 'Kissing Cousins,' have undermined the integrity of research activities as well as political initiatives that have ceased to assume critical perspectives concerning the real unfairness of the situation of the oppressed status of the native people.[64] Nonetheless, such initiatives have stressed the importance of dealing with and supporting such issues.

Conclusion

As a historic thread of political and philosophical analyses regarding joint pathways between Palestinians and Israeli Jews, my contribution has focused on the necessity of deconstructing the foremost mainstream approaches which are founded on exclusive narrative identities. On the contrary, I have sought to go beyond the standardized paradigms that have supported the denial of recognizing the Other by considering diverse theoretical frameworks from Martin Buber to Hannah Arendt and Edward Said, as well as past events along with most recent initiatives which have encouraged political alternatives for future peace resolutions in the land of Israel/Palestine.

At present, the context is destabilized by the urgency expressed throughout the discourse of normalization, which has been extensively discussed in academia as well as by grassroots movements, in terms of "a false image of 'normal' relations, as if there is no occupier and occupied and as if the two sides are

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[62] Colin Knox and Padraic Quirk, *Peace Building in Northern Ireland, Israel and South Africa*, (London: Macmillan, 2000), 138.

[63] With this term I refer especially to both civil society and institutional organisations that, in spite of working to advance peace resolution alternatives, have been significantly influenced by the will of decision-makers founded on the controversial issue of external aid. Concerning the problem of international donors and their political-economic power towards Israeli-Palestinian civil society actions, see Markus E. Bouillon, *The Peace Business: Money and Power in the Palestine-Israel Conflict*, (London and New York: Tauris, 2004); Benoit Challand, *Palestinian Civil Society and Foreign Donors*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2009); Sari Hanafi, Linda Tabar, *The Emergence of a Palestinian Globalized Elite: Donors, International Organizations and Local NGOs*, (Jerusalem: Institute of Jerusalem Studies and Muwatin, 2005); Anne Le More, *International Assistance to the Palestinians After Oslo: Political Guilt, Wasted Money*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2010). For a representation of the peace industry in a satirical key, see the strips by the Palestinians cartoonist Samir Harb, as analyzed in the essay by Chantal Catherine Michel, pp. 185-211.

[64] Salim Tamari, "Kissing Cousins," 16-18.

somehow equal."[65] Indeed, although the Israeli presence in joint initiatives should mean that they support Palestinian activism, on the contrary, in most cases Israeli Jews have become leading actors by forcing their politics on Palestinians by means which include shared projects. The current demise of such initiatives has reflected divergences and unfairness between Palestinians, as components of the occupied population who has not yet achieved a potential for self-determination, and Israeli Jews, as citizens of the occupier state.

Internal mutual relations have dramatically changed, reflecting a deep sense of powerlessness accompanied by discouragement in transforming the discriminatory reality of military occupation. As a critical decline of such joint coalitions' experiences has become particularly apparent during operation Cast Lead, the credibility gap between Palestinians and Israeli Jews has worsened even more. Nonetheless, observing the wave of socio-political protests that has awoken the entire Middle East since the beginning of 2011, the considerable number of recent initiatives founded on non-violent resistance and civil disobedience (above all the popular committees in the West Bank supported by Palestinians along with Israeli and international activists) can still point out possibilities for further forms of joint struggles between Palestinians and Israelis, offering paths towards a just end of the conflict.

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[65] Walid Salem, "A Path to Peace," Mohamed A. Salam, *What is Normalization*.

A Christian Look at the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.
Bruno Hussar and the Foundation of 'Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam'

by *Maria Chiara Rioli*

Abstract

In 1970, after a long genesis, the joint Israeli and Palestinian experience of the village of 'Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam' ('oasis of peace') began. Among the decisive figures for the start of this project, Father Bruno Hussar (1911-1996) was the most important, although his life has not yet been explored by historiography. Born in Egypt to assimilated Jewish parents, during his studies in France he converted to Christianity. In 1953 he was sent to Israel in order to open a Dominican centre for Jewish and Christian studies. During those years the idea of a place where to experiment a direct form of coexistence between Jews, Christians and Muslims in Israel took shape in Hussar's mind. My paper aims to investigate his complex figure, combining Judaism, Christianity, adherence to Zionism and commitment to peace. The analysis will be carried out mainly using three types of sources: the documents gathered in different archives, the association bulletin and the texts published by him.

- Preface: Hussar and 'Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam.' A double reading
- The conversion
- The arrival in Israel and the 'St. James Association' (1953-1959)
- The 1960s: between Jerusalem and Rome. The St. Isaiah House and the Council
- NSWAS: the early years (1969-1976). The pioneering phase and the disagreements with the Patriarchate
- The School for Peace
- The 'oasis of peace' in the Israeli society. The first Intifada
- The silence is broken. The assassination of Rabin
- On the hill

Preface: Hussar and 'Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam.' A double reading

A man with four identities: Jewish, Christian, Israeli, born in Egypt and bound up with the Arab world. Through this multiplicity of different identities, sometimes conflicting with each other, the Dominican Father Bruno Hussar outlined his own life as a priest and, in particular, the period – from 1953 until his death, in 1996 – spent by him in Israel.
The fact of belonging to four different cultures also characterized the best-

known experience initiated by Hussar at the end of the 1960s: the village of 'Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam' (NSWAS),[1] created with the aim of gathering Israeli citizens belonging to three different monotheisms in an experience of living peacefully together.

The history of NSWAS has drawn the attention of the current affairs press, particularly within the European area: the media focused, on several occasions, on the personality of NSWAS's founder – particularly after his death – and on the most famous experience that generally identifies the village: the School for Peace. However, an in-depth historical study of the facts that marked out the case of NSWAS has not been carried out yet. In order to better understand the story of this village, it is necessary to analyze Hussar's figure, without reducing him to an "icon" of inter-religious dialogue and pacifism in Israel.

The aim of this essay, accordingly, is to identify some approaches to the interpretation of the history of Father Bruno and the village of NSWAS, using unpublished archival sources. In order to do this, it will be necessary also to examine the previous stages of Hussar's life: his discovery of Christianity and the parallel development of his awareness of his Jewish origins during the *Shoah*, his move to Israel and his pastoral engagement with Jews converted to Christianity, the establishment of the St. Isaiah House and the participation in the Council. These themes were to give birth to the project leading to NSWAS, whose establishment and subsequent history were to experience transformations and (sometimes dramatic) changes with respect to Hussar's original idea.

The conversion

André Hussar was born in Egypt on 5 May 1911: his father was Hungarian, his mother French, and both were non-practicing, assimilated Jews. After completing his studies at the Italian School of Cairo – adding Italian to English and French as his mother tongues – at the age of 18 he moved with his family to Paris, where he graduated in engineering. It was during his university period, as he claimed several decades afterwards, that his conversion[2] – as he called it describing his identity formation process[3] – to Christianity took place. Hussar

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[1] Unless spelled differently in the sources used, the editor has opted for the spelling 'Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam,' as it appears in http://nswas.org, accessed 28 June 2013.

[2] In the wide historiography on Jewish conversions to Christianity, see for our topics John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother. The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933-1965*, (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012).

[3] In the large historiography tracing the historical development of Jewish identity/ies, particularly related to the Jewish Israeli case, see *Jewish Identity in Modern Israel: Proceedings on Secular Judaism and Democracy*, eds. Naftali Rothenberg, Eliezer Schweid, (Jerusalem: The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute and Urim, 2002); *Contemporary Jewries. Convergence and Divergence*, eds. Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Yosef Gorny and Yacov Ro'i, (Leyden and Boston: Brill Academic Press 2012); Yosef Gorny, *The State of Israel in Jewish Public Thought. The Quest for Collective Identity*, (New York: New York University Press, 1994); Alain Dieckhoff, "Israel: la pluralisation de l'identité

described his approach to faith as prompted by an "agonized anxiety" to receive answers to his questions regarding both the "problem of evil" and the figure of Jesus.[4]

During the dramatic period of the World war two, Hussar went through a stage in which he deepened his choice of faith, in order to overcome his "enthusiastic temper" and "immature Christianity." Those were the years in which André began a reflection – which was to attain fullness after he moved to Israel – on his Jewish origin, starting the development of a religious awareness that was able to combine his belonging to Judaism and his adherence to the Church.

At the same time, and with some difficulties, Hussar also became aware of the anti-Judaic and anti-Semitic prejudice present in the Catholic Church and of the fact that this background was to be held responsible for the Christians' behavior towards the current persecutions. He felt an increasingly strong desire to contribute to the dismantling of the Christian ammunition against Judaism. Hussar himself wrote that, during that period, he met Jacques Maritain and his wife Raïssa, revealing that he was deeply influenced by the philo-Semitic approach of the French philosopher. All these different tensions resulted in a naïve desire not to hide his own Jewish origins: he risked being arrested and had to leave France in 1940 because of the Nazi occupation.

When the war ended Hussar began to attend the philosophy courses at the seminary of Grenoble and prepared to join the Dominican order. He was ordained priest on 16 July 1950 and took the name of Brother Bruno to mark an everlasting monastic reference to the founder of the Carthusian Monastery. This reflected a contemplative dimension that Hussar never gave up in the subsequent decades: it resurfaced particularly in NSWAS, when he devised and created Doumia, the House of Silence, to which he devoted the last years of his life.

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nationale," in *Nationalismes en mutation en Méditerranée orientale*, eds. Id., Riva Kastoryano, (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2002), 153-171; Robert S. Wistrich, *Between Redemption and Perdition: Modern Antisemitism and Jewish Identity*, (London: Routledge, 1990).

[4] Bruno Hussar, *When the cloud lifted*, 1st ed. fr. 1983 (Dublin: Veritas, 1989), 12. I am currently working on this phase of the life of Bruno Hussar in France, which needs further clarification and historical reconstruction.

The arrival in Israel and the 'St. James Association' (1953-1959)

Figure 1: Bruno Hussar in the fifties in Israel. ASJA

The second, decisive moment in Hussar's biography, in which the current historical events posed new questions to him in relation to his Jewish origin, was the foundation of the state of Israel. The events that shook the Middle East in 1947-49 caused different and conflicting reactions among Catholics. The attitude of the Holy See,[5] the most significant one, was based both on a firm refusal to recognize the state of Israel and on an intense diplomatic activity that aimed to induce the UN General Assembly to ratify an internationalization system for Jerusalem and the protection of the Holy Places. There were, however, different attitudes, although they were a minority within the hierarchy and the Catholic clergy. Hussar was an example of this: he rejoiced at the birth of the state of Israel, which he recognized as legitimate and necessary to grant the Jews a homeland after the *Shoah*. His concern was not limited to the political and historical aspects, but also included a theological perspective. In his opinion, it was necessary for the Church and the Christians

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[5] On the reactions of the Holy See (and the ones from the Vatican in particular) to the establishment of the State of Israel, see Silvio Ferrari, *Vaticano e Israele dal secondo conflitto mondiale alla guerra del Golfo*, (Firenze: Sansoni, 1991) and Uri Bialer, *Cross on the Star of David. The Christian World in Israel's Foreign Policy, 1948-1967*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005). On the previous period, see Sergio I. Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism. Conflict in the Holy Land, 1895-1925*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

to make an effort to understand how this epoch-making event could be regarded as a part of the Christian salvific plan and could affect the "mystery of Israel" as well as the relationship between Judaism and Christianity.[6]

Hussar was appointed by the Dominican Provincial Father, Albert-Marie Avril, to open a 'Centre for the study of Judaism' on the Israeli side of Jerusalem, strengthening the already considerable presence of the Dominicans with the École biblique et archéologique[7] in the Jordanian sector of the Holy City.

Hussar arrived in Israel on 23 June 1953. He was deeply impressed and fascinated by the characteristics of the new state and also by Zionism, which he regarded as a movement that was able to give the Jews a new life, by granting them a state.

However, Hussar's opinions were not shared by most of the Church – the Latin Catholic one in the Holy Land – since its vast majority was made up of Palestinian Arabs who were hostile to the new-born Jewish state, and it was led by a patriarchal[8] and regular clergy that had an Arab or Western origin and was generally far from supporting the Jewish cause.

The attempt to oppose the Hierosolymitan Church's dislike for the Jews, and the need for pastoral care for the minority of Christian believers of Jewish origin within the state of Israel were the origin of the creation of the 'St. James Association.'[9] The association, which was placed under the jurisdiction of the Latin Patriarchate, was established on 14 December 1954 by a group of priests who were members of several congregations, including Hussar himself. The goals of the Association included providing religious, social and economic care to the converts and the Christians of Jewish origin who arrived in Israel; promoting a "Jewish-Christian spirituality" and an "understanding of the mystery of Israel"; opposing "all forms of anti-Semitism,"[10] and removing the isolation and separation that existed between the converted Jews and the Latin Church, and also between Jewish Christians and Israeli society.

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[6] Saint Paul referred to the mystery of Israel's role in the history of salvation which is recognized both in God's electing Israel among other peoples and in Israel's rejection of Jesus as a Messiah, the event that, according to the apostle, opened the path to the salvation to the pagans (Letter to the Romans, chapters 9-11).

[7] See Dominique Trimbur, *Une école française à Jérusalem. De l'École Pratique d'Etudes Bibliques des Dominicains à l'Ecole Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem*, (Paris: Cerf, 2002).

[8] On the contemporary history of the diocese of Jerusalem see Paolo Pieraccini: *Il ristabilimento del patriarcato latino di Gerusalemme e la custodia di Terra Santa. La dialettica istituzionale al tempo del primo patriarca mons. Giuseppe Valerga (1847-1872)*, (Cairo; Jerusalem: The Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies, 2006), and Andrea Giovannelli, *La Santa Sede e la Palestina. La Custodia di Terra Santa tra la fine dell'impero ottomano e la guerra dei sei giorni*, (Roma: Studium, 2000). On the Palestinian Christians, see Daphne Tsimhoni, *Christian Communities in Jerusalem and the West Bank Since 1948. An Historical, Social and Political Study*, (Westport: Praeger, 1993).

[9] The history of the 'St. James Association' is still largely unwritten, though it deserves a rigorous historical analysis. Danielle Delmaire has explored some elements of this group (see "La communauté catholique d'expression hebraïque en Israël. *Shoah*, judaïsme et christianisme" *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah* 192 (janvier-juin 2010): 237-287.

[10] Association of St. James, "Statutes," 11 February 1956, Archive of the St. James Association (henceforth ASJA), Jerusalem. My deep thank to Yohanan Elihai for his help and availability.

For the St. James Association, Father Bruno was responsible for a flat – *foyer* – in which the Christian Jews from Jaffa and Tel-Aviv could gather. He was deeply engaged during the first years of life of the association, as he recognized in it the concrete realization of his desire to create a bond between Christianity and Judaism, and to achieve the ideal of a Jewish Christian Church and a liturgy in Hebrew prospering in Israel. Hussar defined it a 'dream,' using a word that later became customary in descriptions of NSWAS. However, the idea of opening a Dominican center in West Jerusalem was still alive in Hussar's mind and in those of his superiors: that would have been the St. Isaiah House.

The 1960s: between Jerusalem and Rome. The St. Isaiah House and the Council

Figure 2: The St. Isaiah House. ASJA

In 1959, after deciding to resume the original project promoted by the Dominican Province in Paris, Hussar, together with Brother Jacques Fontaine and later with Marcel-Jacques Dubois, opened in Jerusalem the St. Isaiah House, a place of prayer and study, which was designed to provide a concrete space where a dialogue between Christians and Jews could be fostered.[11] The

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[11] See Bruno Hussar and Jacques Fontaine to Eugène Tisserant, July 1959, Report *Maison Saint Isaïe*, Archives Tisserant, Montferrer. My deep thank to the association 'Les Amis du Cardinal

aspiration to overcome the separation existing between, on the one hand, the Arab Christians and the European Catholic clergy living in the state of Israel and, on the other hand, Israeli Jews, in a political and social framework where Arab and Jews considered themselves as enemies, lead Hussar, Fontaine and Dubois to the opening of the St. Isaiah House.

In those years, the experience of Vatican Council II represented an important step in Hussar's biography: he was appointed, by Cardinal Bea to take part, as an expert, in the conciliar commission of the Secretariat for Christian unity, with the task of drawing up a document called *De Iudaeis*, to be submitted to the conciliar assembly.[12] Father Bruno's first ten years of stay in Israel and the establishment of the 'St. James Association' seemed to be driven by the attempt of meeting and gathering the Christians of Jewish origin who lived in Israel. They had been marginalized by Jewish Israeli society, but, at the same time converts were eyed suspiciously by the Palestinian population belonging to the Latin Church and by a part of the Western clergy, which associated them in any case to the Jewish state and considered them as potential enemies.

During the fifties the Israeli-Arab conflict had not been absent from Hussar's mind and pastoral care: Jaffa, mostly populated by Arabs, had shown him the complex situation of the Arab population in Israel. The religious separation between Christians and Jews (including the converts to Christianity), and the social and political division between Arabs and Jews, had directly influenced the experience of the *foyer*. Hussar asserted the need for an ecclesial action focused on the meeting of Arabs and Christian Jews; but his leading interest, during his first years in Israel, was fighting the anti-Judaism tinged with anti-Semitism that filled a great part of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land.[13] The experience of the Council was the climax of this effort. For Hussar this was also a personal path: his life in Israel constituted for him a process of discovery of his own Jewish origin and elaboration of a new identity, that of a *Christian Jew*.

The second part of the 1960s marked the emergence and deepening of a new political awareness in Hussar. The work of the Council had forced him to deal with the difficult Islamic reception of the new season of openings between the Church and Judaism, including in the already complex Arab-Israeli conflict also the question of the relationship with Christians.

The Six day war was an epoch-making event in Hussar's interpretation of the political and religious situation in Israel and the entire Middle East. The community that gravitated around the St. Isaiah House joyfully welcomed the

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Tisserant' (and particularly to Paule Hennequin) for their help and availability.

[12] On the complex history of the preparation of *Nostra Aetate*, see Giovanni Miccoli, "Due nodi: la libertà religiosa e le relazioni con gli ebrei," *Storia del Concilio Vaticano II. La Chiesa come comunione, settembre 1964 - settembre 1965*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo, vol. IV, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1999), 119-219, and *Nostra Aetate. Origins, Promulgation, Impact on Jewish-Catholic Relations*, eds. Neville Lamdan and Alberto Melloni, (Münster: Verlag, 2007).

[13] On the Catholic anti-Semitism see at least *Les racines chrétiennes de l'antisemitisme politique (fin XIXe-XXe siècle)*, eds. Catherine Brice and Giovanni Miccoli, (Roma: École française de Rome, 2003).

reunification of the Holy City under Jewish control after the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem. As Rina Geftman, one of Hussar's closest friends since the earliest times of the St. James Association, remembered, the reunified Jerusalem resounded with biblical and eschatological echoes: after the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948, the reunification of Jerusalem was now interpreted as a new stage in the unveiling of the 'mystery of Israel.' The feeling of terror for a possible destruction of Israel by the Arab armies and the subsequent euphoria of victory that were experienced in June 1967 also affected Father Bruno's thought, increasing its consonance with the policies adopted by the Israeli government. His self-definition as a Christian, Jew and loyal citizen of the state of Israel, as well as his adherence to Zionism, became more closely intertwined. While on the one hand Hussar was developing an increasingly pro-Zionist attitude, on the other hand the Six Day War gave him the opportunity to travel in the West Bank, where access during the Jordanian rule had been strictly controlled and possible only through special permits.

The annexation of East Jerusalem and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza (WBGS) made Hussar feel the urgency to find a way for a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. To use Hussar's lexicon, after the "dream" of "reconciliation" between Christians and Jews, it was now time for another "dream:" that of a community that joined Jews, Christians and this time Muslims as well.

NSWAS: the early years (1969-1976). The pioneering phase and the disagreements with the Patriarchate

Figure 3: Hussar and the first hut. ASJA

At the end of the 1960s Hussar was defining his project. He gathered around him some of the protagonists of the 'St. James Association' and St. Isaiah House. In particular, Rina Geftman and Anne Le Meignen supported Hussar's idea and actively co-operated with him.

One of the most important and complex questions during this first phase was the choice of the place. Initially the preference went to the convent of the Muslim village of Abu Gosh, which the Dominicans had already considered in the late 1950s in view of a possible foundation in Israel. According to Hussar, Abu Gosh was a place full of symbolic value because of its geographical position and biblical history:

> This centre will be established on the slopes of Kiriath Yearim, close to the Muslim village of Abu Gosh, 14 kilometres from Jerusalem (road to Tel Aviv), in an area of about 5 hectares made available by the nuns of the Congregation of St. Joseph. It is on this hill that the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the house of Avinadav, until, around the year 1000 BC, King David brought it into the new capital, Jerusalem. So Nevé Shalom will suddenly be inserted into a Christian, Jewish and Muslim context: on the top of the hill of Kiriath there is the Church of Our Lady of the Ark of the Covenant, belonging to the Sisters of St. Joseph, (...), at a short distance, the magnificent basilica built by the Crusaders (one of the possible locations of Emmaus); next to it, two Jewish kibbutzim: Kiryat Anavim and Ma'ale ha-Hamisha, and the Muslim village of Abu Gosh. This location will facilitate friendly and spiritual exchanges.[14]

However, the availability, offered by the head of the Trappists of the nearby Latrun Abbey, of a wider ground of some tens of hectares, led Hussar to abandon the option of Abu Gosh in favor of the latter. The area around the Trappist monastery was a key point in the armistice line between Israel and Jordan after 1948: it was located at an equal distance to Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Ramallah – the three most important cities for Jews, Christians and Muslims because of their religious, political, economic and demographic significance. In Hussar's view, the location of this area – as well as that of Abu Gosh – was a symbol of the equal proximity to the three religions in the Holy Land that the future village would have to secure and maintain, placing itself at the crossroads of three different but intertwined worlds.[15] The valley of Ayalon had seen several battles in the past centuries, as well as in more recent conflicts, and in Hussar's opinion this added a greater value to the choice of this hill for hosting the 'oasis of peace.'

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[14] See Bruno Hussar, Report *Nevé Shalom*, n.d. [1969?], Dossier Nevé Shalom 1969-2000, AG-MS, Archive of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (henceforth ALPJ), Jerusalem.

[15] Bruno Hussar, Report *Nevé Shalom/Wahat as-Salam*, novembre 1987, Dossier Nevé Shalom 1969-2000, AG-MS, ALPJ, Jerusalem.

The biblical tradition of this area was for Hussar a further confirmation of a meta-meaning embodied by his project: a sign of reconciliation that could overcome the political and religious conflicts and was linked to a biblical history interpreted as a prophecy of peace and reconciliation. The name of the nascent village was taken from Chapter 32 of the book of Isaiah (verse 18): "My people will live in an oasis of peace." So the continuity with Hussar's previous experience – the St. Isaiah House – was evident, also in its underlying biblical references. This time, however, the purpose of the new foundation was different from both the foyer of Jaffa/Tel-Aviv and the experience of the study center on Judaism in Jerusalem:

> PURPOSE: This centre aims to be a place where Jews, Christians and Muslims living in the country, as well as pilgrims, occasional visitors and foreign students, can meet or live together. Those who will come there will be led by a sincere desire for mutual understanding and dialogue, in view of a real and just peace between people, communities and nations.[16]

In the opinion of Hussar and his first companions, the only prerequisite for those who wished to go to NSWAS or live there was a desire to meet other communities and religions, and an open-minded attitude towards their arguments.

While some parts of Hussar's description of the village seemed to outline a sort of monastic rule (focused on prayer, work and silence) and were probably influenced by the Dominican example and Hussar's personal experience (thereby running the risk of the imposition of a Christian model), its religious dimension was essential, although no exceptions to atheists were raised. In any case, the founding principles of the village often referred to the Bible, overshadowing the Muslim and atheist component. While the ideal that underpinned the village was a religious one (mostly Jewish-Christian), the organisation designed for the village closely resembled that of a *kibbutz*:

> The social structure will be based on the form of the collective villages existing in Israel. The family will be its basic cell. Since the early stage of its realisation, Nevé Shalom will be widely open to guests; material conditions will be, at the beginning, forcibly poor (dormitories, camping), but the welcome the guests will receive will be as friendly as possible.[17]

The image of the *kibbutz* was full of different meanings. First, it was not a new idea. Already in the fifties some of the members of the 'St. James Association' used to visit several kibbutzim regularly in order to study Hebrew and in some

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[16] Bruno Hussar, Report "Nevé Shalom," n.d [1969?], Dossier Nevé Shalom 1969-2000, AG-MS, ALPJ, Jerusalem.
[17] Ibid.

cases to celebrate mass. Coming from France, where they were close to the movement of the *prêtres-ouvriers*,[18] they found in the *kibbutz* an environment where to work, maintain themselves economically and learn Hebrew. It meant as well to make the first contacts with Israelis and eventually to meet some Jewish people secretly converted to Christianity. The *kibbutz* was regarded by the members of the 'St. James Association' as a community characterised by some traits that were close to the Gospel ideal and to the rule of religious congregations: a simple, egalitarian communal life, often in adverse natural conditions that made farming and economic subsistence difficult and forced the residents to rationalize their resources and share their goods. This position, nuanced by a sort of idealization of the *kibbutz* model, was interesting especially because it contrasted with the traditional Catholic vision about the *kibbutz* as a secular collectivistic experience.

In the 1950s two families among the first members of the 'St. James Association' had tried to build a Christian *kibbutz* in the land provided by the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion in Ein Karem. The creation of NSWAS, therefore, was related specifically to the attempts undertaken a decade earlier.

Secondly, as founders of a new *kibbutz*, though one characterized by such particular features, the protagonists of the foundation of NSWAS (Hussar, a group of less than ten companions, and four families previously connected to the St. Isaiah House) projected on themselves an image of pioneers. The start of NSWAS – between 1970 and 1976, until the arrival of the first families – was specifically identified as the 'pioneering phase.' Before the mid-seventies Hussar and his first companions lived in harsh material conditions, sleeping in caravans and unsuccessfully trying to cultivate the dry land.

The bitter, hard life of the early years was thus compared by Hussar and his companions to that of the first Jewish pioneers who had arrived in Israel at the end of the 19th century, and had had to struggle with the harshness of nature in order to establish the *yishuv*. As Rina Geftman wrote several years after this difficult period,

> You can really say that Father Bruno Hussar and a small team of pioneers, including Anne [Le Meignen], with their patience and courage, have made the desert bloom.[19]

The image of the ascent of the Ayalon hills was reminiscent of another climb, the one towards Israel: the choice of starting the experience of NSWAS was then considered a sort of second *alyiah*.

Another level of reading could also be proposed to decipher the symbolism of the founders-pioneers. In Hussar's mind, while the first members of the *yishuv* had been able to make the desert bloom, as the expression goes, and to build an egalitarian social model in Israel (though without resolving the thorny issue

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[18] For an historical account of this movement, see Émile Poulat, *Les prêtres-ouvriers. Naissance et fin*, (Paris: Cerf, 1999).

[19] Rina Geftman, *Guetteurs d'aurore*, (Paris: Cerf, 1985), 179.

of the relationship with the Arabs), at NSWAS a group of pioneers of dialogue among conflicting religions would have created an 'oasis of peace' with, as its own core, not only egalitarianism but especially reconciliation between peoples, religions and cultures.

In the following decades of village life, the strong link with this kind of imagery was to show various aspects of ambiguity: in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, to take the Jewish pioneers and *kibbutzim* as a social, economic and cultural reference included the risk to appear as potential antagonists to the Palestinians who perceived pioneers as occupiers and usurpers. The difficulties for NSWAS to penetrate the Israeli Arab world, acting as a viable option in the quest for a just peace, were to deepen during the subsequent decades.

At the time of the foundation of NSWAS, however, the first inhabitants and Hussar himself did not seem aware of these implications. What prevailed was the enthusiastic effort to start an experience that was regarded as necessary and unprecedented in Israel. Even concerning the means of sustenance for the young community, Father Bruno did not concentrate on developing feasibility studies, but appeared to be certain that aid would not be lacking, especially through his extensive network of contacts in Europe and the United States.

The project of NSWAS was taking shape in Hussar's mind, and in the late 1960s he sent its description to the former Secretary of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches Cardinal Eugène Tisserant, a supporter of Hussar's work since the foundation of the St. James Association.[20]

The relationship between Hussar and the hierarchy of the diocese of Jerusalem was much more difficult. One of the fundamental obstacles to the beginning of NSWAS was represented by the authorization of the Latin Patriarch. Hussar was thoroughly acquainted with Msgr. Gori and was aware of his resistance to Catholic projects implying a presence in Israel:[21] in this case his resistance was even stronger, because the project that was being proposed, though of Christian origin, was based on an inter-religious spirit and also had obvious political implications regarding both Jews and Muslims. Fifteen years before, the consent of the Latin Patriarchate to the foundation of the 'St. James Association' had come after some years of informal meetings between different religious congregations, laypeople of Jewish origin and converts.

However, while St. James in any case was an association of Christians placed under the Latin Patriarchate in Israel and led by the vicar of the Latin Catholic Church, the project of NSWAS could not have a similar paternity and an equal control by the hierarchy of the Diocese of Jerusalem. It was an experiment of coexistence and dialogue between members of different faiths and origins:

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[20] On Cardinal Tisserant and his attitude towards the Catholic Church in Israel, see Étienne Fouilloux, *Eugène, cardinal Tisserant (1884-1972)*, (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2011), 443-454.

[21] The main attitude by the Latin Patriarchal hierarchy toward the Zionist movement and the Jewish immigration before, during and after the *Shoah* and the establishment of the State of Israel, was characterized by hostility, particularly evident during the pastoral charge of the Patriarchs Luigi Barlassina (1920-1947) and Alberto Gori (1950-1970).

placing it under the control of the Church would have meant undermining its neutrality and credibility in the eyes of the conflicting parties.

At the same time, however, Hussar also sought the approval of the local church. NSWAS aimed to be presented as one of the "fruits" of the Council, and to achieve this it was necessary to receive the ecclesiastical approval both of Rome and of Jerusalem. In the autumn of 1969 Hussar sent his plan to Patriarch Gori, asking for "the aid of your prayers for this work and for the small team of laypeople with whom I work."[22] In the same days, Rina Geftman wrote a letter to Paul VI in order to present the project of NSWAS. Rina Geftman had already sent the Pope a letter dated January 12 of the same year: in the wake of the events of Beirut,[23] she had asked the Pope for "a glance of solicitude for your children of Israel." A few months later, Geftman saw this request fulfilled by the meeting of Paul VI with Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban, "a glance of solicitude" that was accepted by the Christians in Israel as "an entrance into a new era, a page full of hope in the history of the relations between the Church and the Jewish people."[24] Rina Geftman now felt that it was time for a new "sign of reconciliation," and NSWAS could be this. The Secretariat of State sent the letter to the Apostolic Delegate Pio Laghi, who in turn sent it to Patriarch Gori, in order to request an opinion before giving his answer to Rome. The Patriarch decided to wait a few months before formulating a response, assigning a feasibility study to Msgr. Kaldany.

Among the major supporters of the idea of NSWAS there was the abbot of Latrun, Elie Corbisier. His enthusiasm for Hussar's proposal, however, was not shared by some of the monks of the abbey, for economic and administrative reasons connected to the lease contract and, even more significantly, also for reasons of "political prudence" regarding the opinion that the Israeli government and the Muslim population in the nearby villages would have drawn from it.

Despite the impasse in which the relations between Hussar and the Patriarchate seemed destined to remain, and the tensions within the abbey, on 3 June 1970 'Yishuv Neve Shalom' was officially established through an act of incorporation signed by Hussar and Corbisier.

The confirmation of this hostile attitude of the Patriarchate to the idea of the village came in the autumn of the same year: Msgr. Kaldany, formulating a legal opinion requested by Gori on the contract between Latrun and Hussar, advised Corbisier and the Apostolic Delegate Laghi to refuse the lease of the

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[22] Bruno Hussar to Alberto Gori, 13 November 1969, Dossier Nevé Shalom 1969-2000, AG-MS, ALPJ, Jerusalem.

[23] On December 28 1968, after a terrorist attack in Athens by some members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine against a plane of the Israeli airline El Al, the Israeli army attacked the airport of Beirut, destroying 14 aircrafts. Two days later, Paul VI sent a telegram to Lebanese President in which he expressed his "sorrow at the grave event which took place in Beirut," generating strong reactions in Israel.

[24] Rina Geftman to Paul VI, 26 October 1969, Dossier Nevé Shalom 1969-2000, AG-MS, ALPJ, Jerusalem.

land "because of *vague, ambiguous* and *dubious* features contained in the Act of Constitution and in the Companies' Ordinance as regards *the purposes* and *methods* of *future implementation*. Nothing concrete or definite on this subject can be found in the two official documents in question."[25]

Despite the Patriarchate's unfavorable opinion, Hussar and Corbisier decided to proceed with the deal, which was signed on 6 November 1970. The death of Patriarch Gori on 25 November of the same year, and the appointment of Msgr. Beltritti as his successor, further delayed a clear response of the Diocese of Jerusalem about Hussar's project, inducing the latter to proceed without a formal authorization from the bishop.

In the 1970s the project of NSWAS was gradually carried out. Hussar and the group of students moved into small camper vans in the 400 *dunam* of land made available by the abbot of Latrun. "The first six years were very hard; they led to the birth of the present community and to its activities,"[26] Hussar wrote years later. From 1970 to 1976 the search for a livelihood, the harshness of the land to be tilled, and a feeling of isolation from the local Church exacerbated the difficulties: during this stage, the disagreements and conflicts among the founders were set aside because of the greater urgency of the problem of finding practical resources for building the first houses for the village members. In these years, the image of the pioneers, of the founding fathers of the village, emerged and crystallized: they were Bruno Hussar, Anne Le Meignen, Rina Getfman and a few other members of the community.

In the second half of 1970s the village began to change: Hussar's journeys abroad and his many contacts in Europe resulted in the establishment of the first group of 'Friends of NSWAS,' particularly in France, Italy, Switzerland and Belgium. In the 1980s the relationship with some cardinals and representatives of the Roman Curia were probably becoming stronger.[27]

The arrival of a new group of Israeli families of Jewish and Palestinian Arab origin was what chiefly marked the beginning of a new phase in the life of the village. Water came, a generator was installed. The first houses were built. A social and decision-making structure began to appear.

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[25] Hanna Kaldany to Elie Corbisier (and in copy to Pio Laghi), 18 September 1970, Dossier Nevé Shalom 1969-2000, AG-MS, ALPJ, Jerusalem. Emphasis in original.

[26] Bruno Hussar, "Appel à nos amis," November 1987, Dossier Nevé Shalom 1969-2000, AG-MS, ALPJ, Jerusalem.

[27] On 13 April 1986, Bruno Hussar and Anne Le Meignen had gone to Rome to greet the Pope John Paul II on his first visit to a synagogue. There, the two protagonists of NSWAS gave an interview to the Vatican Radio, telling the story of the village whose origins laid – according to them – on the same spirit of dialogue that had prompted the meeting between John Paul II and the Chief Rabbi of Rome Elio Toaff. It is difficult reconstruct the opinion held by the Holy See concerning NSWAS and Hussar's personality due to the current unavailability of the sources held in the Vatican Secret Archives. Certainly, Hussar positively welcomed the process leading to the Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the State of Israel, signed on 30 December 1993 (see his preface to Carlo Maria Martini, *Israele, radice santa*, (Milano: Centro Ambrosiano - Vita e Pensiero, 1993), 11).

While in the 1950s the *foyer* of Tel-Aviv/Jaffa had adopted, as its ideal reference, the Judeo-Christian communities of the Church of the origins (communal life, sharing of property and goods, gathering around the celebration of the Eucharist), twenty years later the first group of founders of NSWAS, though still connected to some of these elements, blended them with the pioneering imagery and the *kibbutz* structure. During the second phase of its history, which opened in the second half of the 1970s, NSWAS began to distance itself from both these models, in an attempt to unite different cultures and ways of life, and to achieve an original and unprecedented experience.

The first conflicts and differences of opinion regarding the next steps to be taken by the community began to emerge. Some of the members left the community, while other families moved into the village. The emphasis on reconciliation between different faiths that characterized the intentions of the early days now gave way to a progressive focus on "identity conflicts" – as Hussar called them – paving the way not only for religious divergences but also, and even more, for conflicting forms of nationalism and ideologies.

This evolution, and the changes that marked the Arab and Israeli societies in the 1970s, contributed to a shift in the agenda of the paths and methods to be chosen in order to achieve NSWAS's goal of becoming a laboratory for peaceful coexistence. The first signs of a rift between Hussar's initial project and the outlook of the new members arriving in the village began to appear. As Rina Geftman explained:

> When Father Bruno and I laid the foundation of this community, we thought that prayer for peace was one of the pillars of life. What happened was very different, because those who came to join us were in love with justice and fraternity, but not interested in the religious aspect.[28]

The change of the village's focus from prayer for peace to social action – choosing education – changed the nature of Hussar's project, and the first signs of such a change became visible from the 1980s onwards and then fully apparent in the successive decade. Rina Geftman, who had spent five years there and had experienced the most difficult period of NSWAS, left the village for these reasons. A decade after its establishment, the only two remaining members of the original group were Father Bruno and Anne Le Meignen.

The need to provide education to the children of the village, whether Jews, Muslims or Christians, Israelis or Palestinians, helped develop a new awareness of the responsibility of education for peace in the schooling of the children of the village. The idea of a School for Peace was born: in NSWAS it was experimented hoping that it might become an educational model for the whole country. From religion, the focus of NSWAS shifted to education.

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[28] Geftman, *Guetteurs*, 180.

The School for Peace

In 1984, the village consisted of about 70 members, half of them Jews, and half Palestinian Arabs, Muslims and Christians. All the inhabitants were Israeli citizens. Together with some unmarried laypeople, 17 families with 30 children were living in NSWAS. A nursery, a kindergarten and a primary school were established for the children.

In the educational system that was being created in NSWAS, the first problem was linguistic: in which language should the children be educated? They all learned either Hebrew or Arabic, depending on their family of origin, but the educational program of NSWAS was designed since the beginning as a bilingual system. The teachers, who were members of the village belonging to different communities, spoke and taught in two languages. Thus the linguistic vehicle was the first channel of knowledge of others and respect for them. The school curriculum was focused on the knowledge of the cultures of the different populations living in Israel. Particular attention was devoted to the preparation and celebration of festivals of all three communities.

In the documents that explained the work and philosophy behind this educational system, and in Hussar's speeches, it was often specified that the goal was not that of a generic 'syncretism' or fusion of cultures and religions, but the children's awareness of their origins, which led to the desire to know and meet different identities and histories. This approach was particularly original in a context, that of Israel, in which even education was designed on the basis of strict national, linguistic and religious divisions.[29]

In 1979 another experience started: that of the School for Peace, which fully developed during the 1980s. Through a contact with the educational system in Northern Ireland and in other theatres of conflict, a team specialized in education for peace was established in NSWAS. Other educational trainers from all over Israel joined the first group. The School for Peace was added to the traditional education of NSWAS, enriching it with other experiences: the reference model considered was that of an open school in which, starting from an essentially pluralistic situation such as that of the village, education and knowledge were not divided on the basis of the children's origins and backgrounds, but were shared, promoting the development of new generations that were able to overcome the friend-versus-enemy outlook and were open to otherness and difference since childhood. The School for Peace aimed to complete the educational path of the children of the village by offering time and space for individual and group teaching, providing creative and artistic tools and skills, developing respect for nature, encouraging forms of personal

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[29] See Majid al-Haj, *Education, Empowerment, and Control. The Case of the Arabs in Israel*, (New York: SUNY Press, 1995); Aurelia Smotriez, "Emancipation, sionisme et education: aux origines du système scolaire israélien" *Revue Labyrinthe* 28/3 (2007): 91-103; Aurelia Smotriez, "Frontières externes et fractures internes entre Juifs et Arabes: aux sources de la segregation scolaire en Israel, 1947-1953" *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* 103/3 (2009): 133-147.

expression of mutual respect and generosity, and also promoting the active involvement of the parents within the school.

One of the most important aspects of the School for Peace was the direct contact with situations outside the village that was provided in order to offer a real opportunity of exchange to the children who had been born and raised in NSWAS. In addition to this, at the end of primary school, the children of NSWAS had to return into the state educational system. Therefore, the School for Peace was a means for continuing to ensure them a personal development based on the founding values of this tiny village. For this purpose, visits to NSWAS were promoted and organized: after its foundation, in less than ten years, the School for Peace was visited by about 8,000 young Jews and Arabs, and more than 1,000 adults visited NSWAS.

The style and method of education of NSWAS deserves further systematic analyses, not only limited to the methods of historical research. However, it is interesting to understand how, in Hussar's mind and choices, the development of peace building strategies and tools was changing during the 1970s and 1980s. On the one hand, the importance of the school within NSWAS was directly linked to the figure of Hussar: his network of contacts in Israel and throughout Europe allowed this village in the Ayalon valley to receive funds to be re-invested in education. At the same time, however, the central role progressively acquired by the school moved NSWAS away from the ideal of inter-religious coexistence for which it had been created. The voice and "dream" of Hussar and of the small group around him at the end of the 1960s became, twenty years later, one of the many voices of the village. An authoritative voice, undoubtedly, but not the only one. While Hussar's reputation and fame were growing abroad, in the internal decisions inside NSWAS the weight and importance of the founders began to decrease. A new generation born or grown up in the village claimed other priorities and choices.

The watershed of the 1980s and the development of the School for Peace cannot be separated from an investigation of the analysis that Hussar and the community provided on the on-going political and social changes, especially when the first Intifada broke out. In parallel, the image and interpretation of NSWAS and of its founder that public opinion in Israel developed (and we shall see, though only through few examples, in the Palestinian territories, oPt) also came under discussion.

The 'oasis of peace' in the Israeli society. The first Intifada

The experience of the School for Peace and the thousands of visitors from all over the world drew the attention of the Israeli media on NSWAS. In the 1980s, newspapers, radio and television investigations devoted space and reports to the history and initiatives of Hussar and of the group of people around him. In those years Hussar received numerous awards for his

commitment to dialogue in the Israeli-Palestinian context: in Israel he was awarded the peace prize by an important magazine, *New Outlook*.[30] In 1988 and in the following year, Hussar was nominated twice for the Nobel Peace Prize. Meanwhile he was trying to obtain the official recognition for NSWAS as a village in Israel; this authorization was granted by the Ministry of the Interior – after several years of hesitation – in September 1989.

In addition, the attention of many politicians has been drawn to NSWAS. On 5 September 1985, the Israeli President Chaim Herzog visited the village in the region of Latrun where he had fought in the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948-1949. After visiting the School for Peace and participating in a work group of young Jews and Arabs, the head of state held a speech in which he stressed the exceptional nature of NSWAS.

The most significant political presence in the village, however, was that of Wellesley (Pinhas) Aron: secretary of the first President of the State of Israel Chaim Weizmann, Pinhas – as they called him in the village – was the founder of the Jewish socialist youth movement *Habonim*. Then, in 1980, with his wife, he joined the first families who moved to NSWAS. For Hussar, the friendship with Pinhas represented a key step in the development of the project of NSWAS, steering it towards the question of peace education. To this topic Pinhas, a high school teacher in Tel Aviv, had dedicated a curriculum in agreement with the Ministry of Education since 1967. Pinhas had also done much to raise the fame of NSWAS in Israel. In 1988, the passing away of one of the main points of reference for NSWAS, a man who had belonged to the Jewish world in Israel and had been close to the Zionist leadership of the country, affected the village in the difficult months of the first Intifada

Since the very beginning of the pioneering phase, Bruno Hussar and his companions had claimed for the nascent village a choice of political neutrality. However, after 1967 Hussar made no secret of his commitment to the ideals of certain currents of Zionism. The 1970s had strengthened these beliefs in Hussar, particularly in light of the resolution adopted by the UN in 1975 that condemned Zionism as a form of racism: this document had been strongly criticised by Hussar and his circle of friends and companions. The next decade had given notoriety to the experience of NSWAS, but had not changed its founding spirit. Peace was still identified not with the fact of joining conflicting ideologies, but with the peaceful coexistence for which the village aimed to be a laboratory and example.

In the 1980s, the political and social radicalization in Israel and the Palestinian territories, the consequences of the civil war in Lebanon and of so-called operation Peace in Galilee, and even more significantly the events connected to

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[30] Founded in 1957 by Martin Buber and Simha Flapan, *New Outlook* has been one of Israel's most important magazines in the pacifist context for several decades (its publication stopped in 1992). See Marcella Simoni, "L''Utopie concrète' de New Outlook. Construire le dialogue entre jeunes Israéliens et Palestiniens dans les années 1960," in *Israël Palestine. Les enjeux d'un conflit*, ed. Esther Benbassa (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2010): 179-193.

the first Intifada (1987-1990), broke this image of neutrality, and dramatically revealed, for the first time, the inner conflicts between the different components of the village.

During the war in Lebanon (1982-1985) the village community had organized a series of talks to discuss the political situation in the region. A few months later, in the summer of 1986, NSWAS responded to President Herzog's call for tolerance and for the rejection of social polarization, included in his speech for the anniversary of the declaration of independence, on 13 May 1986. This appeal was repeated after the incidents in late June in which factions of ultra-Orthodox Jews had clashed with groups of secular Jews. As requested by President Herzog, throughout Israel and also in NSWAS the last two weeks of school were devoted exclusively to the "study of Tolerance." A year later, on 11 April 1987, 20,000 Israelis (both Jews and Palestinians) had gathered in NSWAS. The meeting was particularly significant, because some groups from the oPt participated hoping to renew the effort to build a bridge towards the Palestinians in the oPt. A few months later, the Palestinian question broke out dramatically with the beginning of the first Intifada.[31]

Hussar and the group of founders of NSWAS had never claimed a splendid isolation for the inhabitants of the village, but the events related to the first Intifada really shocked the community. The frequent passages of the army near the village and the news of repression and on-going violence in the oPt distressed the village residents, particularly the children, who were in the habit of reading the newspapers at school and of being up to date about current political events. The choice between military service and conscientious objection also divided the young people of NSWAS[32].

The adults could see in the children and young people the rift that was beginning to divide the entire community in those months. The coordinator of the School for Peace, Ariela, a Jewish Israeli, wrote:

> The Intifada exerts a strong influence on all of us, as well as on the young people who come to the School for Peace. The Arabs feel strengthened, 'At last! We are doing something to change the situation.' And the Jews are terrified by the change in the balance of forces.[33]

In this period Hussar seemed increasingly to step aside, and did not take a public stand on the Palestinian Intifada. Meanwhile the leadership of Abdessalam Najjar (1952-2012), an Israeli Palestinian, Muslim, from Nazareth, secretary of the village – a sort of mayor – and friend of Bruno since the 1970s,

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[31] On the history of the first Intifada, see Mary Elizabeth King, *A Quiet Revolution. The First Palestinian Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance*, (New York: Nation Books, 2007). On the first Intifada see the essay by Julie Norman in this issue, pp. 140-161.

[32] On conscientious objections among Israeli Jews, even though in an earlier period, see the essay by Marcella Simoni in this issue, pp. 73-100.

[33] Ariela (surname not reported), "L'école pour la paix. Un bilan (1988-1989)," *Lettre de la Colline* 14, September 1989, 12.

was growing. For the first time the Palestinian voice was becoming the loudest one inside the village.

After the outbreak of the Intifada, members of the village met and discussed the situation: a majority of people voted for a public protest in front of the prime minister's office, against the Israeli repression in the oPt. The choice of location was significant, because in this way the protest of NSWAS intended to turn directly to the Israeli government, and also because it created a link with marches and sit-ins led by other well-known Israeli peace movements, such as 'Peace Now.'[34] So for the first time NSWAS was close to other pacifist groups and movements, although it did not participate to other collectives. The protest in the name of the village was held on 14 February, 1988. A leaflet was distributed. It stated that:

> We, the members of Nevé Shalom/Waahat as-Salaam, have decided, exceptionally, and on this single occasion, to organise a political initiative about the difficult situation in the occupied territories. We protest against the increasing military repression, and we identify with the Palestinians' struggle for freedom and independence. We want to show the Israeli government that our experience at Nevé Shalom/Waahat as-Salaam, based on community life in equality, exchange, and communication, demonstrates that this path is possible and leads to success in settling disputes. This path is not easy, and sometimes it is very difficult, but it is worthwhile and it is a human path.[35]

A few months later, Najjar prepared an editorial for the community newsletter, and it was published in the same page that hosted the commemoration of Pinhas by Hussar. In his text, Najjar wrote that "the residents of N.Sh.-WS have a strong political consciousness, and the Intifada (...) was not a great surprise, because we have been aware for a long time of the discontent brewing in the occupied territories. Yet, the intensity of the uprising was a shock." With respect to the escalation of violence, he continued, "we have formulated some demands for the end of the occupation and for self-determination."[36] The events of the first Intifada did not lead Hussar to disown the Zionist cause:

> I am a Zionist. This term has been distorted by the struggles and squabbles of party politics which have turned it into a stereotype far removed from its true meaning. Didn't the United Nations go out of its way to identify Zionism with racism? A Zionist is someone who recognises the right of the Jewish people to exist as a nation in the land of their fathers, so that every Jew who wishes may find his homeland

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[34] On 'Peace Now' see the essay by Jon Simons in this essay, pp. 124-159.

[35] Various Autors, "«Des gens et des choses...» ou chronique de la Colline," *Lettre de la Colline,* 12, April 1988, 2.

[36] Abed El Salam Najjar, "Editorial," *Lettre de la Colline,* 13, December 1988, 2.

there. In itself Zionism in not in any way against the right of the Palestinian Arabs to a national existence in the same region; the land is spacious enough for that. (…) No Jew who truly lives in the spirit of the Torah can be indifferent to the fate of the Palestinian Arabs and their hopes. This land is their home too."[37]

Despite Hussar's adherence to Zionism as it is presented in these lines, he never analytically specified which notion and kind of Zionism (political, practical, synthetic, cultural, religious, or other)[38] he referred to. He did not precisely quote his political references in the historical evolution of Zionism before and after the establishment of the state of Israel. Therefore, it appears to be difficult to deconstruct the Zionist vision endorsed by Hussar. He often considered Zionism simply as the movement supporting the right of the Jewish people to a land and a state, especially after the *Shoah*, but without adding any further explanation.

The conclusion coming from the above quotation of Hussar's vision as a Catholic Zionist thinker needs to be approached in a nuanced manner. Hussar dealt with the Israeli state as a historical fact with a religious impact on Christians – as contained in his notion of the correlation between the "mystery of Israel" and the Jewish state. Contrary to the most convinced Christian Zionist thinkers, such as John Hagee, and to other American evangelical fundamentalist circles, Hussar did not interpret the establishment of the state of Israel as an apocalyptic prophecy of the second coming of Jesus, although he undoubtedly considered it under a supernatural light.[39] As we have seen, Hussar's approach considered the Israeli state and its history as a part of the biblical "mystery of Israel," but he never defined in which way the establishment of the Jewish state affected this mystery. According to Hussar, the foundation of Israel was inside this mystery and, although Christians could not fully discover it, they had to consider it while standing pro or against Israel's right to existence. They could not deny the relevancy and legitimacy of Israel as a state, although this did not imply agreeing to every single government decision and measure, as Hussar's attitude to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the 1980s made clear. Therefore, his position can be

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[37] Hussar, *When the cloud*, 97.

[38] For classic histories of the Zionist movement, see Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea. A Historical Analysis and Reader*, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1959); David J. Goldberg, *To the Promised Land: A History of Zionist Thought*, (London: Penguin, 1996); Walter Laqueur, *The History of Zionism*, new edition updated (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003); Georges Bensoussan, *Une histoire intellectuelle et politique du sionisme (1860-1940)*, (Paris: Fayard, 2002).

[39] On Christian Zionism – although rigorous historiography has still to emerge – see Regina Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism. Its Roots in Western History* (London, Zed, 1983); Paul Charles Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism, 1891-1948*, (London: Frank Cass 1998); Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian Attitudes Towards the State of Israel*, (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001). Christian Zionism was rejected by the representatives of different Christian confessions in the so-called *Jerusalem Declaration on Christian Zionism*, signed on 22 August 2006; see "We Stand For Justice: We Can Do No Other" *Holy Land Studies* 5/2 (2006): 211-213.

better defined as pro-Zionist and/or philo-Zionist, rather than as Catholic Zionist. At the same time, Hussar's adherence to the Zionist project remains problematic, as the following history of NSWAS showed.

Coming back to Hussar's words on his vision on Zionism, significantly, the 1988 French edition of the book *When the cloud lifted* included an addition to this paragraph that clarified Hussar's interpretation of the events related to the first Intifada: the Palestinian uprising was, in his opinion, "a natural consequence of growing pressure on the 'territories', due to the Occupation and Jewish settlements – and it has given rise to inevitable and harsh military repression."[40] Hussar's words were no longer those of 1967, because his alignment to the positions of the Israeli government was changing.

According to him, the Palestinian Intifada had brought two outcomes: it had raised the Israeli public's awareness of the situation of the occupation in the oPt, and had led to a rapprochement between the Palestinians of Israel and those of the WBGS, in a common attempt to break the regime's oppression. From a religious point of view, Hussar did not join the nascent Palestinian liberation theology.[41] The Intifada led Hussar, who was about to turn 80, to dissociate himself firmly from the government's policies, though without changing his support to the Zionist ideology and the Israeli stance. In NSWAS, however, the balance of power between the two national components was beginning to shift towards a gradual strengthening of the Palestinians. This determined a progressive severance between Hussar's thought and the feelings of most of the inhabitants of the village. In the 'oasis of peace,' the time of Herzog's visit and Pinhas's presidency seemed hopelessly distant.

The silence is broken. The assassination of Rabin

With the beginning of the 1990s, the conclusion of the Intifada and the opening of peace negotiations seemed to start a season of hope for a resolution of the conflict. Bruno Hussar and the residents of NSWAS shared the expectation of an imminent signature of a peace treaty.

One of the most significant novelties for NSWAS at this stage was the presence in the village school of children coming from 'outside,' in particular from the nearby Muslim village of Abu Gosh. During this period, Hussar was gradually withdrawing from active participation in the village's activities. The

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[40] Hussar, *When the cloud*, 124.

[41] On the Latin American liberation theology see Silvia Scatena, *La teologia della liberazione in America Latina*, (Roma: Carocci, 2008). The liberation theology was spread also in other Christian contexts, such as South Africa and the oPt. In the Palestinian case, the first promoter of a local way of the liberation theology was the Anglican Rev. Naim Stifan Ateek. During the first Intifada, the Palestinian Liberation theology rejected Christian Zionism and adopted the popular reading of the Bible, a contextual approach to the Scriptures and read the sacred text in the light of the concrete condition of the Palestinian people, raising strong opposition in Israel.

last years of his life were devoted to the project of Doumia, the "space of silence."[42]

The history of Doumia is also the story of Hussar's last "dream." In 1983 a small house was opened in NSWAS: its purpose was to provide a place where silence (*doumia* in Biblical Hebrew) was kept, in order to promote meditation and personal prayer.

During the ensuing decade the project was fulfilled by the construction of a building: a white dome, inside which only rugs and cushions were placed, situated in a garden within an area that was slightly separated from the village, in order to encourage silence and meditation. With Doumia, Hussar, now in his eighties, seemed to return to the original project of NSWAS as a meeting place for different faiths: in the presence of opposing nationalisms, the shared prayer of the three religions could be a vehicle for reconciliation and peace.[43]

However, an event abruptly interrupted Hussar's silence and his work in Doumia: the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. The murder of the prime minister on 4 November 1995 was the single most important event that broke the hopes of peace of the 1990s. Hussar did not witness the outbreak of the second Intifada but he foresaw the failure of a season of illusions that peace would be near. Rabin's death deeply upset the Israeli public, like a "shock treatment" as Hussar defined it. His last article, published in early 1996, in the St. Isaiah House bulletin, dealt with this event, interpreting in the light of the development of the "mystery of Israel."[44]

In this article, Hussar described Rabin as a great statesman with an exceptional personality, who had shown his value by shaking hands with Yasser Arafat and "accepting the Oslo II agreement with all its implications." His death had shaken Israel, because "a Jew killing another Jew for political reasons is a fact that has never been seen before."[45] The text is particularly interesting also because of the eschatological reading of these events presented by Hussar:

> In terms of what is sometimes referred to as God's plan, this event, so shocking in its historical dimension, is undoubtedly a further step on the road leading to 'aharit ha-yamim', the last times. (...) We stand in the presence of a mystery: that of the final fulfillment of God's work that began with the creation of the world – and at the heart of the mystery of Israel.[46]

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[42] See Psalm 65: "For you silence is praise, o God" (verse 2).

[43] On joint praying as a vehicle for reconciliation see some events analyzed in the essay by Cristiana Calabrese in this issue, pp. 101-123.

[44] Bruno Hussar, "L'assassinat d'Itzhak Rabin dans la perspective du 'Mystère d'Israël,'" *Les Oliviers de Saint Isaïe. Lettre aux Amis*, 5, first semester 1996, *Shalom, Bruno*, ed. Bruno Segre, (Doar-Na Shimshon: NSWAS, 1997), 13-16.

[45] This idea formulated by Hussar and largely shared by the Israeli public opinion before and after Rabin's murder, was in reality not true; see Nachman Ben-Yehuda, "One More Political Murder by Jews," in *The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin*, ed. Yoram Peri, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 63-95.

[46] Bruno Hussar, "L'assassinat d'Itzhak Rabin," 14-15.

Referring to the letters of Paul and in particular to Chapter 11 of the Letter to the Romans, Hussar wrote:

The reaction of the people of Israel after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin is a major step forward in the march of the Jewish people towards messianic fullness (...) There is a conversion of heart: everyone, Jews and Christians of today, each for their own part, will march towards the era of fullness. Yitzhak Rabin, war chief, became a peacemaker, until he paid for this decision with his life – and the whole country, in its living forces, through its examination of conscience, assures us that this hope is not in vain. There will come a time when the Jews and the Gentiles, trees that complement God's single olive tree, will be united in the same praise. (...) We know that the fulfillment of the mystery of Israel is a part of the march of humanity towards fullness."[47]

It is legitimate to wonder whether the inhabitants of NSWAS shared this kind of reading. But the fact that this was its founder's final stance was significant.

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[47] Ibid., 15-16.

On the hill

Figure 4: NSWAS, aerial view (2002). ASJA

During the last stage of Hussar's life, the hill of NSWAS became for him an image of the peace that could be reached on the "everlasting hills" (Genesis 49, 26).[48] Hussar died on 8 February 1996. His funeral gathered on the hill of NSWAS thousands of people from all over Israel and from different areas of the world. He was buried at Doumia, "in the dry land of our country,"[49] as he had requested in a recording in Hebrew, found after his death and regarded as his testament. Hussar's heritage was (and still is) complex and sometimes disquieting. After the death of its founder, NSWAS survived but it was hit by rifts like all the peace movements and Israeli-Palestinian joint associations during the tragic years of the second Intifada. The uprising showed another time the incapability of Palestinian, Israeli and joint organizations to coordinate among themselves.[50]

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[48] These hills had been mentioned in the last years of his life also by another protagonist of Christianity in the Middle East and the Arab world, Louis Massignon (1883-1962). Although politically divided in their opinion of the Israeli policy, both Hussar and Massignon considered the Holy Land a place to be transformed into a laboratory of coexistence between people, a "jardin d'enfants de l'humanité" now reconciled.

[49] Bruno Hussar, "Testament," *Shalom*, 19.

[50] See Marcella Simoni, "Sul confine. L'attivismo congiunto israelo-palestinese," in *Quaranta*

After Hussar's death, even among those who had most supported NSWAS in the world, there were people who no longer recognized NSWAS as Bruno's "dream."[51] The village did not establish a significant link with Palestinian associations in the West Bank during the second Intifada; this led to a growing isolation of this experience, which became separate both from the Israeli and the Palestinian societies. Some members left NSWAS. Among them, Amin Khalaf, Arab Israeli co-founder – with the American Jewish activist Lee Gordon – of the 'Center for Jewish-Arab Education' in Israel in 1997. The Center opened four 'Yad b'Yad' (Hand in Hand) schools in Israel, with the goal to promote education to Arab and Jewish children together.[52] Although it does not represent the only experience in this field in Israel, the 'Yad b'Yad' example of bilingual education reproduces the pioneering model of NSWAS.

In the dramatic events that followed the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000, not only the school for peace knew a deep crisis: even Father Bruno's ideals were dramatically challenged, particularly by his friend Marcel Dubois. In a long interview, Dubois declared that he and Bruno had "completely denied the Palestinian tragedy": "We were naïvely Zionist, confusing the Jewish adventure with the Israeli one."[53] Such a criticism from one of Hussar's closest

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anni dopo. Confini, barriere e limiti in Israele e Palestina (1967-2007), eds. Arturo Marzano and Marcella Simoni, (Bologna: Il Ponte, 2007): 72-88.

[51] This is the case, for example, of Bruno Segre, who resigned from the presidency of the Italian Friends of NSWAS in 2007. For his resignation letter, in Italian, see http://www.ildialogo.org/noguerra/medioooriente/commiato18062007.htm, accessed 10 June 2013.

[52] This experience can be compared to NSWAS school for peace for the common vision of granting a joint education, teaching in Hebrew and Arabic. The accent on peace education and conflict management and resolution in the school curricula represents an element shared by both experiences. However, they show significant differences: the religious dimensions that had been intimately connected to the establishment and evolution of NSWAS is less evident in the 'Yad b'Yad' schools. Also in this case the awareness of the religious dimension in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict influences the school organization and teaching, but it's less constitutive of the birth of NSWAS. Another diversity is due to the link to the surrounding community: in NSWAS, the school for peace is included in the village and it's part and parcel of it; the children attending the school come from this community who already made a choice of co-existence. On the contrary, 'Yad b'Yad' institutes are established in a normal urban context: the challenge to involve parents and other organizations of the external reality is permanent. On the 'Yad b'Yad' school, see Zvi Bekerman, Gabriel Horenczyk, "Arab-Jewish bilingual coeducation in Israel: A long term approach to intergroup conflict resolution" *Journal of Social Issues* 60/2 (2004): 389-404.

[53] Dubois denounced the excessive adherence to the Israeli policy, the identification between Judaism and the state of Israel, and the blindness to political and military responsibilities in the oPt. He finally inverted his position towards Zionism, identifying it with "possession and conquest." As he wrote : "We have completely denied, yes, completely denied, the Palestinian tragedy. (…) And if I changed my opinion (…) it is not at all out of religious love for Israel, but out of the secular, engaged and selfish reasons of a people trying to reconstitute itself. Nevertheless, I also remain a lover of Sion and of Israel. (…) I am no longer a Zionist stating the right to conquest or to land possession…Finally, I would avoid the word Zionism, because I believe that it means possession and conquest." See Marcel-Jacques Dubois, *Nostalgie d'Israël. Entretiens avec Olivier-Thomas Venard*, (Paris: Cerf, 2006), 28-30, (my translation from French).

friends still raises increasingly pressing questions on the experience of NSWAS, its development, and even its founding ideals.

Eschatological tension, historical reading and political urgency are merged in Hussar's biography. Even in his most famous achievement – the village of NSWAS – these three dimensions are linked in a complex interplay, not devoid of contradictions. During the last stage of Hussar's life, the response offered by him to the Arab-Israeli conflict transcended history and attained mysticism. According to him, if Rabin's assassination was the failure of the possibility of a political solution, then praying for peace was all that remained. It was a choice that had an almost monastic tinge,[54] as shown by Doumia, though in an inter-religious context like NSWAS.

To sum up, Hussar's never-ending effort seemed to be that of creating a space, a place, a land for utopia, a non-place. The *foyer* of Jaffa/Tel-Aviv, the St. Isaiah House, and especially NSWAS, seem to represent the answers to this endeavor to actualize a utopia of dialogue, mutual understanding and peace between religions and cultures. The same space was being sought also by those who had converted from the religion of their family to another religion – as Hussar himself had done – and were always precariously poised and divided between their community of origin and the one of choice.[55] The same position of border-crosser between Jews and Christians that Hussar held during the first part of his stay in Israel, that he searched inside NSWAS between Jews and Arabs (Christian and Muslims) with and after the establishment of the 'oasis of peace.'

At the crest of this paradox lies the immense significance of Hussar's venture (and perhaps failure) of NSWAS. This element will also provide a measure of the importance of future historical works addressing this experience. In the Israeli-Palestinian context, more than in any other, an in-depth historiographical investigation is needed, not only for understanding the course of past events, but also for outlining the future paths of peaceful coexistence in the region between the Mediterranean and the Jordan river.

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[54] The monastic experience interpreted also as a prayer for peace shared by the three monotheistic faiths also inspired Giuseppe Dossetti (1913-1996), although with different starting points and horizons from those of Hussar's. For a history of the origins of the presence of this community in the Holy Land, see the address by Dossetti in 1973 to Cardinal Antonio Poma in the volume *La Piccola famiglia dell'Annunziata: le origini e i testi fondativi, 1953-1986*, (Milano: Paoline, 2004), 214-241.

[55] John Connelly considers Hussar and a generation of converts from Judaism to Christianity who deeply affected the preparation of *Nostra Aetate* as *frontaliers*, *border-crossers* between two communities, never leaving completely one in favor of the other. See Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother*, 63-64).

Normale Superiore (Pisa). She studied at the University of Bologna, Paris VII and she carried out research at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (Paris), the Centre de recherche français à Jerusalem (CNRS) and the Institut français du Proche-Orient (IFPO). She conducted research at several archives in Europe and Israel/Palestinian territories. Her PhD dissertation focuses on the history of the Latin diocese of Jerusalem from the establishment of the State of Israel to the Suez Crisis (1946-56).

How to quote this article:

Constructing peace....but what kind of peace?
Women's activism, strategies and discourse against war
(Israel-Palestine 1950-2012)

By *Valerie Pouzol*

Abstract

Israeli and Palestinian women played a vital role in the difficult process of achieving peace and restoring dialogue. Meeting and organizing away from the spotlight, women held discussions with each other and proposed ways to bring about reconciliation, as well as constructing alternatives to violence and war.

Women from both sides of the Green Line and within Israel were particularly active during the first Intifada, building a genuine women's peace movement while being engaged in protest activities, lobbying and solidarity actions. These grassroots organizations, which were clearly anti- occupation, took part in non-mixed activities and occasionally subverted and deconstructed national identities. In addition to these innovative and intensive activities in the field, political women and social activists tried to develop women's diplomacy at international meetings. Important joint declarations were endorsed at these pioneering conferences, which helped to prepare the ground for future international peace agreements. The outbreak of the El-Aqsa Intifada, and the disillusionment with the Oslo process, lead Israeli women to re-launch their activities in a more radical way, while the peace camp was demobilized. This new shape of activism included a broad spectrum of protest activities, combining the fight against occupation, feminist issues and anti-militarism.

The most durable legacy from women's peace activism was the formulation of new political discourses which defined peace in terms of a global concept that clearly links gender oppression and national oppression and creates an alternative discourse strongly opposed to violent and militarist options.

- Introduction
- Part I - Women for peace (1951-1998)
- Part II: The transnational network and the establishment of women's diplomacy
- Part III - New women's peace groups, changes in activist strategies and discourse for peace (1998 to present)
- Conclusions

*We should not forget a number of small
but effective peace organisations which,
based on their solid moral values,
provide invaluable services in the fields of documentation,
medical assistance and contact with people: the women's organisations.*
(Uri Avnery, December 2000).[1]

Introduction

Palestinian and Israeli women have worked intermittently since the 1950s and continually since 1987 and the first Intifada towards building a real 'clandestine peace.' Their struggles and contacts have helped to bring reconciliation and develop solidarity between two peoples at war and to maintain a link, albeit a symbolic one, during periods of conflict.[2] Female peace activists have resorted to covert activities to varying degrees in their respective societies. For Palestinian women in the West Bank and Gaza, the struggle for peace was initially undertaken individually, by meeting Israeli women for example, in order to raise awareness of the Palestinian cause[3] and create a political alternative to the conflict. Their commitment to peace and their contact with the Other exposed these women to accusations of normalization, and even collaboration, during the military occupation. For Israeli Palestinian women, contact and dialogue was facilitated not so much as a result of a shared nationality, but rather through shared activist experiences in certain sections of the non-Zionist left and in particular, from the 1970s onwards, in feminist groups. For Israeli women, peace activism took place under radically different conditions from those of Palestinian women: they did not live under occupation but in an independent and democratic state; and they could campaign publicly, sometimes within political parties or as part of a peace movement[4] which, although always a minority, counted quite large bodies of public opinion at different times. However, this rallying together was shattered by the second Intifada. Some Israeli women radicalized their actions at this time, describing their fight as opposition 'to war' rather than as a fight for peace, which they believed had become too hypothetical. This second Intifada 'stunned' the Israeli peace camp, part of which started to argue in favor of a 'divorce' from the Palestinians; despite this, it did not discourage groups of

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[1] Uri Avnery, "Pourquoi le mouvement pacifiste peine à mobiliser les Israéliens, Proche-Orient, rebâtir la paix" *Manière de voir n. 54*, *Le Monde Diplomatique,* Paris, November-December 2000.

[2] Valérie Pouzol, *Clandestines de la paix*, (Paris: Editions Complexe, IHTP-CNRS, 2008).

[3] Raymonda Hawa-Tawil, *Mon pays, ma prison: une femme de Palestine*, (Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1979).

[4] Tamar Hermann, *The Israeli Peace Movement: A Shattered Dream,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Israeli women, who even radicalized their fight against occupation. Throughout this period of 'war and peace', the struggles of both sides retained an asymmetrical character: they took several forms in Israel, but in particular that of protest or even solidarity groups;[5] in Palestine, other than the individual positions taken by certain female politicians,[6] they continued through the work of a single non governmental organization (NGO, the 'Jerusalem Centre for Women'), which had for a long time supported women's efforts for peace, under the strict control of the Palestinian Authority.

It is not always easy to reconstruct the history of women's struggle for peace, since this requires a study of sources that are often widely dispersed between activists' and private archives, and which must be combined with oral interviews to draw the background to a dispute which is still ongoing. Moreover, women's peace groups have been, and to a certain extent still are, often transitory, and their composition can change dramatically as a result of events. To a certain extent this last factor gives them their strength, but also makes them transient, hard to identify and difficult to embed in the collective memory. How and in what context did these women from both sides of the Green Line decide to commit themselves to peace and engage in a process of dialogue, meeting and even solidarity? What did these women actually contribute to the long, and at times demoralizing, task of constructing peace? Why did they decide to campaign among women, and did this have an impact on the formulation of peace discourse, on activist identities and their strategies?

Part I - Women for peace (1951-1998)

Post 1948, the few attempts made at reconciliation and dialogue between the Jews and Arabs of British Palestine were still isolated and clandestine, due to the extreme tension between the two communities.[7] The period that followed the creation of the state of Israel and the non-creation of a Palestinian state marked the end of a war in which no peace treaties were signed but only armistices, and in which Palestinian refugees contested the borders that emerged from the war. Any notion of peace and dialogue was thus impossible. Furthermore, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remained in the broader shadow of the Israeli-Arab conflict, which dominated the international and regional scene. The hope for peace or co-existence in the region disappeared among the Israeli political leaders who retreated behind the idea that the survival of the state was not assured, and that the country should mobilize all its strength, and

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[5] 'Women in Black' and 'Women for Women Political Prisoners' (WOFPP).

[6] Hanan Ashrawi and Zuhira Kamal are very well-known politicians from the oPt (occupied Palestinian territories).

[7] Mordechai Bar-On, *In Pursuit of Peace: A History of the Israeli Peace Movement*, (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996).

especially its military forces.[8]

Emerging Israeli and Palestinian nationalism created sizeable ideological barriers that were very difficult to overcome. The majority of attempts at inter-community reconciliation were made in secret, often abroad and in line with an overtly non-Zionist or anti-Zionist political persuasion.[9] It was first of all from inside Israel, in the women's branch of the Israeli Communist Party ('Maki', CP) that in 1951, one thousand Arab and Jewish women joined together around an anti-Zionist ideology and founded 'Tandi' *'Tnu'at Nashim Democratiot'*/'Movement of Democratic Women in Israel')[10]. In the years that followed the creation of the state, the Israeli CP was the most important non-Zionist force. Like the USSR, it did not oppose Israel's right to exist, but questioned the Jewish character of the State. For many years it was the only non-Zionist party in the Knesset, denouncing the treatment of the country's Arab minority. In the women's branch of the CP - which experienced differences of opinion between the Jewish and Arab sections - the latter supported the idea of a bi-national and secular state where Palestinians and Israelis could co-exist.[11] Women activists were quick to debate national questions here as well as issues concerning women and equality, even though debates on this topic were carefully concealed within the CP. 'Tandi' organized periodic demonstrations of solidarity with the Palestinian people; yet it remained very much on the margins of the Israeli public scene. When the Israeli CP split into two factions (Arab and Jewish) in 1965, 'Tandi' remained a bi-national organization, thus providing each side with a platform for exchange and action. Israeli women were also present within the anti-Zionist party 'Matzpen'[12] (the Compass) and in the future parties of the progressive left that were established in the 1970s, such as 'Mapai' (the left wing of the labour movement which favored the creation of a Palestinian State), and also in the 'Moked' party and later 'Sheli'. These last two recognized Zionism as a national liberation movement, but at the same time vigorously defended the Palestinians' right to self-determination; they also called for withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) and for the immediate opening of negotiations with Palestinians including with the PLO. However, although a number of women were clearly involved in most of these political parties, they remained a minority.[13] Although Israeli women showed a certain distrust of political parties, many strongly supported 'Ratz' (Citizens' Rights Movement),

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[8] On some aspects of militarism during the 1950s in Israel, see the essay by Marcella Simoni in this issue, pp. 73-100.

[9] David Hall-Cathala, *The Peace Movement in Israel*, (Oxford: MacMillan, Saint Anthony's College, 1990).

[10] See http://www.rosalux.co.il/TANDI_eng, accessed 6 June 2013.

[11] Ilan Greilsammer, *Les communistes israéliens*, (Paris: Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences-politiques, 1978). For a discussion of other examples of binationalism see the essays by Giulia Daniele and Marcella Simoni in this issue, pp. 1-21 and pp. 73-100.

[12] See http://www.matzpen.org, accessed 6 June 2013.

[13] Gadi Wolfsfeld, *The Politics of Provocation: Participation and Protest in Israel*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997).

founded by Shulamit Aloni and characterized by its strong opposition to the monopoly of religious parties and its marked support for feminism and the rights of Palestinians.

In the 1970s, the actions of Palestinian and Israeli women in favor of dialogue and in support of a negotiated peace settlement were given fresh impetus by two different events: firstly, the national and international affirmation of the feminist movement, and secondly, the emergence of a peace movement in Israel in 1978, to which many Israeli women were committed.

At the beginning of the 1970s, gender equality issues were marginalized in Israel, and the vast majority of Israelis believed that equality had been achieved.[14] However, numerous sensitive issues gradually came to the fore, and the feminist movement reached Israel against the troubled backdrop of the Yom Kippur War. Breaking down the myth of the 'equality bluff', feminist figures such as Marcia Freedman,[15] who was later elected to the Knesset (1973-1977), brought to light issues such as domestic violence, the right to abortion and the question of the legal status of women before rabbinical courts, as well as the marginalization of women in the army and the political domain. Information centers and legal councils were established, but the feminist movement was hesitant to become too political and take a position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Among feminists, however, while debating the issue of the oppression of women in their society and thus denouncing the gender roles established by contemporary Zionism, women were individually positioning themselves as committed feminists in solidarity with Palestinian women.[16] In 1977, during the general elections, Marcia Freedman (a past leader of the feminist movement) decided to form a women's party uniting both Jewish and Arab Israeli women.[17] Although the plan to present a common list of candidates was not successful due to disagreements, it did lead to the creation of a party with an agenda including open support for the right of Palestinians to self-determination and justice. The party denounced the government's military policy, particularly in relation to budgetary spending, and highlighted the low level of social spending, while at the same time striving to become a bi-national party.

At the beginning of the 1980s, Israeli feminism was institutionalized and focused on Israeli society; however, it provided a breeding ground for future women's peace groups by beginning to look at links between acts of oppression. For this reason, at the beginning of the decade, Israeli Arab and Jewish women stood side by side in the leading feminist centers, particularly in Haifa.[18] They learned how to debate and then develop their own questions,

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[14] *Calling the Equality Bluff: Women in Israel*, eds. Barbara Swirski and Marylin Safir, (New York: Pergamon Press, 1991).

[15] Marcia Freedman, *Exile in the Promised Land* (Firebrand: Ithaca Press, 1990).

[16] Pouzol, *Clandestines de la paix*, 98.

[17] Ibid., 99-100.

[18] 'Isha l'Isha' established in 1983, is the oldest grassroots feminist organization in Israel http://www.isha.org.il/eng/, accessed 28 June 2013.

thus creating informal areas for exchange and dialogue. While they did not label themselves reconciliation groups, they did contribute to establishing links and greater awareness of the Other and to working together. These groups were subsequently separated along ethnic-national lines at the start of the 1990s, leading to the first Palestinian feminist and *Mizrahi* groups in Israel.[19] In a twist, the future women's peace groups[20] were to provide new recruits to the feminist groups whose numbers had declined slightly at the beginning of the 1990s.

In the faltering history of dialogue and the building of peace between Israeli and Palestinian women, the foundation of the 'Peace Now' movement by a group of reserve army officers in 1978 represents an important event in the history of women's engagement in inter-community dialogue. Following the stalemate in Israeli-Egyptian peace talks, a significant part of Israeli opinion supported the opening of negotiations with Egypt. This group was created at the initiative of 348 reserve officers and soldiers from elite units, ex-servicemen and women of the Yom Kippur War. Its patriotic legitimacy could not be refuted, and the group achieved great success with strong support from the Israeli public.[21] From its foundation, the group excluded women from signing its declaration of intent.[22] Yael Tamir, who would later occupy a string of important positions within the organization, was a member of the protesting officers but was excluded from the group of signatories:

> There was a lot of pressure on women as we were not allowed to sign the petition. I did not sign it even though I was an officer and had served two and a half years in the intelligence agency in Sinai. The rule in the group was that women could not sign the letter. They believed that since only men fought, women excluded from combat had no right to sign the letter. In fact, I was the only woman active in the movement at that time. Women were not allowed to represent the movement in public. You could say that at the beginning, Peace Now was a men's movement. It was almost a year before I was officially authorised to speak on behalf of the movement.[23]

Far from being anecdotal, this incident shows a strong trend within the country's peace militancy: men who fought were considered legitimate players in the formulation of political alternatives, and thus good negotiators. As it

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[19] Pouzol, *Clandestines de la paix*, 100-105.

[20] 'Women in Black' were not labeled feminists but many activists declared that they were feminists after joining in demonstrations.

[21] Bar-On, *In pursuit of Peace*, 93-118. For further analysis on 'Peace Now' see the essay by Jon Simons in this issue, pp. 212-232.

[22] Tzali Reshef, *Peace Now: From the Officer's Letter to Peace Now* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1996), (Hebrew).

[23] Yuli Tamir, ('Shalom Achshav'), interviewed by Danielle Storper-Perez, May 1990, Personal archives of Danielle-Stoper-Perez.

became more political, 'Peace Now' gradually escaped from the exclusive control of the reserve officers and became a place for activists; however, women continued to find it difficult to establish themselves as leaders within the movement. This struggle to have their voices heard, and more particularly to assume leadership positions, can be seen clearly in accounts by women who were active in groups belonging to the Israeli left, and in the various mixed protest groups who opposed the war at different times. In 1982 during the Lebanon War, one such group, originally called 'Mothers against War', was quickly renamed 'Parents against War,'[24] following pressure from men who wanted to join the movement and assume joint responsibilities. There was considerable tension between men and women in the first Israeli groups fighting against the military-only options. Women exercised authority and made the decisions, yet found it difficult to have their leadership recognised. Yvonne Deutsch, a peace activist, recounts her experience within the mixed group 'Shana 21' (The Twenty-First Year), a left-wing anti-occupation group:

> One of the surprising things in the mixed left-wing groups is that women did most of the work. The men talked and the women acted. This leads to a sort of dichotomy. A good example is the city of tents, the demonstration organised in the Negev against the Ansar III prison camp to protest against the conditions of detention. This idea was launched by Year 21. The women organised everything. But when the time came, only the men were allowed to speak.[25]

This tension, which is not unique to peace groups in Israel, helps to explain why, at the time of the first Intifada, many women decided to campaign by themselves in single-sex environments.[26] On the eve of the first Intifada, it was primarily Israeli women who, as members of radical left-wing parties or mixed peace groups, began to find their voices. In 1982, during operation Peace for Galilee, and following a series of dramatic events,[27] women gradually began to show their opposition to what they saw as a 'war of choice' (*milhemet brirah*);[28] in which they did not feel the country was forced to take part to defend itself. Israeli Palestinian women were either absent from these protest groups, or a minority; nevertheless, they campaigned in Israeli women's or feminist groups where they learned to engage in joint campaigns.

In December 1987, the violence of the Israeli repression in the Palestinian territories propelled women's groups opposed to the military occupation onto

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[24] Nurith Gillath, "Women against War: Parents Against Silence," in *Calling the Equality Bluff,* eds. Barbara Swirski and Marylin Safir: 142-146.

[25] Yvonne Deutsch ('Women in Black'), interview by Danielle Storper-Perez and Maxine Kaufman Nunn, 1993, Personal archives of Danielle-Stoper-Perez.

[26] Olivier Filieule and Patricia Roux, *Le sexe du militantisme*, (Paris: Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences-politiques, 2009).

[27] In 1975, the mother of a soldier killed in combat created 'Gesher' (Bridge) whose objective was to bring together Jewish and Arab women to establish regional peace.

[28] Literally: war of choice or 'unjust war'.

the public stage.[29] It was at this time that a real women's peace movement emerged, bringing together a protest movement comprising a myriad of broadly transient small groups,[30] and, a few years later, an institutionalized movement with international support and funding ('Jerusalem Link').[31]

These women's groups were similar in that they had no hierarchical organization or spokesperson, and the majority of them brought together Israeli Jewish women, although some Israeli Palestinians had also been present in their ranks since the beginning of the uprising.[32] With the exception of the most institutionalized group ('Bat Shalom'/'Daughters of Peace'), an Israeli satellite of 'Jerusalem Link', all operated collectively with decisions being taken together following discussion groups. The overwhelming majority had very few financial resources (private funding) and had no headquarters or offices; meetings were held in activists' homes or in public places (municipal rooms, synagogues). They relied on the energy of the women, some of whom had never been involved in politics before; they produced newsletters, circulated petitions and called for collective mobilization. These groups took different forms: protest groups that made the Israeli people more aware and questioned the acts of politicians, groups promoting solidarity with Palestinians, and dialogue groups. Some - such as 'Shani' ('Israeli Women against the Occupation') - were highly politicized. Based in Jerusalem, this small organization was made up of women from the feminist movement, and in particular from the radical left, who wanted to inform and, more specifically, to open up a debate, by organizing discussions with female Palestinian political representatives. This group of seasoned political activists clearly denounced the consequences of the Israeli occupation on Palestinian civilians and did not hesitate to challenge Israeli feminism when it ignored the issue of the occupation.

Other groups tried to work in a more symbolic way, hoping to mobilize Jewish and Arab women in Israel and Palestinian women in the oPt. As part of this, in 1988, more than five thousand women embroidered pieces of fabric to form a huge Peace Quilt. This was rolled out by some of them in front of the Knesset on 6 June 1988, the twenty-first anniversary of the Six Day War, as a collective

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[29] It is to be noted that a number of women continued to campaign in certain mixed groups while at the same time being active in women's groups.

[30] The main groups are: 'Women in Black', the 'Peace Quilt' (Mapat ha-Shalom), 'Shani', 'Gesher,' 'Tandi', 'Women for Women Political Prisoners' (WOFPP) as well as the 'Israeli Women's Peace Net' ('Reshet') which would become 'Jerusalem Link' and its two satellite groups: 'Bat Shalom' (Israel) and the 'Jerusalem Center for Women' (JCW, West Bank - Palestine). Taking into account the different local satellites of certain groups, it is estimated that around 20 organizations were active at the start of the first Intifada. See http://www.womeninblack.org/es/history, http://www.wofpp.org/english/home.html, http://www.j-c-w.org, all accessed 6 June 2013.

[31] Simona Sharoni, *Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: the Politics of Women's Resistance*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995).

[32] Palestinian Israeli citizens were involved in the first 'Women in Black' vigils, but also in older groups such as 'Tandi,' 'Neled' and 'Gesher.' They would later also form part of the 'Peace Quilt.'

protest against the occupation. The women of the Peace Quilt sent out a very strong, anti-war political message, supporting reconciliation of the two peoples; the quilt was designed for use as a tablecloth, to cover the future negotiating table.

One particularly representative protest group[33] was 'Women in Black' ('*Nashim be-Shahor*'), established in 1987 out of the desire of certain Israeli women, and later of some Israeli Palestinian women, to use the streets and public places to declare their opposition to the violence of the occupation and the repression of the Palestinian uprising. In addition to its particular dynamism and longevity, this group was unusual in offering women a minimalist slogan that could bring together a broad spectrum of female activists. Since its foundation, it united women from very different backgrounds and ages (Zionist, non-Zionist, religious, secular, Jews and Palestinian Arabs from Israel). Inspired by the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, these women, who were often new to collective action, adopted and adapted the Argentinian mothers' weekly ritual of marching around the Plaza Constitución in Buenos Aires. In contrast to the Argentinians, who tied nappies representing children who had disappeared around their faces, the 'Women in Black' decided to protest in silence, wearing mourning clothes instead of symbols of motherhood. This was the only requirement for taking part in the vigil. They opted for dramatic action to increase awareness among the Israeli people, marching holding placards bearing the words 'Stop the occupation' in several languages.[34] The circular and silent procession was a performance, an activist happening which was repeated every week; it evoked the display of death, the invasion of phantoms into everyday urban life,[35] and of female prophets embodying a subversive mourning: that of two nations, Israel and Palestine.[36] The subversion was (and still is) heightened by the unusual and disturbing image of women who, far from portraying a reassuring image (the loving wife or mother of a soldier), have hijacked collective mourning which had previously been carefully orchestrated and guided by the state[37].

Since the first Intifada in June 1988, another group, the 'Women for Women Political Prisoners' (WOFPP) chose a different form of action to show direct solidarity with Palestinian women, carrying out important solidarity work with women prisoners. This group was founded in part by lawyers and teachers, with its headquarters in an office in one of the activists' apartments. It worked to denounce the sexist nature of the Israeli occupation and the particular

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[33] Wolfsfeld, *The Politics of Provocation*.

[34] Danielle Storper-Perez and Maxime Kaufmann-Nunn, *Israéliens et Palestiniens: les mille et une voix de la paix* (Paris: éditions du Cerf, 1993).

[35] Gila Svirsky, "Women in Black," in *Jewish Women's Call for Peace*, eds. R. Falbel, I. Klepfisz and D. Novel (Ithaca, N.Y.: Firebrand Books, 1990).

[36] Sara Helman and Tamar Rapoport, "Women in Black: Challenging Israel's Gender and Socio-Political Order" *British Journal Of Sociology* 48 (1997): 681-700.

[37] Valérie Pouzol, "L'engagement de l'ombre: homosexualité et militantisme pour la paix dans le mouvement des femmes en noir (Israël 1988-2004)," in *Le choix de l'homosexualité*, ed. Bruno Perrau (Paris, Epel, 2006), 75-87.

violence towards the numerous female political prisoners in the country's prisons. By investigating the mistreatment they have been subjected to in prisons, the WOFPP ensures that these women can have quick access to lawyers who can take on their cases. The WOFPP also visits prisoners who are often separated from their families and facilitates visits from their families by helping them fill out the necessary forms. It supports prisoners both materially and morally by providing them with items often lacking in prisons (linen, clean clothing) and regularly denounces in newsletters their poor diet, lack of hygiene and the conditions in which they are detained.[38] Where possible, they also attend prisoner hearings to check that legal procedures are being respected. The WOFPP makes information a priority and denounces the sexual abuse to which some women have been subjected in prison. During the first Intifada, it also published several newsletters in which it described the mistreatment of women.[39]

Alongside these protest and solidarity groups, several important meetings were organized at the end of 1990 between Israeli women, Palestinian Arab women from Israel and Palestinian women from the oPt. In the Arab village of Kfar Yassif and later in the town of Haifa in northern Israel, the 'Coalition of Women for Peace,' an umbrella organization that united the majority of active groups during the first Intifada, organized two important conferences, bringing together up to four hundred activists for the first time.[40] These meetings, during which the women alternated moments of relaxation and intense political debate, not only tackled the issues of the Israeli occupation, the division of land and the need for two states, but also highlighted the difficulties in Israeli-Palestinian dialogue and the question of asymmetrical relations. The conference at Kfar Yassif positioned the Israeli Jewish women as guests of their Palestinian counterparts, who were able to tackle the question of the oppression suffered by Israeli Palestinian women since 1948.[41] In discussions that were at times rather tense, the women broached issues such as the relationship between occupiers and occupied, issues of racism and discrimination against Israeli Palestinian women, and the difficulty of building trust prior to dialogue.[42] During these debates, the women of 'Shani' argued strongly in favor of entering negotiations with the PLO early, rather than waiting for total trust to be established. The women, most of whom felt marginalized in the field of political negotiation, declared above all that they should be present during negotiations and that they should play an active role

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[38] http://www.wofpp.org/english/newsletters.html, accessed 6 June 2013.

[39] WOFPP Newsletters, June 1988, March 1989, personal archives of Danielle Storper-Perez.

[40] Ayala Emmet, *Our Sister's Promised Land. Women Politics and Israeli-Palestinian Experience*, (Ann Arbor: The University Of Michigan Press, 1996). See http://www.coalitionofwomen.org, accessed 6 June 2013.

[41] The latter clearly stated that in the event of the creation of a Palestinian state, they would continue to live in Israel with the hope of obtaining full equality in terms of civil and political rights.

[42] The question of trust was even more difficult in the wake of the First Gulf War in which Palestinians declared their support for Saddam Hussein.

in the division of the territory and the drawing up of future borders.[43]

The first Intifada can therefore be considered a particularly dynamic period in women's peace activism. The Israeli Jewish activists, the majority of whom were Ashkenazi from the middle educated classes, were less politically motivated than their Palestinian partners. For the latter, (the overwhelming majority of whom had a political and feminist past), far from an affirmation of sisterhood, meeting the Other was a pragmatic act to show the oppression suffered by Palestinians both in Israel and the oPt. For Israeli Palestinian women, peace activism was an opportunity to have their voices heard. Until this point, these had been absent from an Israeli peace camp which only saw the conflict from an inter-state perspective rather than an inter-community one. *Mizrahi* women experienced similar ostracism, never being allowed to accede to collective responsibilities in the women's peace movement; these women therefore decided to no longer participate in these organizations.[44]

For Israeli women, peace activism, particularly when it is the first demonstration of a public commitment, is a multifaceted act: sometimes pragmatic in its desire to spare the life of Israeli children sent to the army, but also moral and cathartic, or feminist, this act is always complex.[45] These meetings and dialogue were particularly important for the Israeli participants as they discovered the power of Palestinian women from the territories and, in particular, their feminist convictions. For both sides, these groups represented places where they learnt about activism, places where public opinion was confronted, sometimes violently. Above all, they represented places for empowerment, where some developed a feminist conscience. The national protest groups and ongoing activist activity were not the only forms of peace activism during the first Intifada. These groups were also supported internationally by meetings of women who ratified important documents in the history of Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

Part II: The transnational network and the establishment of women's diplomacy

Although it is sometimes difficult to measure the impact that these women's actions had in the long and at times demoralizing task of building peace, many of them were particularly active behind the scenes of the peace talks during the 1990s. Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel, and Palestinians from the oPt, as well as from the Diaspora, were pioneers in establishing contacts and opening informal negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian women in the years that preceded the Oslo Accords. In parallel to the creation of protest and solidarity

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[43] Emmet, *Our Sister's Promised Land*, 91.

[44] Henriette Dahan-Kelev, "The Oppression of Women by Other Women: Relations and Struggle between Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Women in Israel" *Israel Social Science Research* 12 (1997): 31-44.

[45] Pouzol, *Clandestines de la paix*, 195-204.

groups during the first Intifada, the resolute action of the internationally supported female Israeli and Palestinian political activists not only showed that meetings were possible, but that they could accompany the signing of important bilateral texts. In the history of the lengthy construction of Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, meetings abroad played an important role: they offered Israeli women a means of circumventing the restriction on meeting members of the PLO and allowed both parties to talk more freely on neutral ground.[46]

The meetings between Israeli and Palestinian women were organized in the Diaspora, within the liberal Jewish community of Brussels, at the 'Secular Jewish Community Centre' (CCLJ) led by David Susskind since 1959, who strongly supported and promoted tolerance, dialogue and openness.[47] David and Simone Susskind had been inviting Israeli and Palestinian women to their home since 1978 and had built up contacts with women in the region to facilitate meetings. In May 1989, sixty Israeli and Palestinian women met in Brussels for a conference entitled *Give Peace a Chance: Women Speak Out.* Belgium was itself a country that had experienced inter-community tensions, and it was here that the Susskinds created the setting for this meeting. For Simone Susskind, women had an important role to play in constructing peace. This conference was considered a first in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, since female leaders of the oPt were to meet leading female Israeli representatives, members of the liberal, labor establishment. The two groups selected their delegations themselves, a difficult enough task given the diversity of their respective communities. The Palestinian delegation included women 'on the inside', who were living and bearing political and social responsibilities in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as leaders of the PLO exiled in Tunisia, and women from the Palestinian Diaspora. The Israeli delegation had to include women with political responsibilities and women who were peace activists,[48] as well as considering the ethnic diversity of Israeli society. The PLO was not officially represented as an institutional partner (even though several women were members). Despite numerous difficulties and last minute wavering, the women succeeded in drafting,[49] and subsequently signing, a declaration in which the participants jointly recognized the need for two states to co-exist. The Brussels declaration acknowledged the right to existence of a Palestinian State. But above all, it created a precedent in calling for negotiations with the PLO. This first meeting also resulted in the establishment of a

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[46] Regarding the issue of a place for activism, see Michel Warshawski, *Sur la frontière*, (Paris: Editions Stock, 2002).

[47] http://www.cclj.be, accessed 6 June 2013.

[48] Among them: Shulamit Aloni, Nava Arad, Yael Dayan, Hanna Meron, Naomi Chazan, Hanan Ashrawi, Suad Amiri, Zuhira Kamal, Leila Shahid, Rana Nashashibi.

[49] Hanan Ashrawi and Naomi Chazan were responsible for drafting the final political declaration. Naomi Chazan, professor of political science, is an Israeli politician very much involved in defending women's rights and in constructing peace. She was elected to the Knesset (MK) for the first time in 1992 with 'Meretz' and was re-elected to office three times up to 2003. She has been very involved in different women's peace groups including 'Jerusalem Link'.

'Network of Israeli and Palestinian Women for Peace,' to promote the action of women for peace.

In Israel and Palestine, as elsewhere, in Cyprus[50] and in Ireland[51], women who had played a pioneering role in working towards reconciliation were not invited to take part in the diplomatic delegations charged with negotiating peace. During the Madrid conference in November 1991, the intense media coverage given to Hanan Ashrawi as spokesperson of the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation was unable to conceal the absence of women from the delegation. The spokeswoman experienced some difficulty in gaining acceptance of her isolated position and in the end did not attend the final negotiating table. This lack of representation of women was even more surprising since the women's movement had just completed an intense period of mobilization in the oPt. In the Israeli camp, a single woman, Sarah Doron,[52] Likud MK, was summoned urgently in response to the media presence of Hanan Ashrawi.

The second peace conference was again held under the auspices of the CCLJ in Brussels, in September 1992, amidst a favorable climate following the Madrid conference and the re-election of the labor government in Israel. Here the women reaffirmed their desire to promote a fairer peace for the region, using their experience in cooperation, and established this principle as the foundation of their joint declarations. Both Palestinian and Israeli women were aware of the exclusion of women activists from the decision-making process. On this occasion they clearly reaffirmed their intent to participate in the international peace process and restated their desire to make a decisive contribution to the construction of peace in the region. Tamar Gujanski, at that time an MK for the 'Hadash' party (the revamped Israeli CP),[53] expressed the greatest concerns for a peace brokered by those in power, highlighting the absolute necessity for women from both camps to make their voices heard.

However, on this point their voices fell on deaf ears. The negotiation process which began in September 1993 with the signature of the declaration of principles (DoP) did nothing to change the situation that had prevailed in Madrid from the point of view of the presence of women. Once again, the Palestinian delegation comprised very few women. On the Israeli side, secret negotiations were conducted by military strategists and lawyers who turned the challenge of peace into a set of territorial and security stakes. In this respect, the Israelis remained faithful to a concept that peace should be negotiated by defense and military specialists. The speech delivered by Yitzhak Rabin in 1993

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[50] Podromos Podromou, "Elles marchent contre le mur de la honte" *Confluences Méditerranée*, 17 (1996): 165-169.

[51] Ronit Lentin, "Women, War and Peace in a Culture of Violence: The Middle East and Northern Ireland," in *Women and The Politics of Peace, Contributions to a Culture of Women's Resistance*, ed. Biljana Kasic (Zagreb: Centre for Women's Studies, 1997): 64-74.

[52] Sarah Doron was a Likud Member of Knesset (1977-1992). In 1991 she was Coalition Chairwoman and member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

[53] http://hadash.org.il/english/, accessed 6 June 2013.

during the signature of the DoP is enlightening in this respect. He gave precedence to a vision of peace negotiated by a military strategist who had for a long time assured the defense and security of the state of Israel. The message of women's peace groups and their tendency to deviate from nationalist loyalties can to a large extent explain their marginalization from the final rounds of peace agreements.

Nevertheless, as a result of their political positions, their convictions and courage, female politicians from both sides of the Green Line paved the way for official negotiations. Hanan Ashrawi recalls in her memoirs how, for her, the signing of the peace agreements was merely 'a play repeated for the umpteenth time, in slow motion and more extravagantly, so great was the number of rehearsals.'[54] She stresses the pioneering role of these meetings of women who, although not well known, helped disentangle the Gordian knot of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The women explored sensitive issues, essential questions and proposed monitoring mechanisms. She states that taboos were shattered, such as the prohibition on meetings with members of the PLO and the question of Jerusalem.

It was against a politically favorable backdrop[55] that the 'Jerusalem Link' was officially inaugurated in 1994, with the objective of maintaining dialogue between women from the two communities by developing joint activities thanks to the logistical support of two centers, 'Bat Shalom' (Women for Peace) on the Israeli side and the 'Jerusalem Centre for Women' on the Palestinian side. These two centers worked to raise awareness of the peace building process among women, but also to increase awareness of the role that they could play in consolidating peace within their respective societies. Since this period had aroused many hopes, protest activism fell. 'Women in Black' stopped their protest vigils on 20 October 1993 hoping, for a short time, that they would no longer be necessary. From this date, the two centers - placed under the patronage of female politicians[56] who had by now taken on governmental responsibilities - controlled the majority of women's peace actions. As a result, they were criticized by activists in the field who considered this new form of activism to have become too institutional, not sufficiently anti-establishment and too dominated by Ashkenazi women from the privileged classes. Despite some opposition, the 'Jerusalem Link' adopted several joint declarations covering important points (the two-state solution, Jerusalem as a joint capital, application of the Oslo Accords with recognition of resolutions nos. 242 and 338, denunciation of colonization, rejection of violence and the participation of women in constructing peace).[57]

The two centers had several particularly audacious joint operations to their credit: in the summer of 1997, during a period of heightened tension and while the Israeli policy of colonization continued, they launched a program of joint

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[54] Hanan Ashrawi, *This side of Peace: a Personal Account*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995).
[55] In 1992 a new Labour-'Meretz' coalition came to power.
[56] Naomi Chazan, Yael Dayan, Hanan Ashrawi, Zuhira Kamal, Leila Shahid, Suad Amriri.
[57] For the 1999 Jerusalem Link Declaration, www.miftah.org/english/, accessed 9 June 2013.

discussions on the topic of 'Jerusalem: two capitals for two States.' Once again, the meetings and dialogue on this highly sensitive question were facilitated by previously established contacts between activists who already knew each other. In 1997, the Palestinian Authority quickly approved the 'Jerusalem Centre for Women' (JCW), hoping that bilateral meetings of women would enable it to circumvent the ban on raising the question of Jerusalem at international peace negotiations. During negotiations between the PLO and the Israeli delegation, the question of the status of Jerusalem was deemed to be so sensitive by the Israelis that it was agreed to postpone discussion of it until after trust between the partners had been re-established. Throughout the run-up to this event, the Palestinian women were given political protection, which was essential in their society since, in times of crisis, contact with the Other could lead to women being accused of normalization or collaboration. For their own protection, they assembled a political committee of about thirty people in charge of providing moral support and approving each of their political platforms and decisions.[58] Throughout this joint work, it was clear that the Palestinian women officially engaged in the center were highly educated women with undisputed national standing in their society. The Palestinian JCW did not focus on Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, but rather on internal work within Palestinian society, promoting the participation of women in public life and the construction of democracy.[59]

However, work within the women's network was not immune to the increasing tensions mounting towards the end of the 1990s. The Palestinian members of the JCW demanded that the executive committee of 'Bat Shalom' should clearly state its position in reference to the new principles of a joint declaration adopted in August 1999. This alluded, among other things, to the defense of the Palestinian refugees' right of return, in accordance with UN resolution no. 194.[60] With the advent of the second Intifada in November 2000, the decision was taken to discontinue all joint programs of the two centers. As the director of the JCW explained:

> We had no choice but to discontinue the work in progress. The political climate paralysed even the idea of collaboration. Our despair and feeling of helplessness increased every day. The work for peace was increasingly questioned and we were openly requested to stop this work. The majority of women publicly distanced themselves from the Centre to save their reputations.[61]

From this date onwards, women from both sides of the Green Line continued their contact, but often met abroad. The international scene, and *a fortiori* the

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[58] Soumeya Farhat-Nasser, *Le cri des oliviers, une palestinienne en lutte pour la paix*, (Geneva: éditions Labor and Fides, 2004).

[59] Since 1996 the JCW therefore supported the constitution of a parallel women's parliament.

[60] Farhat-Nasser, *Le cri des oliviers*, 219

[61] Ibid., 220.

UN, offered activists from both sides the immunity and protection that they had found increasingly difficult to achieve at home. In 2003, the two groups of the 'Jerusalem Link' joined the 'International Women's Peace Activist Network'[62], which aimed to forge links and exchange experiences with women from other areas of conflict. By establishing contact between different international partners, this network hoped to promote the defense of civil rights and form pressure groups that would then be able to influence international decision-makers to listen to women's voices.

At the same time, Israeli and Palestinian women demanded before the United Nations and European Union that an 'International Women Commission' (IWC) composed of Israeli and Palestinian women and women from the international community, pressure for more women to be included in peace negotiations and thus make a decisive contribution to the resolution of the region's conflict. This commission would ensure that the specific needs of women affected by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were listened to, as suggested by resolution no. 1325 of the UN Security Council.[63]

Part III - New women's peace groups, changes in activist strategies and discourse for peace (1998 to present)

In addition to protests and solidarity, and their ability to organize and establish a parallel feminist diplomacy, women fighting for peace shaped activist identities, strategies and discourses within their different women's organizations. They were able to shake up the ideas of gender roles constructed by their respective nationalisms, thus radicalizing peace discourse. The non-application of the Oslo Accords and, in particular, the advent of the second Intifada in 2000 changed the playing field, as it prevented Palestinian women in the oPt from participating in joint peace actions without risking their lives. From this date onwards, most women's actions against the war were conducted by Israeli women who intensified their actions against the occupation.

Certain Israeli women activists chose to move away from the national mainstream way of thinking and from its security arguments, in favor of the concept of an all-embracing peace, thus making the issue of oppression central. As they saw things, the national oppression of Palestinians was in part linked to the oppression of women.[64] Thus, certain women activists found it difficult

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[62] www.cfd-ch.org/pdf/publikationen/focus_fr/newsletter1_03_frz.pdf, accessed 13 June 2013.

[63] The UN Security Council resolution no. 1325, adopted unanimously on 31 October 2000, is a legal and formal document that required parties in conflict to pay attention to women's rights and to support their participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict resolution. See http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf, accessed 13 June 2013.

[64] This global approach is based on the feminist theory of intersectionality. Intersectionality (or intersectionalism) is the study of the interaction of multiple systems of oppression or discrimination. This feminist sociological theory was first highlighted by Kimberlé Crenshaw in

to identify with groups who defined peace from a security standpoint[65] (e.g. 'Peace Now') or from a highly politicized point of view (various anti-occupation organizations.[66]

In this respect, the mobilization of activist identities offers a wealth of information: the range of identities varied from one which positioned activists within a legitimate national identity (the mother of a soldier) to one which placed them outside such identity (the woman in black mourning two nations). While some displayed essentialist qualities valuing the central role of the soldier's mother, others supported a more subversive identity, which obscured the nationalist message. This recourse to changing identities, which at times integrate, deconstruct or subvert national identities, allowed women to explore a larger political repertoire, and thus reach Israeli citizens as women rather than national icons.[67] Using a similar approach, at the time of the second Intifada, Palestinian feminists in the West Bank and Gaza denounced the rise of domestic violence against women in their own society and strongly opposed the national roles assigned to them, which identified them primarily as mothers of soldiers and then mothers of martyrs.

Confronted with the deterioration of the political situation both locally (the continued occupation) and regionally (the Israeli army stationed in South Lebanon), Israeli women created new groups and NGOs, juxtaposing their struggles with the older organizations of the first Intifada. During this tense period, 'Mothers Against the War' once again mobilized in Israel against the military presence in South Lebanon and in the oPt.[68]

Another organization, 'Four Mothers'[69] provides a good example of such mobilization. Created in 1998 by the mother of a soldier killed in Lebanon, this group brought together women from different locations in the country who, dressed in white and holding plastic baby dolls, demanded the withdrawal of the army from Lebanon. This group, which did not act under a feminist label or any specific political reference, was very effective in its public protests and its popularity was helped by its use of an identity considered legitimate and having broad consensus inside the country (the mother of a soldier). Meeting

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1988. See Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color" *Stanford Law Review* (1991): 1241–1299.

[65] Hannah Safran, "From Denial to Equal Representation. Women's Peace Groups and the Creation of New Feminist Activism" *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 2/2 (1985): 22-25.

[66] For instance in 'Dai le Kibush' (End the Occupation) or in 'The-Twenty-First Year' anti-occupation organisations during the first Intifada. For details see www.Israeli-left-archive.org, accessed 13 June 2013.

[67] Sarah Helman, "From soldiering and motherhood to citizenship: A study of four Israeli Peace Protest Movements" *Social Politics* 6/3 (1999): 292-313.

[68] Several groups of mothers appeared from 1997: the 'Four Mothers,' 'Mothers Against the War,' 'Women for the sanctity of life' (group of Orthodox mothers). A group called 'Mothers against Silence' had already been established in 1982 during the Lebanon War, as mentioned above.

[69] The 'Four Mothers' makes reference to the four matriarchs in the Bible Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel. See http://capital2.capital.edu/faculty/rbendor/, accessed 13 June 2013.

with the Israeli people, they were able to have numerous petitions signed. By influencing public opinion in this way, the 'Four Mothers' helped achieve the withdrawal of the Israeli army from South Lebanon in 1999. However, the part they played in this was not acknowledged, as a cultural shift occurred which placed the spotlight on action at a political level. MK Yossi Beilin, a member of the Labour party was officially credited with advocating the unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon between 1998 and 1999. These groups openly chose to position themselves within the national consensus in order to rally Israeli opinion to their cause and thus influence government policy.

These women's groups offered their activists a secure place for their activities, allowing, in some cases, the liberation of voices that until then had never dared to be expressed. Peace was therefore defined as a global characteristic, which not only ensures the security of states but also contributes to an internal calm within both society and families. In constructing their activist identity and in their work on awareness, 'Women in Black', like the WOFPP, made it clear that they see a strong connection between a militarized society and violence against women. They believed that the violence of the combatant is not always directed at the enemy, and that once arms are put down, this violence can be redirected towards the family.[70] They chose to highlight the existence of a war within a war, linking the militarization of society and its consequences in terms of symbolic and real violence against individuals. From 1998, during their silent marches on Fridays, 'Women in Black' used slogans against the occupation together with photographs of female victims of domestic violence in Israel. The WOFPP radicalized their position by revealing in their newsletters the existence of sexually-based repressive practices in the Israeli army.[71]

In their desire to highlight the 'war within the war,' fought against the background of militarization of Israeli society, Orthodox religious women also denounced the excessive sacralization of land at the expense of the sanctity of human life. In their discourse and acts, they formulated a new definition of peace more concerned with preserving life than with conquering territories and protecting monuments associated with Jewish history. In 1997, the 'Women for the Sanctity of Life' violently opposed the rhetoric of religious Zionism which made land and holy Jewish sites central elements of the connection to Judaism. One of the religious women, S., declared:

> As a religious woman, the country is important to me and tombs also have meaning for me, but what is more important to me is the life of others. I prefer to cry from a distance on the tombs of my ancestors

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[70] Simona Sharoni, "Homefront as battlefield. Gender, military occupation and violence against women," in *Women and the Israeli Occupation: The Politics of Changes*, ed. Tamar Mayer, (New York: Routledge, 1994)121-137. For an analysis of workshops and programs that educate against domestic violence in certain sectors of Palestinian society, see the essay by Erin Dyer in this issue, pp.162-184.

[71] Stéphanie Latte Abdallah, "Incarcération des femmes palestiniennes et engagement (1967-2009)" *Le Mouvement social* 2/4 (2010): 9-28.

than to cry on the tombs of my children. This is what I wrote in a letter published in the Israeli newspapers. From now on, we are saying that our lives and those of the Palestinians are more important. Peace is a central value of Judaism. We sent letters to Rabbis stating that we should preserve the lives of Jews and non-Jews, that the sanctity of life is greater than that of the land.[72]

When the second Intifada broke out in 2000, the level of violence and the return of Palestinian terrorist attacks in Israel radicalized a public opinion that was already delicate; as a result, traditional defenders of peace repositioned themselves within the national consensus of security. At that time, many people supported the construction of a security barrier and the principle of *hafradah* (separation) Thus 'Peace Now', which was opposed to the occupation of Palestinian territories, gradually positioned itself to support the construction of the so-called security barrier in 2002. It was in reaction to this crisis that, in November 2000, a 'Coalition of Women for a Just Peace' was established.[73] This organization grouped together nine women's groups and NGOs, including the historical 'Women in Black' and WOFPP.[74] The latter once again called for an immediate end to the occupation, the full involvement of women in peace talks, reduced militarization of Israeli society and social and political justice for Israeli Palestinians. The majority of women involved were linked to the Israeli radical left and campaigned in a network with European and American feminists who provided financial aid and supported their actions by publicizing them abroad. Thus, from this moment, the 'Coalition of Women for Peace' increased their public presence during military confrontations. In July 2006, the 'Coalition' launched a campaign *Women against the War*, and were thus among the first organizations to demonstrate against the war in Lebanon, in particular in Haifa where clashes with counter demonstrators were particularly violent. In November 2006, the 'Coalition' re-launched a communication campaign and sent a petition to the government demanding an immediate end to the siege of Gaza and opposing military intervention between December 2008 and January 2009.[75] In general, the anti-war campaigns had become more radical and, from November 2009, in a decision

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[72] Interview of the A. with Ayala, 'Women for the Sanctity of Life', Jerusalem, 28 May 1997. For another view on peace oriented movements of Orthodox Jews see the essay by Cristiana Calabrese in this issue, pp. 101-123.

[73] http://www.coalitionofwomen.org/?lang=en, the name would later change to 'Coalition of Women for Peace', accessed 14 June 2013.

[74] The 'Coalition of Women for Just Peace' groups together 'Bat Shalom,' 'Women in Black,' 'New Profile,' 'The Fifth Mother,' the Israeli section of the WILPF ('Women's International League for Peace and Freedom'), the 'Democratic Women's Movement' comprised of Jewish and Arab women ('Tandi'), the feminist magazine *Noga*, 'Women for Israeli-Arab co-existence' ('Neled'), 'Machsom Watch.' See http://www.newprofile.org/english/, http://it.wiser.org/group/thefifthmother , http://www.wilpfinternational.org/palestine/, http://www.machsomwatch.org/en, all accessed 15 June 2013.

[75] http://www.coalitionofwomen.org/?page_id=176&lang=en, accessed 14 June 2013.

approved by its general assembly, the 'Coalition of Women for Peace' called for support of the 'Palestinian Boycott Divestment and Sanction' (BDS)[76] appeal, thus joining the international resistance movement charged with exerting international pressure on Israel.[77] Since 2007 the 'Coalition' has been working on an investigation entitled *Who profits from the occupation?*, gathering data and then denouncing the profits made by Israeli companies from the occupation of Palestinian territories.[78]

In the majority of groups that are part of the 'Coalition', the label 'peace feminist' is commonly used, and a radical discourse is adopted denouncing oppression in all its forms, whether on a national basis (that of Palestinians), ethnic grounds (Ashkenazi vs. Mizrahi), sexual difference (men vs. women) or on the basis of sexual orientation (heterosexuals vs. homosexuals). It was therefore within groups such as 'Women in Black' that lesbians gradually found their voice to speak out against the violence they had experienced in an Israeli society that, at times of war, tends to reassert a heterosexual norm, with the family at the center of the security system.[79] With the growth of women's peace groups, and the inclusion of a gender dimension in peace activism, groups of Lesbians, Gays, Bi-Sexuals, Transgenders and Queers (LGBTQ) who were pro-peace and against the Israeli occupation appeared on the public scene both in Israel and, more recently, in Palestine.[80] The birth of the group 'Kvisah Schorah' ('Black Laundry' but also Black/Lost Sheep) can be dated to 2001, at the time of the second Intifada. This was a LGBTQ group comprising Jewish and Palestinian Israelis who had marched during the Tel Aviv Gay Pride demonstration carrying placards calling for the withdrawal of the Israeli army from Palestinian territories. Although the majority of Israeli LGBTQ groups position themselves within the national consensus and demand nothing more than to be considered part of the State regardless of its political choices,[81] a

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[76] In 2005, Palestinian civil society issued a call for a campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions in order to increase economic, political, cultural and academic pressure on Israel to end the occupation and settlements, and for the respect of the rights of Palestinians. This movement is coordinated by the Palestinian BDS National Committee established (BNC) in 2007. See http://www.bdsmovement.net, accessed 15 June 2013.

[77] Open Letter to Members of the European Parliament Committee on International Trade, posted by the Coalition Of Women for Peace (10 September 2012), http://www.bdsmovement.net/2012/cwp-acca-letter-9497, accessed 14 June 2013.

[78] http://www.whoprofits.org/reports, accessed 6 June 2013.

[79] Nitza Berkovith, "Motherhood as a national mission: The construction of womanhood in the legal discourse in Israel" *Women's Studies International Forum*, 20/5 (1997): 605-619.

[80] Lee Walzer, *Between Sodom and Eden. A Gay Journey Through Today's Changing Israel*, (New-York: Columbia University Press, 2000). On gay Palestinian runaways from the West Bank in Tel Aviv and on the help extended to many of them by gay Israeli individuals and NGOs, see the film by Yariv Mozer, *The Invisible Men*, 2012.

[81] This is the case with the 'Agudah' and 'Beit Ha-patuach'/'Open House' (Jerusalem), an Israeli NGO that supports the rights of sexual minorities in Israel while proclaiming their loyalty to the Israeli state. See Erez Lavon, Language and the Politics of Sexuality. Lesbians and Gays in Israel, (Palgrave Mac Millan, 2010). See also http://www.agudah.israel-live.de, accessed 4 June 2013.

small minority very much on the margins upholds the principle of intersectionality[82] of the campaigns and denounces both the heterosexual and national oppression suffered by Palestinians.

It was also under the feminist label, and with a view to proposing a political alternative to the military choices of Israeli society, that a radical protest group 'Profil Hadash' ('New Profile', NP) was created in 1998.[83] Although NP is a mixed-gender group, it calls itself "a group of men and feminist women." The latter are particularly active and were at the origin of the movement's foundation. In its charter, NP rejects the Israeli government's military-only options for resolving the regional conflict and denounces the social and cultural consequences of such political choices. This protest movement hopes to transform Israeli society by providing it with a new image: that of a peaceful community in which the rights of all are equally respected and defended, and a community in which there is no abusive military occupation of other people's land.[84] In this sense, this movement systematically deconstructs the gender roles drawn up by Israeli nationalism, rejecting in particular the codes of warrior heroism, the notion of the soldier-strategist-peacemaker and the extremely close links between the army and political life. The movement itself proposes action in different domains (in particular the education of young people, and the support of army conscripts who refused to be recruited[85]) in order to help reform Israeli society and, above all, put an end to the violent and discriminatory practices inspired by militarism. This movement allies the molding of a new Israeli society to the construction of peace and is involved in collective actions to bring together Israeli Jews and Palestinians.

It was with a view to denouncing the abuses committed against Palestinians at checkpoints that, in 2001, a group of Israeli women created the NGO 'Machsom Watch,' thus adapting to the changes in the military regime of occupation, and in particular, to the policy of segregation in the oPt.[86] With a type of activism which was both "engaged in the field" and "pragmatic," 'Machsom Watch' (which brings together up to five hundred women across the country) began a relentless campaign of surveillance of checkpoints, their long-term objective being the dismantlement of these. With their presence and observations, they hope to maintain continued pressure on the soldiers, and thus reduce the humiliation and mistreatment suffered by Palestinians. Despite not wanting to intervene, when they began their observations they became real

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[82] Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins," 1241-1299.

[83] This group is trying to reform statute 21 reserved in the army for unfit soldiers. In Israel, this Profile 21 is very discriminatory against entry into civil life. The group is therefore trying to gain recognition of the conscientious objector status as an official status, thus providing Israeli society with a new category. In reference to this question, see Karine Lamarche, *En attendant la chute du mur. Agir et protester en Israel aujourd'hui* (Paris: Ginkgo éditeur, 2011).

[84] http://www.newprofile.org/english/about_en/charter, accessed 5 June 2013.

[85] The status of conscientious objector does not exist in Israel. On the first conscientious objectors in Israel, see the essay by Marcella Simoni in this issue, pp.73-100.

[86] Stéphanie Latte Abdallah, Cédric Parizot, *A l'ombre du mur. Israéliens et Palestiniens. Entre séparation et occupation*, (Arles: Actes Sud/MMSH, 2011).

mediators, using their network of people to contact elected representatives and denounce abuses.[87] These older women belong to the educated upper classes; the majority is Ashkenazi and urbanized, sometimes their families include high ranking members of the Israeli army. They have issued requests for the army to install toilets, provide drinking water and erect shelters over the waiting lines. The form of their action, however, which makes no reference to any political or feminist engagement, runs the risk of helping to make the occupation less abusive by making the checkpoints more humane.

Conclusions

Israeli and Palestinian women have been pioneers in meetings and in the signing of certain particularly audacious resolutions in the history of Israeli-Palestinian dialogue. The time of the first Intifada was clearly the golden age of these meetings and this exploratory phase, while the period after the failure of the peace accords and the outbreak of the second Intifada led to a decline in bilateral meetings and the joint, ground breaking work of the 'Jerusalem Link'. Nevertheless, although the outbreak of the second Intifada provided a second moment of protest activities dominated by Israelis, it prevented Palestinians in the oPt from any official participation in activities based on co-operation. Although women continued to participate in dialogue, they did so on an individual basis or as part of international peace groups. Similarly, during this period Israeli Palestinians seemed to have lost interest in dialogue and feminist groups, preferring to campaign in areas and with NGOs that were more closely focused on their own society. In the field, Israeli women's groups and NGOs were constantly being renewed and refused to let their guard fall. Through their relentless work, they continued their fight against the occupation and denounced the consequences of the Israeli government's military choices, not only on Palestinian society but on their own society too. Although women's peace groups restricted their references to feminist identity during the first Intifada, this was no longer the case during the second Intifada, during which references to gender-linked oppression multiplied within the activist groups and NGOs.

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[87] Karine Lamarche, "Sous le regard des mères: la surveillance des check-points par des militantes israéliennes" *Confluences Méditerranée*, *Israël: l'enfermement*, (Paris: éditions l'Harmattan, 2005), 171-179. The whole issue is available also at http://www.cairn.info/revue-confluences-mediterranee-2005-3.htm, accessed 14 June 2013.

both nationalisms. Her publications include *Clandestines de la paix. Israéliennes et Palestiniennes contre la guerre, Paris, Complexe, IHTP-CNRS* (2008). More recently, as member of an International Research Program (MOFIP/ *mofip.mmsh.univ-aix.fr*) she has also conducted research on Palestinian and Israeli LGBTQ activism – questioning - and underlining the political dimension of this form of activism. Since 2011, she has conducted fieldwork and researches on Jewish orthodox feminism and protest activism against gender segregation in Israeli public space.

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"Hello pacifist"
War Resisters in Israel's First Decade

By *Marcella Simoni*

Abstract

This paper discusses the history, organization, networks and political outlook of the state of Israel's first conscientious objectors (COs) in the 1950s, and the consequences they confronted, individually and as a group. Despite it being a very unlikely period for the foundation of such a movement, a small branch of 'War Resisters' International' (WRI, 1921) was established in Israel in 1947. This paper discusses what can the attitudes towards COs tell of the early history of the State of Israel, especially at a time when conscientious objection was not recognized as a right almost anywhere. The history of the first Israeli COs breaks a number of assumptions, albeit contradictory ones: on the one hand it strengthens the image of Israel as a militaristic country; on the other, it shows that institutions were in Israel more tolerant towards COs than other countries; it shows that COs were the supporters of an non ethnically homogenous society and, most of all, that, even in a decade such as the 1950s, a different and deep voice was trying to make itself heard. This paper is based on primary sources from the WRI archives and on the correspondence that Israeli COs entertained with WRI in the 1950s.

- Introduction. The 1950s
- WRI Israel. The origins
- The Amnon Zichrony affair
- Beyond draft refusal. A broader critique

> A. *Binationalism and Israel's nationality law (1952)*
> B. *Internally and Externally Displaced Arabs (Palestinians)*
> C. *Military training in schools - gadna*
> D. *Other issues*

- Beyond the military. Other consequences of being a CO
- Conclusions

Introduction. The 1950s

In 1962 Avner Falk, a young Israeli conscientious objector (CO), described the situation around him:

> Whatever the reasons, the Israeli pacifist finds he has to confront a

cold, sneering and contemptuous attitude not only on the part of indifferent people but also on that of his own friends. A fellow student stopped speaking to me upon reading a letter of mine in an Israeli paper (…). Many other who have heard of my "conversion to pacifism" have made it a point of always greeting me: "Hello pacifist" when they see me.[1]

With these words, Falk revealed how COs were perceived in Israel in the 1950s – the decade of the 'nation in arms,' and a golden age for the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF)[2] – self righteous at best, traitors at worst and, in all cases, marginal in a society were pacifism was not considered a virtue.

This essay tells the history of a group of secular men - and a few women - who were total COs in Israel in the 1950s. This decade saw the consolidation of the newly established state and institutions through a very centralized form of statalism (*mamlachtyiut*) and through the immigration of about 600.000 Jews from Arab countries, a process which was by far more traumatic than the traditional expression 'the ingathering of the exiles' suggests.[3] The 1950s was also a decade of war: it opened on the ruins of the 1948 war, it saw the border wars and then the Suez war (1956).[4]

In a context where the state, its institutions and society undertook a huge collective effort to survive and consolidate, there appears to have been very little space for non-institutional organizations to emerge and eventually challenge its pervasiveness, especially in matters such as national defence. Even more so as, at the time, nowhere was conscientious objection considered an individual human right. Few countries had provision for it - among them Great Britain [5] - and the first non-binding international pronouncements on conscientious objection as a human right only appeared in 1967 (res. n. 337 of the Council of Europe);[6] formal UN recognition came in 1987.[7] In the context

[1] Avner Falk, *Conflicts of an Israeli Pacifists*, September 1962, folder 321, Collection War Resisters' International (hencefort WRI), International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam (henceforth IISH.)

[2] See Uri Ben Eliezer, *The Making of Israeli Militarism*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998); *The Military and Militarism in Israeli Society* eds. Eyal Ben-Ari and Edna Lomsky-Feder, (Albany: SUNY, 1999); *Militarism and Israeli Society*, eds. Gabriel Sheffer and Oren Baraks (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

[3] The literature on this topic is very vast; see Yehuda Shenhav, *The Arab Jews. A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion, and Ethnicity*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); Ella Shohat, "A reluctant eulogy: fragments from the memories of an Arab-Jew," in *Women and the Politics of Military Confrontation. Palestinian and Israeli Gendered Narratives of Dislocation*, eds. Nahla Abdo and Ronit Lentin, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 262-76.

[4] Benny Morris, *Israel's Border Wars 1949-1956*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); see also Mordechai Bar-On, "Small Wars, Big Wars: Security Debates during Israel's First Decade" *Israel Studies* 5/2 (2000): 107-27.

[5] The Military Service Act of 1916 establishing male conscription also included a conscience clause, whereby those who had a "conscientious objection to bearing arms" were freed from military service if they successfully argued their case in court.

[6] Folder 1287, Collection Amnesty International (henceforth AI), IISH.

of the 1950s therefore, the foundation of an organized movement of COs in Israel did not seem to stand much of a chance.

Some had started to resist draft before 1948, but a group - and an association, 'War Resisters' International - Israel Section' (WRII) - grew in the 1950s.[8] This association, its efforts and its struggles could be seen as a possibility - in the 1950s no more than that - for the beginning of a new kind of civil-military relations and therefore, also as a possible starting point of a relationship between an embryonic civil society and the state. Not by chance, Tamar Hermann defined this association "one of the oldest NGOs [non governmental organization] in Israel."[9]

Two themes run on the background of this essay: first, the fact that indirectly - i.e. through the political, judicial and cultural reactions of the state's institutions and society - conscientious objection represents a mirror returning their image at a given time and place. The image tells of the state's strength, weakness and/or ability to handle dissenting citizens in ways other than prison or punishment; the mirror also returns an impression of a society's ability to include members who do not share the values and practices of the mainstream. Second, it is worth reminding that, today as in the past, despite their strong and deep individual motivations, COs have organized collectively, either through international or national associations and later NGOs. The right to conscientious objection was historically asserted collectively and, in the 20th century, it was defended by associations operating at a transnational level; the already mentioned WRI is a case in point, while, for a later period, Amnesty

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[7] By then, many countries in Western Europe had laws regulating alternative civil service; by the mid-1990s few countries in Europe still drafted their male citizens, with few exceptions, notably Greece. David Fairhall, "Europe falls into step on new model army," *The Guardian*, 2 March 1996, 14, 649, WRI, IISH.

[8] Named in conscious imitation of the Socialist and Communist Internationals, WRI was established in 1921 at Bilthoven, NL. Its founding declaration reads: "War is a crime against humanity. We are therefore determined not to support any kind of war and to work for the abolition of all causes of war." 319, WRI, IISH.

[9] Tamar Hermann, "Pacifism and Anti-Militarism in the Period Surrounding the Birth of the State of Israel," *Israel Studies* 15/2 (2010): 127-148; 133. Some aspects of the early history of conscientious objection in Israel are told in Alek D. Epstein, "For the peoples of the promised land: Intellectual and social origins of Jewish pacifism in Israel" *Journal of Israeli History: Politics, Society and Culture* 19/2 (1998): 5-20; see also Anthony G. Bing, *Israeli Pacifist. The Life of J. A. Abileah*, (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990) and Michael Keren, *Zichrony v. State of Israel. The Biography of a Civil Right Lawyer*, (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2002). On grassroots mobilization in the 1950s see Tamar Hermann, "New Challenges to New Authorities," in *Israel The First Decade of Independence*, eds. Ilan Troen and Noah Lucas, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995): 105-122. On civil-military relations in the 1950s see Moshe Lissak, "The Civilian Components of Israel's Security Doctrine: The Evolution of Civil-Military Relations in the First Decade," Ibid.: 575-591. This article is different from these works; relying on hitherto unpublished primary sources, it allows a broader examination of the WRII's first decade, it shows the extensive political and cultural criticism of the first COs and it gives an idea of the association's network of domestic and international contacts.

International is another.[10] In this respect, "one of the country's oldest NGOs" was also a transnational one.

In this essay I discuss what can the attitude towards conscientious objection tell of the early history of the state of Israel, at a time when most COs in the world were imprisoned, and could suffer the capital punishment. Can we draw a portrait of the IDF - considered here as a founding institution of the state - through conscientious objection? And if so, is it more similar to the utopia in uniform drawn by Zeev Drori, or to the nightmare described by Yehoshua Kenaz in his novel *Infiltration*?[11] I thus look at some of the key members of this organization, at the development of the movement, at the ideology informing the stand and the political views of its members. I also examine some of the short- and/or long-term consequences of being a CO in Israel in the 1950s. Finally, I discuss whether any of the instances they had put forward more than half a century ago can be of any value for adding some nuance to the picture of Israel's first decade, generally represented through images of a triumphant militarism, the time that seems to have delivered, among other things, the often heard refrain 'there is no choice' (but war).

The sources used here tell the history of conscientious objection in Israel through the perspective of WRII and of its members, without introducing that of the other parties to this relationship, i.e. the government, the judiciary and the IDF. Still, this hitherto unpublished material offers an original view on conscientious objection in Israel well before it became organized in the 1980s through well-known local NGOs.[12]

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[10] The bibliography on the history of conscientious objection is very vast, both in general terms and considering specific case studies. See Lilian Schlissel, *Conscience in America; A Documentary History of Conscientious Objection in America, 1757-1967*, (New York: Dutton, 1968); *Selective Conscientious Objection: Accommodating Conscience and Security*, Michael F. Noone, Jr. ed., (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989); *The New Conscientious Objection. From Sacred to Secular Resistance*, eds. Charles C. Moskos, John Whiteclay Chambers II, (New York, Oxford, 1993); Sergio Albesano, *Storia dell'obiezione di coscienza in Italia*, (Treviso: Santi Quaranta, 1993); *Varieties of Pacifism: A Survey from Antiquity to the Outset of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter Brock, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998) and bibliography quoted therein.

[11] Zeev Drori, *The IDF and the Foundation of Israel. Utopia in Uniform*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2005); Yehoshua Kenaz, *Infiltration*, (South Royalton, Vermont: Zoland Books, 2003) [ed. or. *Hitganvut Yehidim*, 1986] (Hebrew) and its homonymous cinematographic adaptation by Dover Koshashvili, 2009. Here a group of disturbed recruits is too weak to sustain training, too geographically and culturally diverse to integrate, or excessively motivated to be able to support the physical and moral humiliations relentlessly inflicted by sadistic superiors.

[12] Among them, 'Yesh Gvul', 'Courage to refuse,' 'New Profile,' 'Shministim,' 'Combatants for Peace' and others. See http://www.yeshgvul.org; http://www.couragetorefuse.org/english/movement.asp; http://www.newprofile.org/english/; http://cfpeace.org; http://www.whywerefuse.org. See also 'Breaking the Silence,' http://www.breakingthesilence.org.il, all accessed 11 June 2013.

WRI Israel. The origins

The origins of the Israel section of WRI can be found in the pangs of conscience of David Engel, a young man who immigrated from Germany to Palestine before World war two. In 1943, when he was about 18, he contacted WRI in London to share some of the dilemmas and difficulties of a young Jew escaped from Germany who refused to join the British army, at a time when many Jews from British Palestine were enlisting. David Engel refused (voluntary) draft and, as a consequence, was expelled from Kfar Ruppin where he lived; he moved and worked for two years as an educator among Jewish children of Arab provenance in the youth village of Tel Mond, from where he was again expelled after 1945. He then found employment as a probation officer of the Mandatory government.[13]

Other COs from Palestine wrote to the WRI headquarters at this time, expressing their loneliness and doubts: they were all caught between their determination to refuse service, the uneasiness of this choice and social pressure: in 1943 from Beer Tuvia, Avraham Shimoni had written in this sense to Runham Brown, the chairman of WRI.[14] Shortly after, he told of "few conscientious objectors in Palestine."[15] In 1946, he was writing again about "the difficult times" and "the heavy burdens" he had endured "because I did not join the Haganah and up to this day I persist in my refusal."[16]

On January 13, 1946, David Engel announced to the London headquarters "the formation of a Palestinian group of WRI" in which "about 40 comrades from all parts of the country took part" and the election of a committee formed by Nathan Chofshi, Abraham Lisavoder and himself.[17] After the third meeting on 17-18 May, Engel resigned as secretary on grounds of ideological differences over the question whether the association should be Zionist - a view he did not share, and which the association embraced - and passed the testimony over to Abraham Lisavoder.[18] In this first group of COs we also find Joseph W. Abileah and Nathan Chofshi, the chairman of the WRII, the better-known COs from this first group.

Abileah's life has been told in a biographical study, in the already mentioned articles by Epstein and Hermann, and summarized for the press by Akiva Eldar in 2005.[19] Not by chance, given his central role inside the organization:

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[13] Folder (henceforth f.) 'David Engel 1943-48', 320, WRI, IISH.

[14] Letter from A. Shimoni to Runham Brown, 26 August 1943, 321, WRI, IISH.

[15] Letter from A. Shimoni to WRI, 14 September 1943, 321, WRI, IISH.

[16] Letter from A. Shimoni to WRI, 16 October 1946, 321, WRI, IISH.

[17] Letter from David Engel to WRI, 13 January 1946, 320, WRI, IISH. A partial list of 32 names (inclusive of adherents and sympathizers) and the Circular n. 1 containing the statute of the new organization are in Ibid.

[18] Letter from David Engel to WRI, 19 May 1946, 320, WRI, IISH.

[19] Epstein, "For the peoples of the promised land;" Hermann, "Pacifism and Anti-Militarism;" Bing, *Israeli Pacifist*; Akiva Eldar, "The first Israeli conscientious objector," *Haaretz*, 21 July 2005.

from 1946 until the end of the 1960 he was the Haifa secretary of WRII, and then treasurer until 1961. Abileah then gave up the former role to two younger members, Yeshayahu Toma Shik and Amnon Zichrony, but kept the latter one.[20] In these capacities he was for more than 20 years one of the souls, and the corresponding arm of the WRII. Among the various documents of this lengthy correspondence, we find a brief curriculum:

> Born in 1905 in Austria, immigrated to Palestine in 1926, graduate of College des Freres (sic), Jaffa, professional (violin, viola), worked for Jewish-Arab cooperation since school days and objected participation in Arab-Israel war. Member of WRI-Israel since 1949 and WRI International Council since 1957. Active SCI [*Service Civile International*] and other peace movements.[21]

Abileah himself told the history of his turning to non-violence, and then making it a way of life in various instances: on the journal *The War Resister*, published by WRI in several languages (including Esperanto) and circulated worldwide, in personal correspondence, and in 1968 in a letter addressed to King Hussein of Jordan (when he was trying to push forward a post-1967 plan for a Confederation of the Middle East).[22] From 1936 onwards, Abileah's choice towards non-violence stood firm and, as he himself states, he had great difficulty in finding employment. He then refused to join the 'Haganah' and, according to Hermann, he was also the first CO to be tried by a military court for refusing the draft notice he had received in 1948, at the age of 33. Despite the war, Abileah received a "mild sentence with harsh words," as Hermann wrote: "to perform duties that did not require the use of force and did not offend 'his conscience' at a time when the nation was fighting for his life" and to pay 50 liras.[23] As we learn from later correspondence, the fine was never collected, but neither was Abileah permanently discharged. In 1949 he was informing WRI that:

> a few days after the session of the Supreme Court, I was dispensed

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[20] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 17 April, 1961, 319, WRI, IISH.

[21] 319, WRI, IISH, n.d. SCI was established in 1920 by the Swiss engineer Pierre Cérésole; the first international voluntary work camp took place on the battlefield of Verdun and it aimed at reconstructing the war damaged village Esnes-en-Argonne as a symbol of reconciliation between France and Germany. See http://www.sciint.org/learn-about-sci/155, accessed 7 June 2013.

[22] During a trip in 1936 (during the Great Arab Revolt) in the area of Lydda, he was confronted with locals who claimed to have "received instruction from the Imam to kill any Jewish person they would meet." To his interlocutor Abileah responded in Arabic that "if it was his duty, he should do so." The story ends with no aggressor having the courage to throw Abileah in a well, and with someone finding the practical solution of converting him into a Moslem by repetition of the necessary formula and letting him go. Letter from Joseph Abileah to King Hussein of Jordan, 4 January 1968, 319, WRI, IISH.

[23] Hermann, "Pacifism and Anti-Militarism," 144; Epstein, "For the peoples of the promised land," 11-13.

from any duty for reasons of health. The authorities had been informed that I stayed for some time in a sanatorium for nerve diseases where in fact I had been hidden by friends and relatives in order to escape terrorists' persecution in the year 1947. This was taken as pretext to declare me as chronically soul-sick and settle the matter without loss of prestige. The fine of LP 50 was not collected from me.[24]

The matter came up again in 1951:

Regarding my refusal to do alternative service within the army, I have not had any personal trouble up till now. The matter is however, not definitely settled as yet. (…) I am likely to be called to a session before a special committee to decide if I will be granted civil alternative service and consequently be exempted from army service.[25]

The chairman of WRII was Nathan Chofshi from Nahalal. Born in 1899, he migrated from Poland to Palestine in 1909; though coming from a religious family, he had joined 'Ha-Poel Ha-Tzeir,' which he then left in 1921 over ideological divergences.[26] His conscientious objection was a mixture of religious and socialist/internationalist values; he belonged to an older generation and in part acted also as theoretical/spiritual guide, often making reference to holy texts to inspire and teach younger generations of COs. As he wrote:

Judaism (…) is neither petrified nor frozen. It has many shades, and it knows ferment and struggle, (…) is interwoven with the unity of mankind and the cosmos and with world peace.[27]

The shades, and struggles that he emphasized mentioned God scolding the angels rejoicing at the drowning of Egyptians when the Red sea opened; rabbi Akiva and rabbi Tarfon defining a court murderous should it pronounce a death sentence in 70 years; Moses fighting the Amorites only when they refused peace and "rose to make war against Israel;" the sages of the Talmud as heirs to the prophets, and Hillel who established the rule "do not do unto your neighbour that which is hateful to yourself."[28] Getting closer to the 20th century, Chofshi referred to Ahad Ha'Am, A.D. Gordon and Tolstoy. Most of the COs mentioned thus far were also active - or had some contact - with 'Ihud' (Unity), the organization set up in 1942 by Jehuda L. Magnes and other

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[24] Letter from J.A. Abileah to WRI, 10 June 1949, 319, WRI, IISH.

[25] Letter from J.A. Abileah to WRI, 7 May 1951, 319, WRI, IISH.

[26] Epstein, "For the peoples of the promised land," 6-12; Hermann, "Pacifism and Anti-Militarism," 138-41.

[27] Nathan Chofshi, *Peace and Non-violence in Jewish thought* [1954?], 319, WRI, IISH

[28] Ibid.

former members of the binational movement 'Brit Shalom' (1925-1931).[29]

This first period in the history of WRII also saw the first dropouts: either Jews who were COs (or WRI supporters) in their home countries but felt they could not take the same stand once in Palestine/Israel; or members of the association who left Israel with their families after the 1948 war. One example of the first case is Lola Wegner, a British Jew, long-standing member of WRI in the UK. Immigrated to Palestine in 1946, she explained why she was unable to join the would-be founded WRI-Palestine:

> I know that the situation in Palestine in its reality does not allow me to pledge myself for good to do away with any possible defence in a critical moment. That would mean suicide for my people who only want to build up peacefully (…). I am willing, even eager, to cooperate with our Arab neighbours, and the proposition of Magnes (…) seemed to me fair and reasonable. (…) After the slaughter of six million people, that little corner, that home, means to be or not to be, also in a spiritual sense to keep the values on an ancient people revived (…). I am deeply troubled not to be able to join. I know you faced the same problem during the war and answered it differently.[30]

In 1950 Lola Wegner was a subscriber to the WRI's publications and a decade later she was heading the 'Women's International League for Peace and Freedom' (WILPF, est. 1915), whose groups "were established in three big cities."[31] In 1949 there had been another dropout, Herbert Leader, who immigrated with his wife and daughter to Argentina.
In 1950, 50 people participated to the national conference of WRII[32] and, as we can read in «Haaretz» in 1954, they were estimated to be about 100. The journalist described them as

> strange idealists but of exceptionally high moral standard (…) ready to suffer great hardships for their stand. They refuse to serve in the army but I know some of them who are the first in every voluntary public service. Their refusal is based on a deep conviction and they cannot be taken as people who want to evade service for ease or comfort.[33]

With the exception of David Engel and few others, these first COs were not

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[29] Yosef Heller, *From Brit Shalom to Ihud. Judah Leib Magnes and the Struggle for a Bi-national State*, (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 2003) (Hebrew); see also Hermann, "Pacifism and Anti-Militarism," 130-133; on 'Ihud' and 'Brit Shalom' see the essays by Giulia Daniele and Cristiana Calabrese in this issue, pp. 1-21 and pp. 101-123.
[30] Letter from Lola Wegner to Runham Brown, 14 May 1946, 322, WRI, IISH.
[31] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, 13 February 1960, 319, WRI, IISH.
[32] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, 26 December 1953, 319, WRI, IISH.
[33] [n.a.], "Difficulties to Conscientious Objectors," *Haaretz*, 14 September 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.

anti-Zionist. As we shall see, throughout the 1950s many of them grew increasingly critical of the state's policies in matters of citizenship legislation, of Palestinian refugees and of the progressive militarization of the educational system. Still, most of them supported the idea of a Jewish nation-state; the words of Lola Wegner speak for themselves. The *Shoah* and the 1948 war, which they painfully understood in existential terms, were too close question which kind of ethno-political implications such a nationalist idea might carry in the long-term.

Given the small numbers, it should come as no surprise if this group remained altogether unknown after its foundation; WRII kept a low profile within a society that celebrated military virtues in part out of ideology and in part out of necessity, and related more naturally to the London headquarters than to the existing Israeli political parties and groups. One exception was the small 'Ihud,' which COs perceived closer to their political outlook. On a political level, WRII failed to have the right to conscientious objection included in the 1949 National Service Law, which established compulsory military service for male and female citizens.[34] In 1951 Abileah reported:

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[34] The law established that males aged 18-26 would serve for 24 months; males aged 27-29 would serve 18 months. Women aged 18-26 would serve 24 months. Men aged 18-39 and women aged 18-34 would also serve reserve duty for 31 consecutive days in 1 year and 1 day each month; men up to 40 years old would serve up to 14 consecutive days and 1 each month. The law did not contemplate the possibility of refusal. f. "National Service Law 1949," 320, WRI, IISH; see also www.israellawresourcecenter.org/israellaws/fulltext/defenceservicelaw.htm accessed 22 May 2013; on this law and its later amendments from a gender perspective see Nira Yuval Davis, "The Bearers of the Collective: Women and Religious Legislation in Israel" *Feminist Review,* 14 (1980): 15-27. For a description of today's cases of service exemption see http://www.newprofile.org/english/node/205, accessed 11 June 2013. Haredi Jews have been exempt from military service according to the *Torato Omanuto* arrangement (The study of the Torah is his art/occupation, Hebrew, b. Talmud, Tractate Shabbat, 11a) reached between Prime Minister David Ben Gurion, 'Agudat Yisrael' and Yitzhak Meir Levin during the 1948 war. This legal arrangement exempted students from Haredi yeshivas (about 400 at the time) from military service if their sole occupation was to study the *Torah*. The number of those exempt under *Torato Omanuto* grew from 800 men in 1968 to 41,450 in 2005. In 1999, 9.2% of the soldiers enlisting were exempt under the *Torato Omanuto* terms. This situation prompted Prime Minister Ehud Barak to institute the Tal Commission, which produced the so-called Tal law approved by the Knesset in July 2002 as a temporary law subject to revision. The Tal law continued the *Torato Omanuto* system with some changes, but in February 2012 the Supreme Court of Justice declared it unconstitutional. The bibliography on these themes is very vast. See Stuart Cohen, "Tensions Between Military Service and Jewish Orthodoxy In Israel: Implications Imagined and Real" *Israel Studies* 12/1 (2007): 103-126 and bibliography therein quoted.

> All efforts to have the right of conscientious objection legally recognised (…) were of no avail even to this day and, though the attitude of the government towards conscientious objectors is by far more tolerant, any basis for legal recognition is lacking and depends for good or bad on the goodwill of the government. The legally unstable position looms like a steady menace above the heads of our friends, and they may be arrested any day and any hour.[35]

Still in April 1957 Abileah was writing:

> There is no consideration of providing legal protection to male COs; the Minister of Defence has, however, the power to release or transfer to non-combatant duties at his option, provided the stand is made on enrolment.[36]

If we look at civil society as one of the sites where the power of the state and institutions is negotiated and at times re-addressed, we can conclude that WRII, as a representative of an embryonic civil society during Israel's first years, failed to have its claims recognized. Yet, the experience of these first years (and of these very first COs) seems to sketch a picture in which the state's institutions did not adopt a punitive policy against conscientious objection *per se*, unlike several other countries.[37] Each case was evaluated individually and, as a general rule, non-combatant (military), and eventually civil, service was given in alternative. As we read in one of the many letters that Abileah sent to WRI to describe the situation of Israeli COs, in 1950 about 20 members of WRII had applied for exemption from military service but it was only after the personal intervention of the Tel Aviv secretary, Dr. E. J. Jarus(lawski), that he was "promised that a committee will be formed to examine each case separately and provide for alternative service within or without the army as the case may be."[38]

As we shall see below, responses by individual COs varied, given the different nature of alternative service offered, non-combatant or civil; periods of harsh reclusion were given to COs refusing one or the other, or both. In such cases WRII - and then WRI - intervened. What appeared crucial in the process was to state one's conscientious objection *before* draft and not *after* conscription. The authorities had shown their tolerance towards Abileah between 1948 and 1951, as they could afford a few COs in the framework of the *leve en masse* of that period. For other cases - Nathan Chavkin, David Kremer, Meir Lissai, Michel Posner, Michel Rubinstein (1951), David Almaliah (1952), Chava Bloch,

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[35] *Report of the Israel Section to the WRI International Conference at Brunswick* (27th-31st July 1951), 319, WRI, IISH.

[36] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 20 April 1957, 319, WRI, IISH.

[37] See fn. 9.

[38] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 7 May 1951, 319, WRI, IISH.

Baruch Friedman, Michele (Michael) Tagliacozzo, Itzhak Weiss (1953) just to quote a few names - alternative civil service was generally negotiated individually with the authorities. However, as the example below demonstrates, confronted with individuals who objected *after* recruitment, the IDF and the authorities were much less tolerant.[39]

The Amnon Zichrony affair

In the context of the WRII's early history this case is important for various reasons. It was the first time that the authorities faced a CO objecting after starting service; he was described as "one of the difficult cases of a soldier on active service when his conviction is formed and strengthened while experiencing the war machine face to face."[40] Unlike Chofshi and Abileah and others, he had been born in Israel, a fact that also changed the authorities' perception of this association, i.e. a group of foreign-born eccentric individuals. Abileah's case had been settled on (mental) health grounds after all. The Zichrony affair functioned as a tester of the authorities' attitude and of the WRII's ability to negotiate the case of one of its younger members; it presented a test for the Israeli press and society too, as Zichrony and the association received a broad publicity both in Israel and abroad. At the time Meir Rubinstein, another CO, commented: "a wave of sympathy has surged up but also hostile attitudes nourished by fear, and narrow-mindedness come not unfrequent."[41]

The history of Zichrony's enlistment, refusal to bear arms, imprisonment, hunger strike and trial, the defense strategy of his attorney Mordechai Stein, the press coverage of the case, the family's involvement, and the movement of public opinion in Israel in favor or against this case are known and are detailed in Keren's biography of Amnon Zichrony.[42] In brief, Zichrony was drafted on July 20, 1953 but he refused to take the IDF oath and to carry arms. In November he was transferred to (non combatant) medical duties, which he also refused; in March 1954, while on leave without permission, he made contact with WRII. His trial was scheduled for June 1, but a few days before, Zichrony started a hunger strike that lasted for 23 days. The military judges did not recognize his "deep pacifist conviction," nor acknowledged his objection on grounds of conscience as a counterweight for his responsibility as a soldier, and they condemned Zichrony to seven months imprisonment for insubordination. Zichrony was hospitalized as he suffered some injuries leaving the courtroom, and in hospital he continued his hunger-strike. A few weeks later, Abileah informed WRI in London on the developments of this case:

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[39] See also the cases of Joseph Chabaz, David Kremer and Benjamin Gut, described by Abileah to WRI respectively in 1949, 1951 and 1956, 319, WRI, IISH.

[40] *As appears in WR* [*The War Resister*], n.d. [Haifa, 28 April 1957], 319, WRI, IISH.

[41] Letter from Meir Rubinstein to WRI, 20 June 1954, 320, WRI, IISH.

[42] Keren, *Zichrony v. State of Israel,* 31-53

> Today I have some better news: Amnon's sentence has been cancelled by the army authorities and he has received a month's leave from the army service for rehabilitation and final clarification of his position. He still refuses to do any alternative service within the army as offered to him but has stopped the hunger strike after having completed his 23rd day.[43]

This case tested WRII's ability to mobilize its national and international networks. In June 1954 Abileah wrote that the members had "all been very active throughout the period of Amnon's hunger strike." Such activity consisted in "writing letters to various authorities" and "applying for the intervention" of well-known personalities, such as Rejendra Prasad (President of India), Albert Einstein and to the Israeli President and Prime Minister; the replies of the latter two were considered "rather discouraging." More effective was the press conference organized by attorney Mordechai Stein with Nathan Chofshi, Joseph Abileah and E. J. Jarus(lawski), the Secretary of WRI's Tel Aviv Section.[44] In *The War Resister* this conference was described as the event that, for the first time, interested Israeli public opinion to the case of a CO. WRI organized a worldwide protest and the members of WRII made a one-day hunger strike of solidarity.[45] In August 1954, we find Zichrony "working (…) as a civilian in the ARP without uniform, without pay and having his meals at home," i.e in alternative civil service, a condition that he maintained until December of the same year when he was released.[46] In September 1955, Zichrony obtained his discharge from the army on grounds of conscience.[47] We find him again in 1957 protesting the treatment of French COs in front of the French embassy together with another CO, Shalom Zamir.[48] In the early 1960s he briefly volunteered at the WRII's administration.[49] As a lawyer, he then worked with the younger generation of COs (and with many other more - or less - famous defendants).[50]

In September 1954, «Haaretz» had written how "the general public became aware of the existence of COs in Israel after the fasting of Amnon Zichrony;"[51]

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[43] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 20 June 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.
[44] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, 20 June 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.
[45] *As appears in WR [The War Resister]* [Haifa, 28 April 1957], 319, WRI, IISH.
[46] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 30 August 1954 and 25 December 1954, IISH, WRI, 319.
[47] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, 25 September 1955, IISH, WRI, 319. In 1963 Zichrony was "summoned for service in the reserve forces." For the correspondence relating to this second stage see Ibid.
[48] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, 20 April 1957, IISH, WRI, 319.
[49] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 21 July 1962, 319, WRI, IISH.
[50] See Michael Keren, *Zichrony v. State of Israel. The Biography of a Civil Right Lawyer*, (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2002).
[51] [n.a.], "Difficulties to Conscientious Objectors," *Haaretz*, 14 September 1954, IISH, WRI,

his long hunger strike received wide press coverage in «Haaretz», «Davar», «Al Ha-Mishmar», «Maariv», «Zmanim», «Ha-Olam Ha-Ze», raising a number of questions: was Zichrony just a young man playing the hero in fields other than the battlefield, as the sentence he received implied? Was he ready to accept hardship, but only in a hospital bed, as some of the articles' titles recited? Had the state actually proclaimed a death sentence (by hunger) on one of its young citizens by not recognizing conscientious objection as an individual civil right? Could "the Israeli public not accept this small number of people whose conviction does not allow them to carry arms but are ready to serve society voluntarily in any field of social activity and with fidelity to be praised?"[52] The next paragraph will try to answer, at least in part, to these questions.

Beyond draft refusal. A broader critique

Being a CO in Israel the 1950s did not mean just to refuse draft, to support fellow war resisters *in loco* or abroad, or to do alternative service; it also meant keeping in touch with similar organizations elsewhere, or with associations that functioned as coordinating agencies between national branches: the London headquarters of WRI, but also the 'American Friends Service Committee' (AFSC, the Quakers), SCI and others. Locally, Israeli COs maintained tight connections among themselves and with 'Ihud.' Unlike the latter, WRII was not necessarily for a binational state but, analyzing the individual and collective stands of many COs at the time, and some of the themes they debated, it is obvious that draft refusal was just one aspect of a broader political vision which sharply contrasted with that of the majority.

There are at least four questions under which we can divide such broad criticism: first, the issues binationalism and Israel's nationality law; second, the theme of Palestinian refugees (called at the time Arab refugees) and of their properties: these were both externally and internally displaced Palestinians; third, the spreading militarism of Israel's society, with a special focus on education. Finally, several members of WRII adopted fiscal objection against taxes that supported the war effort, the IDF or related institutions.

A. Binationalism and Israel's nationality law (1952)

These were two very different issues, but, as we shall see, they were connected through an idea that the country (and its population) should not be divided, whether through partition, war or legislation. WRII had been against partition in 1947; in its report for the WRI triennal conference of 1951, the organization drafted a manifesto in Arabic and in Hebrew inviting "to preserve the integrity of our country and to stop the fraternal strife and to save as long as there is still something to be saved."[53] The publication of the manifesto was followed

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319.

[52] Ibid.

[53] *Report of the Israel Section to the WRI International Conference at Brunswick* (27th-31st July 1951), 319,

by a small pamphlet entitled *Letter to friends* that propagated the binational idea and the creation of a forum for both Palestinian Arabs and would-be Israelis. In the meantime the whole country turned into the front, and binationalism drowned. However, throughout his life, Abileah returned on this idea: in 1947 he had obtained an interview with the UNSCOP commission to push forward a plan for a confederation of the Middle East on the Swiss model; in the immediate aftermath of the Six day war, he again devoted much of his time and energies to a similar plan. The London headquarters of WRI, the Quakers and other internationally accredited agencies helped him at that time.[54]

Reporting to WRI on WRII's activity in 1951-54, Chofshi anticipated the approach of some historiography on territorial partitions, by making a comparison between bodily integrity and national unity, whereby the partition of a country (and the moving of populations) closely resembles the physical dismemberment of a body, or loss of limbs. In 1954 Chofshi was describing Israel as a wounded country, as "one body representing an organic unit and which has been devided (sic) into two sections, one Jewish sovereign state and a part annexed to the Kingdom of Jordan."[55] As he wrote, the war "between Israel and the neighbouring Arab countries" had left "its negative print on the country's life in every respect;" the situation of the Palestinians - "hundreds of thousands of Arab farmers who fled (…) from fear of war or who had been expelled by the Israel authorities" - was dramatic; they had left a void in the country, in its landscape, in the professions and in the chain of production, and no one could take their place. Although Chofshi did not analyze the social composition of Palestinians, he nevertheless acknowledged their dramatic fate as refugees and the terrible consequences of this situation for Israel too. In this context, he foresaw quite accurately the dynamics of the upcoming border wars:

> Hundreds of thousands of refugees living on the boundaries are a continuous source of infiltration of desparate (sic) people deprived of all means and who endanger the peace of the country. Attacks on life and property by infiltrees (sic) and bloody acts of revenge from both sides in particular between Israel and Jordan aggrevate (sic) the situation gradually and it will not be a surprise if some day the war will flare up again with Jordan and other Arab states.[56]

Binationalism was equally unpopular in 1947, in 1951 and in 1954, but WRII as

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WRI, IISH. *An Appeal April 1948 by the Palestine Section of the War Resisters' International to the Arabs Jews and Christians in Palestine and the world,* 321, WRI, IISH.

[54] 319, WRI, IISH.

[55] WRI-ISRAEL Section, *Report to the WRI triennial conference at Abbaye du Royaumont near Paris (29.7-3.8.1954) of activity covering the period summer 1951 to end of April 1954. Introduction by Nathan Chofshi,* 319, WRI, IISH. See Johnathan D. Greenberg, "Generations of Memory: Remembering Partitions in India/Pakistan and Israel/Palestine" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 25 (2005), 89. For a later view on territorial partitions, see the essay by Cristiana Calabrese in this issue, pp. 101-123.

[56] WRI-ISRAEL Section, *Report to the WRI triennal conference.*

an association, and COs as individuals, continued to see it as the only way to stop the strife between brothers, as they used to write. This was one of the contexts that saw WRII and 'Ihud' cooperate: through the latter, they entertained common activities with "some Arab friends," some of whom had even registered with WRII. However, broadening their shared activities was recognized as almost impossible in 1951 especially for "the difficult conditions in general and the military rule imposed on the Arab villages and towns."[57]

The promotion of binationalism in Israel in the 1950s might strengthen the idea that these groups were quite out of touch with the region's socio-political and international situation. Still, WRIIs' methods recall at least one of the two conditions outlined years later by Johan Galtung as founding of any peace-building work. Galtung saw bottom up peace-building as made of two successive stages; he termed the first "dissociation," i.e. deconstructing ideological and social structures that help build oppression and perpetuate violence, and the second "association," i.e. constructing movements and activities that can confront social and political inequalities from within societies.[58] In this respect, WRII and 'Ihud' tried to build a framework where to realize the first stage, and eventually move on to the second. The battle to change certain sections of the Nationality Law (1952) represents an example of such attempt.

The criticism of WRII towards the Nationality Law was not directed at that part known as the Law of Return, i.e. the immediate granting of citizenship to a Jew "the moment he puts his foot on Israeli soil;" as mentioned before, those who did not believe that WRII should be Zionist left or maintained a low profile. Criticism was raised towards the exclusion of non-Jews from citizenship, i.e. Palestinians who had been in the country (art. 3) when the law was passed.[59] On this matter the journal *Ner* (mouthpiece of 'Ihud') presented the words of Samuel Ussishkin, attorney and son of Menachem Ussiskin:

> Even if we could justify our stand with regard to the distinction (made by the Law) between the naturalization of Jews and the naturalization of non-Jews, we could under no circumstances justify such distinction with respect to those (Jews and Arabs) who are already in Israel. There is no way of cleansing the defilement of discrimination...[60]

In 1952, when these words were written, the Nationality Law was one of the

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[57] Ibid.

[58] Johan Galtung, *Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means (the Transcend method)*, (New York: UN, 1998). Also available at http://www.transcend.org/pctrcluj2004/TRANSCEND_manual.pdf, accessed 1 June 2013. On Galtung see the essay by Erin Dyer in this issue, pp.162-184.

[59] See http://www.israellawresourcecenter.org/israellaws/fulltext/nationalitylaw.htm accessed 19 August 2012.

[60] *Highlights of the Yiddish and Hebrew Press*, Vol. III, n. 40, 320, WRI, IISH.

few basic laws of the state (for lack of a constitution) and, for this reason too, it was considered crucial in peace circles that it would be "extremely liberal, in fact the very example of liberality." In this instance *Ner* recalled the same framework that Chofshi used, invoking the words of Hillel on the one hand ("whatsoever is hateful unto thee, do not unto thy neighbour"), and the history of Jewish persecution on the other. The Talmudic idea of Israel as a "light unto the nations" - of doing better than others once the opportunity is given, (i.e. once Jews have a state) - was at the foundation of such reasoning.[61] For a group that maintained a direct relationship between their conscience and their political stand, it was therefore quite untenable that

> an Arab, then, wishing to become a citizen of Israel must first produce proof that he had been a citizen of Palestine (during the Mandate rule) and even then he will be granted citizenship papers only when the Minister of the Interior so wishes....[62]

On April 4, 1952 an association called 'Jewish-Arab Assembly' organized a protest meeting in Haifa that "saw the participation of all sections of the population" and which rejected the clauses, which it did not hesitate to define racial, "incorporated into the law of citizenship which the Knesset adopted on April 1st 1952." In particular, this assembly demanded the revision of paragraphs 3, 6 and 11 "so as to grant automatic citizenship to all Arabs who were in Israel on the day of the adoption of the law, the same as is granted to Jews."

> The Assembly demands that the Law permit acquisition of Israeli citizenship through marriage. We should be mindful of the tragedies that were caused, and are being caused, to thousands of Arab families in Israel through the separation of husbands and wives. The power to unite families now rests entirely with the Government which is exploiting it as a political means.[63]

Unable to participate to the meeting, Chofshi protested against "the insult and the wrong new law imposed upon our brothers and neighbours":

> This law is not only a heavy blow for the indigenous Arabs who will be the direct sufferers from it; it is also a great insult to the concepts of democracy and freedom. It is an insult to every true Jew who, generation after generation, has fought against discrimination and all forms of national oppression, racial or religious. And it is a great insult also to the Jews of all countries in the Diaspora. Let us Jews and Arabs continue our work together, for the abrogation of this discriminatory

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[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] *Highlights of the Yiddish and Hebrew Press*, Vol. III, n. 40, 320, WRI, IISH.

law and for the full and absolute equality of all citizens of our land.[64]

The absolute equality of all citizens before the law remained one of the objectives of WRII to promote peaceful coexistence. As the following paragraph shows, this was particularly important in the case of Palestinians, whether internally displaced or external refugees.

B. *Internally and Externally Displaced Arabs (Palestinians)*

The WRII denounced the issue of refugees as fuelling conflict. In this context we have to place Abileah's visit to the village of Migdal Gad (one of the temporary names in the transition from Majdal to Ashkelon) on 8 October 1950, and the quite long and tough report he delivered to WRI in London. The history of the departure of this last group of internal refugees towards Gaza, the ways in which it was engineered, and the question of how many refugees were left in Israel after the 1948 war (who was granted refugee status, who received Israeli citizenship and who was forced to leave), have been discussed by historiography at length.[65] In this respect Abileah's report - who visited the place just before the last group of about 600 was exodused towards Gaza – does not add much to the already existing knowledge today. At the time it certainly did, and it still provides a dramatic first hand account of the situation, revealing also how different was the outlook of a CO on the politics and on the events of their times.

The report pointed out that "before the Arab-Jewish war Migdal was a township of 12000 inhabitants" and that "2700 were left when it became part of Israel;"[66] it also suggested some of the reasons for the population's feeble resistance:

> Every inhabitant had to fill in a questionnaire stating whether he intended to leave for Egypt of Jordan or to stay in Israel. In the latter case, he was to be transferred to Galilea (sic) or another place where he was to live as a refugee. Under these circumstances they all replied that they wanted to go to Egypt or Jordan and had to sign an application asking the military governor to allow them to leave Israel. Having done so, he was permitted to take all his belongings or cash (Israel pounds to be exchanged against Palestine Pounds on the frontier) and was also granted transport to the frontier. (…) The property is administered by the custodian of abandoned property. Rent or income from other sources will be registered in their name. Of course, administration fees and taxes nearly equal the income and no noticeable amounts will

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Benny Morris, *1948 and After. Israel and the Palestinians*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 345; see also Alexander Bligh, "Israel and the refugee problem: from exodus to resettlement 1948-1952" *Middle Eastern Studies* 34 (1998), 123-47, 125; see also Ilana Feldman, "Home as refrain: remembering and living displacement in Gaza" *History and Memory* 18 (2006) 10-47.

[66] Joseph Abileah, *My trip to Migdal Gad on 8.10.1950*, 319, WRI, IISH.

remain for these people in Israel. Besides, they had to sign a declaration that they do not intend to return to Israel. To my question, what would happen, if a citizen of Migdal refused to sign the application for forced migration, he replied that the military governor "advised" every one to sign, for after 15th October 1950 all the remaining inhabitants would be forcibly removed by the army and expelled from the country without any property and after that date he would not be able to help anybody. (…) Within 3 months, 2100 inhabitants left the place. Tomorrow 400 will leave and next week the remaining 200. After that, the place will be "Araber-rein."[67]

This description is at times disturbing, in particular for some of his terminology: Israel as an "Araber-rein" state, the Arab area as a "ghetto,"[68] the "preparation for an exodus" for a population group forced to migrate by means of psychological pressure, humiliation, financial coercion and for lack of endogenous political guidance. Altogether, Abileah returned from Migdal Gad/Majdal with a "very depressing picture."[69] The use of such expressions in this context remains problematic, even more so just a few years after they had an application against Jews. At the same time, these were fairly common at the time, as in the well-known case of Lydda for example.[70] The second part of this report, subtitled *Glimpses*, seems a group portrait one minute before it fades from the picture. Despite some sentimental overtones, it represents an important testimony.

> Walking through the Ghetto streets you see a few shops still open and a few coffee houses where some men play cards or *tawla* and the radio blares gay tunes as if it wanted to hide and make forget the bitter reality. Old men who had spent the days of their childhood here and rejoiced their grandchildren, tomorrow have to leave the place where they lived for seventy or more years. At the gate of the mosque, the keepers and other believers sit motionless. The miller submits the list of his property to the military governor in the presence of the mayor. Here there is still a weaving shop of which Migdal had so many in the past, and two workers toil as if nothing has happened. How long? Perhaps another week, and then they will have to close the shop and go abroad. At the other end of the street about 300 meters from the Ghetto, are the offices of the military governor. At the doors a signboard: Housing

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[67] Ibid.

[68] The bibliography on the use of *Shoah*-related words in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is very vast; see Gerald Cromer, *A War of Words. Political Violence and Public Debate in Israel*, (London, New York: Frank Cass, 2004); see also the classic Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1991).

[69] Joseph Abileah, *My trip to Migdal Gad on 8.10.1950*, 319, WRI, IISH.

[70] See Michel Khleifi, Eyal Sivan, *Route 181. Fragments of a Journey in Palestine-Israel*, 2004, esp. ch. Lydda-Lod.

commission. Here the new immigrants are queuing up to be allotted the flats which will be vacated tomorrow. (…) There are 1100 new immigrant families, altogether some 4000 souls. A great part are (sic) from oriental communities. The villages nearby as Isdud, Yibna, Julis and other places have been laid in ruins and the new immigrants have been settled in new settlements near the destroyed villages. Not so in Migdal, to which nearly no new houses have been added and where the immigrants have been put up into the houses of the former inhabitants, into their houses and on their forcibly abandoned land...[71]

Pressure on Palestinians to leave was also a way to acquire, and eventually incorporate, new estates to house thousands of Jewish immigrants arriving in Israel from European or Arab countries, one aspect of the 'ingathering of the exiles' mentioned above. WRII denounced this situation that, in their opinion, was laying the foundations for new wars.

As it is known, the claim that the "hundred of thousands of refugees living on the boundaries" were "a continuous source of infiltration,"[72] and thus a danger for the new owners who then sought revenge, was right. This circle of violence was leading to bloody fights, loss of life and was aggravating the relations between Jordan and Israel. Moshe Dayan, in his famous eulogy on the grave of Roi Rutenberg on 19 April 1956, indeed described this very same situation. In a masterpiece of political rhetoric, he fed fear in the population together with the myth of the "brutal destiny of our generation"- that of the peasants turned into warriors against their will (Israelis) to react against the murderous (Palestinians) who have a "burning hatred for us." In the very words of Dayan: "for eight years they have been sitting in the refugee camps in Gaza, and before their eyes we have been transforming the lands and the villages, where they and their fathers dwelt, into our estate." [73]

Recognizing the immediate power to mobilize the population for war, WRII denounced this rhetoric and called attention to the refugees' real situation. In March 1955 Professor Arthur Bruenner, in a lecture to younger COs, listed a few points that, unless addressed, would in his opinion deepen "the abyss between the two people and frustrate every peace endeavour." Among them, the release of the funds of Arab refugees frozen in Israeli banks, the return of the property taken, the settlement by peaceful means of frontier incidents, and the stop of retaliations by both sides, as many of them ended hitting innocent people.[74]

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[71] Joseph Abileah, *My trip to Migdal Gad on 8.10.1950*, 319, WRI, IISH.

[72] WRI-ISRAEL Section, *Report to the WRI triennal conference*.

[73] Nissim Calderon, "All that we have left," *Haaretz*, 14 September 2006. The A. compares Dayan's eulogy for Roi Rutenberg to David Grossman's eulogy for Uri Grossman, considering both as formative and enduring texts of the identity of each generation. See http://www.haaretz.com/all-that-we-have-left-1.197279, accessed 11 May 2013.

[74] As in many of the operations of the 1950s along (and over) the Eastern and Western borders;

WRII thus recognized the Palestinian refugee problem not only in terms of citizenship (above), but also in terms of property loss/restitution. Like Chofshi, also Bruenner belonged to WRII's older generation. It was clear to them that "peace will not be possible without returning of a least a part of the Arab refugees;" at the same time, they also used a repertoire of images and a language that oscillated between orientalist overtones - Palestinians as *fellahin* - and the recognition of their role in the country's economy (agriculture). They were the ones "who know the special character of the Palestinian soil for hundred of years,"[75] a statement that hit the myth of the Zionist transformation of Palestine's presumed desert into a garden. In this framework one should also see the mobilization of WRII against the Land Requisition Law of 1953. This allowed Government to claim the property of lands which were not in the possession of its owner as of 1 April 1952, in practice legalizing expropriations of Palestinian land for military purposes or for the establishment of Jewish settlements.[76]

Some of these ideas were taken up by the new generation of CO that met in Tel Aviv in November 1955 and organized a 'National Conference of Conscientious Objectors.' Here, they released a short manifesto in five points. Point n. 3 remarked their awareness of the "terrible fate of hundreds of thousands of Arab refugees" and demanded "that a great part of them be returned to our common fatherland."[77] The Conference also underlined the rejection of "war and violence as means to settle differences" and the need to adopt a mentality open to "renunciation for the sake of peace."[78]

Despite the small numbers, two generations started to co-exist in WRII in mid-1950s, at least until 1961 when Shik became national Secretary.[79] He represented the younger members, who maintained a more outspoken political approach and did not defend objection only on religious or moral grounds.[80] However, in both generations we find a belief and a determination that stood in stark contrast to the emerging Israeli security and national discourse: all of them saw the uselessness of "bellicose speeches by both sides" and considered it "impossible that Israel should remain indifferent to the great misery of Arab

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see the incursion at Beit Jala (January 6, 1952), the Qibya incident/massacre (14 October 1953), the various other operations by IDF Unit 101 (among them Operation Black Arrow - February 1955), the Qalqilya police station attack (October, 1956). Benny Morris, *Israel's Border Wars, 1949-1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[75] Arthur Bruenner, *First Steps to peace in Middle East*, 9 March 1955, 320, WRI, IISH.

[76] See http://www.israellawresourcecenter.org/israellaws/fulltext/landacquisitionlaw.htm, accessed 11 May 2013.

[77] Summary of deliberations at the National Conference of Conscientious Objectors, Tel Aviv, Nov. 19, 1955, 319, WRI, IISH.

[78] Ibid.

[79] The whole Shik archive (5 boxes) is not yet indexed at IISH.

[80] Yeshayahu Toma Shik, *WRI meeting on Prisoners' Day*, [1961?], 321, WRI, IISH.

refugees." Helping them was seen as a way "to put the wrong right and to remove the causes leading to fratricide," because "the good example will awake the good which his dormant also in the camp of the 'enemy'."[81]

C. *Military training in schools - gadna*

In 1953 WRII initiated a campaign against *gadna* ("youth battalion courses" arranged by the Department of Education) fearing that the militarization of youth would begin before the age of 18, when conscription started.[82] As Ben-Yehuda wrote, although *gadna* emphasized values like trekking and scouting, some *gadna* forces had fought actively during the 1948 war and, in general, the aim of this kind of programs helped youth familiarize with the military before conscription.

WRII saw the establishment of *gadna* as the wheel of history moving backwards, i.e. the potential return - in the very country that in the 1950s symbolized the living defeat of Nazi-Fascism - of regimes that, among other things, not long before had built their consent also on the militarization of youth.[83] In 1953 Nathan Chosfhi protested the establishment of *gadna* with the Israeli Minister of Education and Culture.

> Years ago, we and the civilized world witnessed with horror how the most wicked and vile dictators of the gentiles poisoned the youth of their countries with the venom of militarization: we saw the terrifying fruits of the doctrine of the sword grown by the military education of Fascist Italy's and Nazi Germany's children. (...). We parents, brothers and sisters demand: hands off these children! (…) Let the Jewish schools imbue its pupils, young and old, with the teaching "love thy neighbour" with the sublime role of Hillel "That which is hateful to you, do not do unto your fellow man." Let the school teach the children the words of our great prophets on the redemption of Israel and the return to Zion in peace, friendliness and non-violence.[84]

In 1954, it became clear that participation to *gadna* had not been sanctioned by law, and that students who refused to participate would be dismissed from

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[81] Summary of deliberations at the National Conference of Conscientious Objectors, Tel Aviv, Nov. 19, 1955, 319, WRI, IISH.

[82] On *gadna* see the traditional Joseph W. Eaton, "Gadna: Israel's Youth Corps" *Middle East Journal* 23/4 (1969): 471-483; on the Masada myth and the *gadna*, see Nachman Ben-Yehuda, "The Masada Mythical narrative and the Israeli Army," in *Military and Militarism in Israeli Society*, eds. Eyal Ben-Ari and Edna Lomsky-Feder, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999): 57-88, 81-83.

[83] The bibliography on these themes is very vast;, see Michael H. Kater, *Hitler Youth*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2004) and Lisa Pine, *Education in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010); Carmen Betti, *L'opera nazionale balilla e l'educazione fascista* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1984).

[84] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 12 February 1954, [translation of Nathan Chofshi's letter to the Minister of Education and Culture dated 13.12.1953], 319, WRI, IISH.

school on grounds of breaking discipline, rather than of breaking the law. No such law was ever passed anyway[85] and no such dismissals had occurred in 1954, with the exception of a controversy surrounding two girls, Hagar and Ruth Lisser, daughters of a CO. Of this controversy Abileah informed WRI:

> Two girls, aged about 16 and 17, daughters of our devoted member Lisser, maintain a strong stand against conscription and will make us busy in the future. One of them, Hagar (about 16) refused to do the compulsory youth training in school. She was threatened by the director of the school that she will not be accepted for final examinations which will deprive her of the possibility to go to university. She replied quietly and simply "I do not go to school for certificates but to acquire knowledge" whereupon she was released from "Gadna" training.[86]

Two years later, when called up for conscription, Hagar and Ruth Lisser became COs. In 1956 Hagar declared under oath that "reasons of conscience restrain[ed her] from serving in the Security Service" and that she could in "no way kill, no matter from which side the order to kill [was] given (…)."[87] As for Ruth Lisser, she was allowed to "do alternative service as a school teacher as soon as she (…) finish[es] her studies at the seminary."[88]

D. Other issues

Political criticism and personal commitment were expressed also in other ways, i.e objecting to taxes that supported the war effort, directly or indirectly. For example, Abileah had the amounts due redirected to maternity funds of the National Insurance or to orphanages. WRI acknowledged this as a sign of a "liberal attitude on the part of the Israeli Government which (…) no other Government has shown."[89]

Another way to struggle was to maintain an international(ist) network and political horizon. Many COs participated to SCI work camps. In 1952 WRII supported the establishment in Israel of international work camps sponsored

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[85] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 26 March 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.

[86] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 28 April 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.

[87] Joseph Abileah, "War Resisting Sisters" *The War Resister* 70 1st Quarter, (1956): 13, 319, WRI, IISH.

[88] Ibid.

[89] On 18 December 1955 Abileah reported on a letter to WRI the application he had made to the National Insurance office: "I am an objector to military service for reasons of conscience and as such have not served (and will not serve in the future) in the reserve forces in the Israel Army. (…) I cannot support as a matter of principle, a financial institution which is financing directly the army and therefore ask you to release me from payment to your cash but thereagainst oblige me to pay it to another institution (social or national). (…) Please consider my application seriously and do not compel me to act against my deep belief and conviction that war (be it war of defence or offensive), preparations for war and anything connected with it, is a crime against humanity." 319, WRI, IISH. See also the letter of reply, dated 1 November 1955 in Ibid.

by the AFSC and UNESCO.[90] COs regularly mobilized for Prisoners' of Peace Day (1 December), established by WRI in support of war resisters imprisoned all over the world.[91] Abileah was in contact with the already mentioned WILPF headed by Lola Wegner.[92] Many COs participated in joint strikes and demonstrations with Palestinian Israelis: these were against unemployment, organized by the Communist party, as in Nazareth in 1950. Or they could be demonstrations for peace, as in the case of the march that took place in Tel Aviv on 11 March 1950 following the 1st Israel Congress for Peace "organized by the Mapam (left wing of the Labor Party) and the Communists."[93] It had been attended by more than 5000 "Arabs and Jews from all parts of Israel" with "all Arab towns and villages (…) represented."

As mentioned above, most CO were in favor of binationalism. Their meetings often saw the participation of "Arab friends"[94] and contacts with 'Ihud' were constant; Nathan Chofshi was associated editor of *Ner*; Bahais were also in contact with WRI;[95] some references are found also to the 'World Peace Brigades' and to the 'Partisans of Peace,' the two organizations connected to WRI through the 'International Liaison Committee of Organisations for Peace' (ILCOP, est. 1949).[96]

These are just few examples of the national and international networks, and of individual and collective stands, that placed these early COs apart from the generally nationalistic mainstream in Israel in the 1950s, both considering the political scene and the population's attitudes. As we shall see below, an international(ist) horizon was essential for many COs to find some respite from isolation and, at times, ostracism.

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[90] WRI-ISRAEL Section, *Report to the WRI triennal conference*. See letter from Meir Rubenstein to Grace M. Beaton, WRI, 321, WRI, IISH; See also American Friends Service Committee – Israel Unit, Patricia Hunt, *Final Report of Kfar Vitkin Work Camp* (August 1 to September 15, 1952), f. 'Shimshon Marcus', 321, WRI, IISH.

[91] See just for a few examples up to 1961, *As appears in WR* [*The War Resister*], [Haifa, 28 April 1957]; letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 9 February 1958; letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 13 December 1958; WRI ISRAEL section, *Report of the activity covering the period 1.5.57-31.8.60*, Haifa, 30 August 1960; letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 3 November 1960; letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 7 October 1961; letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 21 November 1961; letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 13 December 1961, all in 319, WRI, IISH; Yeshayahu Toma Shik, *WRI meeting on Prisoners' Day*, f. 'Yehashayahu Toma Sjik 1962-77', 321, WRI, IISH.

[92] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, 13 February 1960, 319, WRI, IISH.

[93] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, 17 April 1950 and 24 April 1950, 319, WRI, IISH. See the classic Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906-1948*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); see also the essay by Giulia Daniele in this issue, pp. 1-21.

[94] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 26 December 1953, 319, WRI, IISH.

[95] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, Haifa, 9 February 1958, 319, WRI, IISH.

[96] www.santibox.ch/Peace/Peacemaking.htm#5.%20A%20New%20Start, accessed 9 June 2013.

Beyond the military. Other consequences of being a CO

Being a CO in Israel in the 1950s felt claustrophobic, even only considering the non-military consequences. In 1954 «Haaretz» reported:

> The Department of Defence have (sic) recently refused the grant of exit permits to two conscientious objectors who intended to go abroad in order to work in international work camps sponsored by the Quakers. The University refused to accept an application from a young CO who was not in possession of army papers. Government departments and various institutions do not accept COs for work.[97]

Denial of exit permits was fairly common; in case of COs, it hindered their attendance to international meetings, SCI or AFSC working camps, the WRI international conferences, or their work or study specialization abroad, just to mention a few examples. Many COs encountered this prohibition, which made it difficult for them to be active in that international(ist) movement of which they felt part, even if from afar. In 1955 Abileah explained how the granting of exit visas worked in Israel:

> Any man or woman in military age has to submit his or her army booklet or release while applying for an exit permit. (…) As most of conscientious objections have no army booklet at all (and also no official exemption) no application for an exit permit is accepted from such members of our group. Young people who are not pacifists are denied permission to leave the country according to need and urgency of their services in the army. Ration booklets are issued for food only. They are not permanent and are renewed to the population at irregular periods of time (every one or two years). Last time the procedure was like for exit permits. Every person liable for army service had to present his army booklet.[98]

These words highlighted the centrality of the army in Israel, as an institution regulating individuals' study, travel, work and food distribution, issues that Abileah defined "civil rights." Such centrality emerges more clearly looking, only briefly for reasons of space, at three examples; they sum up some of the questions mentioned thus far. Among them, how the state of Israel scored in comparative perspective with other countries in its dealing with COs.

Together with Zichrony, Yitzhak Weiss (Halivni) belonged to the new generation of Israeli-born COs that the authorities were not ready to let go

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[97] [n.a.], "Difficulties to Conscientious Objectors," *Haaretz*, 14 September 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.

[98] Letter from Joseph Abileah to WRI, 18 December 1955, 319, WRI, IISH.

unchallenged.[99] In 1954 Weiss was unemployed, as it had proven difficult to "find work in any institution factory or government office without army certificates" and thus he could not pay his own defense.[100] In 1955 he had to struggle for admission at the Hebrew University (HU) "because of his status as a CO" and three years later his permission to specialize at the University of London was withheld for the same reason.[101] Once admitted to the HU, he did not receive a food ration booklet without presenting papers from the army.[102] In 1953 Chofshi had already denounced how distribution of food rations had been made dependent on the fulfillment of military duties, as an attempt of the government to pressure COs.[103] The second case is that of Meir Rubinstein who, in 1954, wrote a first hand account of his experience. His testimony shows the frustration of a CO who wanted to maintain an international(ist) personal and political perspective:

> I have left no stone unturned; have spared no time, no effort, no money – yet my travel documents are not ready. (…). Now it is certain that I will be unable to attend the conference and, as to the participation in work camp abroad, the prospects are not favourable either. I had agreed to the formalities of registration and medical examination, but refused to swear the oath of allegiance to the army, even in its modified form especially arranged to meet the demands of a CO in their view; the consequence, no exit permit. The ministry of education, as well as the ministry of foreign affairs, both in some ways concerned with the work camps, were unfriendly and declined to be helpful. I have the impression (…) that the officials of both ministries do not favour an independent work camp movement where people like we (sic) are active to prove the sincerity of our convictions, to promote Arab-Jewish friendship and where young people come in touch with us and might learn about peace in the ways by which it will be achieved as we think.[104]

In 1953 the case of Michele (Michael) Tagliacozzo came up. A Roman Jew who had survived the Nazi raid of October 1943, he had joined the Zionist Italian youth movement *Hechalutz* after the war. Once in Israel, he settled in a religious *kibbutz*. In 1953 we find him among COs threatened of expulsion with his family of three from the religious *kibbutz* where they lived "if he does

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[99] Letter from J. Abileah to WRI, Haifa 26 March 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.
[100] Letter from J. Abileah to WRI, Haifa 30 August 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.
[101] *Extract from letter from Jospeh Abileah dated 10.5.58*, 319, WRI, IISH.
[102] Letter from Jospeh Abileah to WRI, 25 December 1954, 319, WRI, IISH.
[103] Letter from Nathan Chofshi to WRI, 19 August 1953, 320, WRI, IISH. On the austerity regime imposed by the government in April 1949 and its social and political effects throughout the 1950s see, Orit Rozin, *The Rise of the Individual in 1950s Israel. A Challenge to Collectivism*, (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2011).
[104] Letter from Meir Rubinstein to Grace Beaton, WRI, 20 July 1954, 320, WRI, IISH. See also the previous letter of 20 June 1954, Ibid.

not change his views." His story is not particularly different from that of other COs; however, the correspondence about him shows that, in a comparative perspective, the headquarters of WRI considered Israel to be a better place for a war resister than others, in this case of Italy, where Tagliacozzo was apparently planning to return:

> I note you say Michael Tagliaccuzzo (sic) intends to immigrate to Italy, from whence he comes, but surely he will confront greater difficulties in Italy than in Israel. You of course know the feelings against war resisters in Italy, where there is no kind of recognition of conscientious objection, and where if a man refuses, the first sentence is usually a year, and he is called up again for military service as soon as the first prison sentence has been completed. I think our friend should be told this.[105]

Conclusions

In 1962 Avner Falk, the pacifist mentioned in opening, described Israel as "a terribly militaristic country" turned into a "nation of soldiers out of an essentially peaceful and harmless (though much-harmed) Jewry in European, African and Asian exile."[106] He also told how difficult it was to hold on to the principles of Gandhi, Tolstoy, Bertrand Russell and Albert Schweitzer, whose words appeared to fall on deaf ears in Israel in the 1950s.

Israeli COs in general, and the few cases that I could present here, not only objected to conscription; they had a more articulated socio-political outlook that was deeply critical of the mainstream's views. Most of all, they cultivated the image of humanity as a family/close knit community of brothers sharing the same (humanistic) values and thus proposed an idea of citizenship that was not based on ethnical homogeneity. For this reason too, their cultural and political horizon was that of the internationalist organizations, conferences, peace camps, an international reality that was developing after World war two in Europe and elsewhere.

If we were to draw a portrait of WRII in the 1950s we would see an organization that operated in circles: a very active core, a cohesive membership, a group of sympathizers, and many subscribers to the publications that WRI regularly sent over. There were also some women, but their number was small. In the 1950s – and for two other decades at least, members of WRII were total/absolute objectors. Most of them refused draft, to wear a uniform while doing alternative civil service, to carry and use arms, army pay and army food,

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[105] Letter from Grace Benton to Joseph Abileah, 4 March 1953, 319, WRI, IISH. The law (n. 772, Marcora Law) allowing and regulating conscientious objection was approved on 15 December 1972. See www.caritasitaliana.it/caritasitaliana/allegati/524/Legge%20772-72.pdf, accessed 11 June 2013. Before this date conscientious objection equalled draft dodging or desertion. See Alberto Albesano, *Storia dell'obiezione di coscienza in Italia.*

[106] A. Falk, *Conflicts of an Israeli Pacifist*, September 1962, 320, WRI, IISH.

even in prison. If doing alternative civil service, some of them refused to sleep in army buildings. Several of them refused to serve in medical corps (non-combatant service), an oft-offered compromise between duty to serve and conscientious objection. Some of them were vegetarian and spoke/corresponded in Esperanto. Others were *Shoah* survivors, or their children.

Overall, WRII remained a rather isolated group with a limited political impact. Still, its purpose had not been to fight a battle of principle, to oppose nationalism/Zionism as such, or to convince others to join. This association defended those who objected, and tried to negotiate the best possible conditions that would allow them to assert their stand as an individual civil right, and thus not go to jail. In this respect, it responded to one of the features expected from civil society, i.e. negotiating with the state for the transformation of political reality.

The situation of Israel's first CO was difficult, but it appeared to be better than that of others elsewhere, as WRI in London often remarked; and even if such attitude changed over time when numbers increased, such initial tolerance, especially if compared to other national cases, should be noted.

In their study on comparative conscientious objection, historian Charles Moskos and sociologist John Chambers identified three stages in the evolving relations between war resistance, military service and the state. In stage one (pre-industrial, early modern society) the state grants official recognition to conscientious objection, limiting such recognition to the "churches that came out of the Protestant Reformation." At this stage, peace churches hold the leadership of COs movements, and the state grants the right to serve in non-combatant capacity as a compromise. Stage two belongs to industrial, late modern Western societies: the state accepts religiously based objection as a criterion, and alternative civilian service under military aegis is offered to COs. A change in the quality and quantity of conscientious objection occurs in the transition between stage two and three, which is characteristic of post-modern and post-industrial Western societies: the leadership of the movement for conscientious objection now includes secular groups, objection is not based on religious grounds, selective conscientious objection is contemplated, numbers of objectors swell, and the state offers civilian service under a civilian aegis.[107]

Considering Israel's COs in the 1950s – even if only through the sources of their only association – we find ourselves in stage two, with some overlap into stage three. In the objection and leadership of Chofshi, Abileah, Jarus(lawsky) and others there was a religious element that this first generation tried to pass on, without success. Chofshi did not miss an opportunity to quote from the holy texts to explain his stand. So did Bruenner, when he discussed issues of citizenship law. Despite this initial religious overtone, the WRII in the 1950s was, and remained, secular.

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[107] Moskos and Whiteclay Chambers II, *Conscientious Objection*: esp. from p. 197.

As for the state of Israel, it never recognized conscientious objection as an individual right by law. However, at the time, it recognized a broader criterion than religious objection only; it did not set up an alternative civil service, but it demanded either non-combatant (military) or civil (non-military) duties from COs, obtaining very different reactions. Provided objection had been declared before conscription, it offered non-combatant duty to be performed under military aegis, which many of Israeli COs still refused; only after substantial mobilization, did the state authorities offer civil service, as the Zichrony case shows. Not offering male COs alternative civil service to be performed under civilian aegis, the state of Israel had not at the time - and has not today - passed the threshold between stage two and three, despite having well entered a post-industrial, a post-modern, and being in long transition towards a post-Zionist phase.[108] On the contrary, several NGOs of Israelis COs crossed this very same threshold in the 1980s, for example upholding the right to selective conscientious objection, which also led to a swelling in their numbers. However, this part of the history of conscientious objection and war resistance in Israel will be told elsewhere.

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[108] Laurence J. Silberstein, *The Post-Zionist Debates. Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).

In God's Name: Jewish Religious and Traditional Peace and Human Rights Movements in Israel and in the Occupied Territories[1]

by *Cristiana Calabrese*

Abstract

The peace-building activities of several dozens peace and human rights activists from Israeli-Jewish religious and traditional milieus has not received enough attention either from the Israeli and international media or in the academia. Actually, following the Six-day war and the beginning of the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a certain number of Orthodox Israelis committed to peace and justice founded a Jewish religious peace movement called 'Oz Ve Shalom' ('Strength and Peace'). A few years later, another peace movement called 'Netivot Shalom' ('Paths of Peace') was founded by Israeli yeshiva students and young new immigrants from the United States. At the end of the 1980s, in the wake of the first Intifada, a small circle of religious and traditional Israeli rabbis committed to the respect of human rights came to the fore and, more recently, a group of Hasidic settlers inspired by the teachings of Rabbi Menahem Froman has created a peace group called 'Eretz Shalom' ('Land of Peace'). This essay, mainly based on primary sources such as periodicals, bulletins, newsletters, monographs, leaflets and other diverse material published by these movements, and on oral testimonies collected by the Author, retraces the history of these religious peace groups in a cohesive framework.

- Introduction
- 'Oz Ve Shalom,' 'Netivot Shalom' and 'Meimad': Modern Orthodox Jews and Religious Zionists for peace and justice
- 'Shomrei Mishpat/Rabbis for Human Rights': All streams of Judaism together to advance the respect of human rights
- 'Eretz Shalom': Jewish settlers building bridges to the Palestinians in the West Bank
- Conclusions - The importance of grassroots peace movements within the Israeli-Jewish religious and traditional context

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[1] The movements that I will present in this paper need to be defined as 'peace movements' and not as 'pacifist movements.' For an explanation of the differences existing between these two categories, see Tamar Hermann, "Contemporary Peace Movements: Between the Hammer of Political Realism and the Anvil of Pacifism" *The Western Political Quarterly* 45/4 (1992): 869-93; Tamar Hermann, *The Israeli Peace Movement: A Shattered Dream*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 31.

[2] Yehuda Stolov, "Religious Narratives on Jerusalem and Their Role in Peace Building," *Religious Narratives on Jerusalem and Their Role in Peace Building: Proceedings of an Interreligious Conference Held October 20th, 2009 in Jerusalem*, (Jerusalem: Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst, 2009), 58.

[3] Interview with Uriel Simon, Jerusalem, 06/28/2012, (Hebrew).

Introduction

> *"When people of different communities never live
> more than a few tens of kilometers from each other –
> and many times live just a few meters from each other –
> agreements between governments, if they are to be sustainable,
> cannot be the first and main step but an advanced one,
> which is built upon real and significant improvement
> in the pattern of inter-communal relations."*[2]

"Peace is not a matter of texts, it is a matter of hearts."[3] So I was told by Uriel Simon, professor emeritus of Bible at Bar Ilan University and among the founders of religious Zionist peace organization 'Oz Ve Shalom.'[4]

Uriel Simon was born in Jerusalem, in 1929. His commitment to peace traces its roots back in Mandatory Palestine, where his father, Akiva Ernst Simon (Berlin, 1899 – Jerusalem, 1988), a German Jewish philosopher and educator, devoted himself to build peace and trust between Arabs and Jews.[5] In the early 1920s, Akiva Ernst Simon was active in the 'Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus,' an educational center established in Frankfurt am Main by Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig. When he arrived to Jerusalem, in 1928, Akiva Ernst Simon joined 'Brit Shalom' ('Covenant of Peace'), a group founded in 1925 by a circle of Jewish intellectuals, whose aim was to promote peaceful coexistence and genuine cooperation between Arabs and Jews.[6] In 1942, Akiva Ernst Simon,

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[2] Yehuda Stolov, "Religious Narratives on Jerusalem and Their Role in Peace Building," *Religious Narratives on Jerusalem and Their Role in Peace Building: Proceedings of an Interreligious Conference Held October 20th, 2009 in Jerusalem*, (Jerusalem: Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst, 2009), 58.

[3] Interview with Uriel Simon, Jerusalem, 06/28/2012, (Hebrew).

[4] On Uriel Simon's conception of peace as a religious commandment, see Uriel Simon, "*Seek Peace and Pursue It": Topical Issues in the Light of Bible, the Bible in the Light of Topical Issues*, (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2002), (Hebrew).

[5] On Akiva Ernst Simon's thought about the State of Israel and the relations between Arabs and Jews, see Akiva Ernst Simon, "Nationalismus, Zionismus und der jüdische-arabische Konflikt in Martin Bubers Theorie und Wirksamkeit" *Bulletin des Leo Baecks Instituts* 33 (1966): 21-84; Akiva Ernst Simon, "Are We Israelis Still Jews? The Search for Judaism in the New Society," in *Arguments and Doctrines: A Reader of Jewish Thinking in the Aftermath of the Holocaust*, ed. Arthur A. Cohen, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1970); Akiva Ernst Simon, "The Neighbor ("re'a") Whom We Shall Love," in *Modern Jewish Ethics: Theory and Practice*, ed. Marvin Fox, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1975); Akiva Ernst Simon, "Religion und Staat in Israel," in *Religion und Politik in der Gesellschaft des 20. Jahrhunderts: Ein Symposium mit israelischen und deutschen Wissenshaftlern*, eds. Semaryahu Talmon and Gregor Siefer, (Bonn: Keil Verlag, 1978), 148-91.

[6] On 'Brit Shalom,' see Daniel Howard Nevins, *State Building and Social Criticism: The Internal Dynamics of Brit Shalom, 1925-1933*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989); Shalom Ratzabi, *Between Zionism and Judaism: The Radical Circle in Brith Shalom, 1925-1933*, (Boston: Brill, 2001). For more bibliographical references on 'Brit Shalom,' see also Aharon Kedar's list of

together with Martin Buber, Gershom Sholem, Judah Magnes and others, founded a political framework called 'Ihud' ('Union'), which supported the creation of a bi-national State in Palestine.[7]

The movements that I introduced above no longer exist; nevertheless there still appears to be room for an Israeli-Jewish religious and traditional peace building effort in the State of Israel and in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt).

The main aim of this paper is thus to introduce and analyze some vibrant and deeply rooted groups of modern Orthodox and traditional Israeli Jews, who are committed to peace between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs. The Israeli-Jewish religious and traditional peace and human rights movements whose history I will detail in this paper have not received enough attention either from the Israeli and international media or in the academia from the scholars who have dealt with other aspects of the history of the Israeli peace movement until today.[8] In this respect, this paper intends to fill this gap, starting from the written sources and the oral evidences that I collected in summer 2012 from within the Israeli-Jewish religious and traditional peace movements.[9]

The peace movements that I will present and analyze in this paper were founded in different historical moments; for this reason the primary sources that I used are not homogeneous in terms of type and of timeframe. On 'Oz Ve Shalom,' 'Netivot Shalom,' 'Meimad' and 'Shomrei Mishpat/Rabbis for Human Rights,' which were founded between 1975 and 1988, I collected periodicals, bulletins, newsletters, monographs, pamphlets, leaflets and other diverse written material, which I found mainly at the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem and at the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam.

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publications, http://jewishhistory.huji.ac.il/profs/HU/Jewish%20History/kedar.htm, accessed 31 May 2013.

[7] On 'Ihud,' see Judah Leon Magnes, *Palestine – Divided or United? The Case for a Bi-National Palestine Before the United Nations*, (Jerusalem: Ihud, 1947); Judah Leon Magnes, Martin Buber, *Arab-Jewish Unity: Testimony Before the Anglo-American Inquiry Commission for the Ihud (Union) Association*, (London: Gollancz, 1947). For a biography of Judah Magnes, see Arthur A. Goren, *Dissenter in Zion: From the Writings of Judah L. Magnes*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982). On other aspects of the history of 'Ihud' see the essays by Giulia Daniele and Marcella Simoni in this issue, respectively at pp. 1-21 and 73-100.

[8] See Mordechai Bar-On, *In Pursuit of Peace: A History of the Israeli Peace Movement*, (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1996); Reuven Kaminer, *The Politics of Protest: The Israeli Peace Movement and the Palestinian Intifada*, (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1996); Tamar Hermann, *The Israeli Peace Movement: A Shattered Dream*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[9] Though the anthropological dimension of my research is not the focus of this paper, I would nevertheless like to briefly introduce it here. The research work that I conducted in the last year and half could be divided into three phases. First of all, I mapped and studied the main literature dealing with the Israeli peace movement on the one hand and with the connections between Judaism and human values on the other hand. Then, once I identified the Israeli religious peace groups that it could be interesting to explore in greater detail and depth, I got in touch with some of their members in order to interview them; at the same time, I collected many primary written sources. Finally, I elaborated, analyzed and combined the collected data in a synergic framework.

My analysis of 'Eretz Shalom,' which is a very recent movement established in 2009, is necessarily based on online material and on primary oral sources, which I collected in summer 2012 in Jerusalem and in some settlements in the region of Gush Eztion. All in all, the corpus of oral testimonies that I will present in the following pages is made of twenty interviews with members of these various peace movements.

This paper is organized into three chapters, each of which addresses at the same time the history, the religious-philosophical and the socio-political dimensions of the three peace movements that I intend to analyze here, namely 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom,' 'Shomrei Mishpat/Rabbis for Human Rights' and 'Eretz Shalom.' In conclusion, I will illustrate the value of these religious peace movements in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict resolution and I will suggest some recommendations for further research in this regard.

'Oz Ve Shalom,' 'Netivot Shalom' and 'Meimad': Modern Orthodox Jews and Religious Zionists for peace and justice

The Jewish religious peace movement 'Oz Ve Shalom' ('Strength and Peace')[10] was founded in 1975 by a small group of modern Orthodox Jews. The main aim of these "religious Zionists for strength and peace", as they used to define themselves, was "to strengthen the spiritual and moral fiber of Israeli life"[11] by reminding both Israeli citizens and Israel's political and religious institutions that "a Jewish State must be faithful to Jewish values and Torah principles, above all peace and justice."[12]

The foundation of the movement has to be related to the political, social and religious issues at stake at the time. As it is well-known, in 1967, following the Six day war and the Israeli conquest of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Sinai peninsula and the Golan Heights, the vast majority of Israeli Jews, regardless of their religious devotion, felt exhilarated by Israel's victory over the neighboring Arab countries. When the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and of the Gaza Strip (WBGS) began, the internal and external actors involved in the conflict came to play new roles.[13]

Immediately after the Six day war, Israeli scientist and philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz was among the first Israeli Orthodox Jews to publicly express concern and disapproval of Israel's occupation policies of WBGS. In his article published in 1983 in the Israeli daily newspaper «Haaretz» Leibowitz wrote:

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[10] The movement's name is taken from *Psalms* 29:11 "The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace."

[11] "What is Oz Ve Shalom?" *Oz Ve Shalom*, English Bulletin 1 (1982): 2.

[12] Ibid.

[13] On the political impact of the Six Day War, see Bassam Tibi, *Conflict and War in the Middle East, 1967-1991: Regional Dynamic and the Superpowers*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); Michael B. Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Frank Brenchley, *Britain, the Six-Day War and its Aftermath*, (London: Tauris, 2005).

About 15 years ago, some two years after the Six-Day War, when the vast majority of Israelis, and even considerable sections of Diaspora Jewry, were affected by ravenous nationalist bragging and arrogance over military achievements (…), I plucked up courage to express in speeches and articles my apprehension lest the glorious victory bringing about the conquest (or the "liberation") of the whole Eretz Israel (Palestine) and even the peninsula of Sinai, mark in the eyes of the future historian the onset of the process of Israel's decline and collapse. It was evident to me that it is not the territories that count but the people populating them, the people we are trying to subjugate.[14]

After the sudden turning point of 1967, it took left-wing religious Zionists a few years to organize a well-prepared counteraction to the ultra-nationalist ideas and practices that were spreading out in the wider Jewish religious milieu in Israel. In 1974, a political messianic movement called 'Gush Emunim' ('Bloc of the Faithful') was officially founded by students of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook.[15] 'Gush Emunim' called upon every religious Jew in Israel to move to the oPt and to settle down there, in order to fulfill the divine commandment (*mitzvah*) to conquer and settle all the land of Israel, so that the Messiah could finally come and redeem the Jewish people.[16] As the founders of 'Oz Ve

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[14] Yeshayahu Leibowitz, "Gaining Land but Losing Soul?," *Haaretz*, September 16, 1983. See also Yeshayahu Leibowitz, John P. Egan, "Yeshayahu Leibowitz: Liberating Israel from the Occupied Territories" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 15/2 (1986): 102-108; Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values and the Jewish State*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992). On the biography and the thought of Yeshayahu Leibowitz, see also the documentary film Uri Rosenwaks, *Leibowitz: Faith, Country and Man*, Israel, 2012.

[15] On the impact of the teachings of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook in the foundation of 'Gush Emunim,' see Richard Lawrence Hoch, *The Politics of Redemption: Rabbi Zvi Yehuda ha-Kohen Kook and the Origins of Gush Emunim*, (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1994).

[16] On 'Gush Emunim' and its role in the Jewish settlement of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, see David Newman, *Jewish Settlements in the West Bank: The Role of Gush Emunim*, (Durham: University of Durham, 1982); David Newman, *The Impact of Gush Emunim: Politics and Settlements in the West Bank*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985); Ehud Sprinzak, *Gush Emunim: The Politics of Zionist Fundamentalism in Israel*, (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1986); Ian Lustick, *For the Land and for the Lord*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988); Gershom Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967-1977*, (New York: Times Books, 2006); Idith Zertal, *Lords of the Land: The War Over Israel's Settlements in the Occupied Territories, 1967-2007*, (New York: Nation Books, 2009); Michael Feige, *Settling in the Hearts: Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2009). On the debate between 'Oz Ve Shalom' religious Zionists for peace and 'Gush Emunim' supporters, see Fred David Levine, *Territory or Peace? Religious Zionism in Conflict*, (New York: Institute on American Jewish-Israeli Relations, 1986); Yehezkel Landau, *Religious Zionism: Challenges and Choices*, (Jerusalem: Oz Ve Shalom Publications, 1992); Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Motti Inbari, *Messianic Religious Zionism Confronts Israeli Territorial Compromises*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Shalom' declared in the first issue of the English bulletin of this religious peace movement:

> Oz Ve Shalom was founded in 1975 as a reaction to what was regarded as a misinterpretation of Torah and halakhah, and a distortion of religious Zionism, by members of Gush Emunim. In our platform, we state our belief that Jews certainly have an irrevocable right to Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel. However, the Palestinian Arab desire for national self-determination precludes the fulfillment of this historical and Biblical claim within the totality of the Land.[17]

As we can conclude from the above-mentioned quotation, the members of 'Oz Ve Shalom' did not call the Jewish right to the Land of Israel into question, but rather they insisted on the Palestinian Arabs' right to self-determination as well. Ophir Yarden, a modern Orthodox Jew who had joined the Israeli religious peace movement since his arrival to Israel from the United States at the end of the 1970s, affirmed:

> I think that just as a person who defines himself as a Zionist and believes that the Jewish people have the right to a State must say: "Why should the right to self-determination cease to be relevant after Zionism?" Palestinians have the right to a State, too. For the same or for similar reasons as Jews do have this right.[18]

In 1982, another peace group of modern Orthodox Jews came to the fore. The movement was called 'Netivot Shalom'[19] and its founders were mainly Israeli yeshiva students or new immigrants from the United States who opposed Israel's military campaign in Lebanon.[20] The deepest reasons of their protest against the Lebanon War of 1982 traced their roots in the Jewish law (*halakhah*), which clarified that the divine commandment of the preservation of human life (*pikuach nefesh*) must take priority over any other religious or political consideration. Since its foundation, 'Netivot Shalom' gained the blessing of two prominent Orthodox rabbis from Yeshivat Har Etzion: Rabbi Yehuda Amital and Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein.[21]

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[17] "What is Oz Ve Shalom?" *Oz Ve Shalom*, English Bulletin 1 (1982): 2.

[18] Interview of the A. with Ophir Yarden, Jerusalem, 8 July 2012, (Hebrew).

[19] The movement's name is taken from *Proverbs* 3:17 "Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace."

[20] Israel's military campaign in Lebanon, which began in 1982, encouraged the emergence of a widespread opposition movement within the Israeli public opinion. For an extensive analysis of the reasons, which were at the basis of this opposition movement, see Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars: State, Society and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon and the United States in Vietnam*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[21] Rabbi Yehuda Amital (Oradea, 1924 – Jerusalem, 2010) was a prominent Israeli Orthodox rabbi. During the Second World War, he was deported to Auschwitz with his family, he survived the *Shah* and, in 1944, he emigrated to *Eretz Israel*. After the Six Day War, he founded

In 1984, 'Oz Ve Shalom' and 'Netivot Shalom' merged into one movement called 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom.'[22] The main aims of this old-new movement were to promote peace between Israelis and Palestinians within a religious Zionist framework and to strongly oppose every ethnocentric, extremist nationalist[23] and fundamentalist claim advanced by religious Jews in the name of God and in the name of the Torah.[24]

Mainly active in the 1980s, the members of 'Oz Ve Shalom' and 'Netivot Shalom' organized many activities to encourage what they saw as "consciousness-raising"[25] among Israeli and Diaspora Jews. Among the activities they promoted were public prayers, demonstrations, political and educational campaigns, informational activities, petitions, public lectures, rallies and publications highlighting the religious and moral duty of seeking and building peace.[26]

Just to give an example, the so-called anti-Kahane campaign has been one of the most significant actions promoted by the members of 'Oz Ve Shalom' and 'Netivot Shalom.' When in the 1984 Knesset elections, the ultra-nationalist party 'Kach' led by Rabbi Meir Kahane got 25,907 votes, equivalent to one seat in the Israeli parliament,[27] the members of the religious peace movements that

Yeshivat Har Etzion, near the settlement of Alon Shevut, in the region of Gush Etzion. In 1971, Rabbi Amital invited Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein (Paris, 1933) to join him at Yeshivat Har Etzion as *Rosh Yeshiva*. Although being a rabbi who headed a yeshiva in the Occupied Territories, especially in the 1980s, Rabbi Yehuda Amital gave voice to the moderate camp within religious Zionism. In 1988, he contributed to the foundation of 'Meimad' and became the party leader. In 1995, Shimon Peres from the Labor Party, who led the government after Rabin's assassination, gave him a ministry without portfolio. On the biography and the thought of Rabbi Yehuda Amital, see Elyashev Reichner, *By Faith Alone: The Story of Rabbi Yehuda Amital*, (Jerusalem: Maggid, 2011).

[22] *Unification or Cooperation: Debate in 'Oz Ve Shalom' Forum, November 27, 1983*, (Jerusalem: Oz Ve Shalom, 1983), 1, (Hebrew).

[23] On the difference between extremist nationalism (*leumanut*) and nationalism (*leumiut*), see Mordechai Breuer, "Extremist Nationalism and Judaism" *Netivot Shalom* 3 (1996): 5-10, (Hebrew).

[24] Since 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom' is not a political party with a well-structured program, but rather a religious movement aiming at promoting sensitivity to peace and justice from and within a religious Zionist perspective, it is hardly possible to describe the program of this movement in any organic way. In order to understand the spirit and the guidelines of 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom,' see especially the links *About the Movement* and *Objectives and Principles* in the official website of the movement at: http://www.netivot-shalom.org.il/, accessed 31 May 2013 On the same topic, see also *Rally at the Jerusalem Khan, 7 February 1988: You Must Not Remain Indifferent*, (Jerusalem: Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom, 1988).

[25] "Our Activities: Overview and Examples" *Oz Ve Shalom*, English Bulletin 1 (1982): 3.

[26] On the activities organized by 'Oz Ve Shalom' and 'Netivot Shalom,' see 'Oz Ve Shalom' bulletins in Hebrew, English and German and 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom' newspaper editions in Hebrew. This material is available at the National Library of Israel, in Jerusalem. Some of the activities promoted by the religious peace movement 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom' are reported also in the association's official website, see http://www.netivot-shalom.org.il/, accessed 31 May 2013.

[27] http://www.knesset.gov.il/description/eng/eng_mimshal_res11.htm, accessed 31 May 2013.

I presented above realized that it was urgent for them to oppose the ideology that Kahane upheld and spread, which fostered racism in the name of Judaism.[28] As we can read in the 1984 English bulletin of 'Oz Ve Shalom,' Israeli religious Zionists for peace expressed a more general concern that went beyond the elections results:

> We have a long struggle ahead of us, to counteract the chauvinistic and anti-democratic elements in our midst. Meir Kahene is but a symptom of a general social disease that goes beyond the voters who put him over the electoral threshold – this is but 1.2% of the Israeli electorate. (…) But even outside the Knesset, this ideology must be effectively countered. A recent Van Leer Institute survey found that 25% of Israeli young people display anti-democratic tendencies, though they themselves may deny it. When asked whether they believe in democracy, they tend to say, "of course". When asked, should Israeli Arabs enjoy equal rights and benefits, this segment of our youth will say "no". So the challenge is to translate the abstract concept of democracy into practical concern for the rights and welfare of the minority.[29]

In order to invalidate Kahane's racist arguments, the members of 'Oz Ve Shalom' and 'Netivot Shalom' highlighted biblical and Talmudic passages calling for tolerance and peaceful coexistence between Jews and non-Jews. As reported in an article published in «The Jerusalem Post» on July 27, 1984, the members of these religious peace movements used to join into anti-racist demonstrations, too:

> Several dozen members of the religious peace movements Netivot Shalom and Oz Ve Shalom marched through the Old City of Jerusalem yesterday from the Jaffa Gate to the Western Wall. (…) They distributed a letter to Arab merchants along the way saying: "Meir Kahane does not represent the majority of the Jewish people nor does he represent our Torah and the Jewish religion… We call on you to

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[28] For the collected writings of Rabbi Meir Kahane, see David J. Fein, *Beyond Words: Selected Writings of Rabbi Meir Kahane, 1960-1990*, (Brooklyn: Institute for Publication of the Writings of Rabbi Meir Kahane, 2010). On the biography and the ideology of Rabbi Meir Kahane, see Ehud Sprinzak, *Kach and Meir Kahane: The Emergence of Jewish Quasi-Fascism*, (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 1985); Raphael Mergui, Philippe Simonnot, *Israel's Ayatollahs: Meir Kahane and the Far Right in Israel*, (London: Saqi Books, 1987); Robert I. Friedman, *The False Prophet: Rabbi Meir Kahane: From FBI Informant to Knesset Member*, (Brooklyn: Lawrence Hill Books, 1990). On the opposition of many Israelis to Kahane's ideology, see Raphael Cohen-Almagor, *The Boundaries of Liberty and Tolerance: The Struggle Against Kahanism in Israel*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994).
[29] "The Educational Challenge" *Oz Ve Shalom*, English Bulletin 4/5 (1984): 8-9.

work together with us to achieve a just peace between our peoples…
for we are all created in the image of the One-God."[30]

The anti-Kahane campaign promoted by religious Zionists for peace grew even
stronger in 1985, when they decided to "fight fire with fire without
succumbing to the vulgarity and the negativity one is combating."[31] In the first
months of 1985, the members of 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom' handed out
thousands of leaflets especially in the neighborhoods where Kahane used to
hold his speeches. The campaign of 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom' addressed
every Israeli citizen, above all those belonging to the Israeli Jewish religious
background. As they themselves understood:

> Since surveys show that a sizable percentage of Kach supporters have
> religious backgrounds, it is vital that we reach traditionally observant
> neighborhoods, with our arguments from Biblical and Rabbinic
> sources.[32]

In 1988, the religious doves of 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom,' who no
longer identified with any political party, decided to give their contribution to
the foundation of a new political framework called 'Meimad.'[33] The name
'Meimad' was the Hebrew acronym for "Jewish State, democratic State". The
social base of 'Meimad' party was a group of religious Zionists who had
gradually distanced from the 'Mafdal,' the Israeli National Religious Party,
which starting from the elections of 1977 had drifted more and more to the
right. During the 1980s, most of the left-wing exponents of the 'Mafdal,' had
been gradually removed from the party's management board and more right-
wing representatives had taken their place. In the parliamentary elections of
1988, 'Meimad,' led by Rabbi Yehuda Amital, who in 1982 had supported the
opposition of 'Netivot Shalom' to the first Lebanon War, ran for the Knesset.
'Meimad' got only about 16,000 votes, which were not enough to overcome
the threshold[34] and to obtain a Knesset seat.[35]

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[30] "Kollek Calls for Law Banning Racist Talk," *The Jerusalem Post*, 27 July 1984.
[31] "Update on Oz Ve Shalom and Netivot Shalom" *Oz Ve Shalom*, English Bulletin 6 (1985): 9.
[32] Ibid., 9-10.
[33] On 'Meimad' social and political outlooks, see *Why Meimad? The Religious Center Party*,
(Jerusalem: Meimad, 1988), (Hebrew).
[34] In the elections to the twelfth Knesset, which took place on November 1, 1988, the
qualifying threshold (1%) corresponded to 22,831 votes. Source:
http://www.knesset.gov.il/description/eng/eng_mimshal_res12.htm, accessed 15 March 2013
[35] For an analysis of the 1988 Israeli elections results focusing on religious parties, see Robert
O. Freedman, "Religion, Politics and the Israeli Elections of 1988" *Middle East Journal* 43/3
(1989): 406-22.

'Shomrei Mishpat/Rabbis for Human Rights': All streams of Judaism together to advance the respect of human rights[36]

In 1988, in the wake of the first Intifada, which began in December 1987, a group of ordained rabbis founded a human rights movement aiming at defending the basic human rights of every human being living in the state of Israel and in the oPt. The movement was called 'Shomrei Mishpat' ('Those who act justly')[37] – 'Rabbinic Human Rights Watch' (from 1991 on, the non governmental organization (NGO) changed its name in 'Shomrei Mishpat/Rabbis for Human Rights').[38] 'Rabbis for Human Rights' shared some of the values of the Orthodox peace movement 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom,' but the two groups were quite different from some points of view.

First of all, the members of 'Rabbis for Human Rights' were mainly Reform and Conservative rabbis who were born in the 1950s in the United States and had emigrated to the State of Israel after the war of 1967. Most of them had been involved in the social and political movements founded in North America in the 1960s and 1970s, protesting against the war in Vietnam and on behalf of civil rights of discriminated minorities in the United States.

Secondly, unlike the members of 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom' who stressed the need to withdraw from the oPt and to draw well-defined borders between the State of Israel and the future Palestinian State,[39] the main purpose of 'Rabbis for Human Rights' was not to propose a well-defined and ultimate solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but rather to implement the rational consequences of the following biblical passage applied to the political context in which they live(d):

> Then God said: "Let us make the man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have domination over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (*Genesis* 1:26-27).

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[36] Unlike the other peace groups that I present in this paper, for multiple reasons it is relatively easy to find material in English about 'Shomrei Mishpat/Rabbis for Human Rights.' Apart from the material produced by this NGO itself, see, among others, Bettina Prato, "Prophetic Justice in a Home Haunted by Strangers: Transgressive Solidarity and Trauma in the Work of an Israeli Rabbis' Group" Hent De Vries, Lawrence E. Sullivan eds, *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 557-85.

[37] The movement's name is taken from *Psalms* 106:3 "Happy are those who act justly, who do right at all times."

[38] "Change of the Association's English Name" *Shomrei Mishpat/Rabbis for Human Rights* 1/4 (1991): 4, (Hebrew).

[39] On the peace plan proposed by the members of 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom,' see "A Wise Peace: A Model for a Peace Plan Between Israel and the Palestinians" *Netivot Shalom* 7 (1997): 15-17, (Hebrew).

As we can gather from a book called *Life, Liberty and Equality in the Jewish Tradition*,[40] which presents the *Weltanschauung* of this NGO, the members of 'Rabbis for Human Rights' stress that not only the Universal Declaration of Human Rights drafted by the United Nations in 1948, but also the Jewish religious tradition itself, attributes an inviolable and sacred value to the life of every human being, irrespective of his/her belonging to the Jewish people.

This concept has been central to the actions and thought of the members of 'Rabbis for Human Rights,' but especially to two of them, who define themselves as absolutely pacifists: Reform Rabbi Moshe Yehudai and Conservative Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom.

Moshe Yehudai was born in Jerusalem in 1940 and at the age of 21 he refused to join the Israeli army and fulfill his mandatory military service. As he himself explained:

> In 1961, I attended a meeting organized by Jewish and Arab students. At that time, in the State of Israel, the debate about mandatory military service for Arab citizens of Israel was a burning issue. So an Arab student took the floor and said: "How could I join the Israeli army? On the other front, there is my people. On the other front, there could be my family. I cannot join the army, I cannot shoot Arabs." Exactly at that moment, I thought: "He cannot join the Israeli army, because he is an Arab. But if he were in Jordan or in Egypt, he would not have had any problems in shooting Jews. He cannot shoot Arabs. Why? Because it is his people, right? If you ask Jews, they would give you exactly the same answer. They would say to you: "What are you saying?! I am a Jew, so I cannot shoot Jews. I can shoot Arabs, but not Jews. It is my people." Right in that moment, I became a citizen of the world. I said to myself: "Jews or Arabs, that is not the point. For me they are all human beings. For me there is no difference between a Jew and an Arab." Suddenly this thought came to my mind: "If an Arab cannot shoot Arabs, because he is himself an Arab; and a Jew cannot shoot Jews, because he is himself a Jew; I cannot shoot neither Jews nor Arabs, because for me they are all human beings." As this thought came to my mind, I decided that I would never join any army.[41]

Yehudai's pacifist worldview was strengthened by his rabbinic training, which culminated with ordination in 1983. He had become a religious pacifist, convinced that no human being is allowed to kill a life that God himself has created.[42]

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[40] Noam Zohar, *Life, Liberty and Equality in the Jewish Tradition*, (Jerusalem: Rabbis for Human Rights, 2006).

[41] Interview of the A. with Moshe Yehudai, Ra'anana, 3 July 2012, (Hebrew).

[42] Moshe Yehudai wrote a dissertation called: *The Value of the Life of the Non-Jew in the Jewish Law*, unpublished, (Hebrew).

Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom, who was born in the United States in 1953 and emigrated to Israel in 1968, fulfilled his compulsory military service at the beginning of the 1970s, but in the following years he adopted pacifism and nonviolence as guidelines of his life. In his own words:

> I embraced pacifism, when my daughter, Kinneret, was born. For me it was a very strong experience. It was 1982. From that point on, it became very clear to me that I would never been ready to take up a weapon again. I began to deeply understand that everybody loves his children and I began to feel empathy and solidarity with all the parents in the world.[43]

Despite the positions that I presented above, most of the members of 'Rabbis for Human Rights' do not support total conscientious objection, but they stress the importance of remaining faithful to what they call "religious humanism,"[44] even within the military framework.

Since the foundation of the NGO, 'Rabbis for Human Rights' has been calling for the respect of human values, which are at the same time universal and typical of the Jewish tradition. The initiative for creating a group of Israeli rabbis committed to human rights is Reform Rabbi David Forman's. As he stated in a speech in 2006:

> It was the beginning of July, 1982, during the first Lebanon War; I was with my artillery unit above the Beirut-Damascus highway. After a quiet few days, suddenly a barrage of Syrian rockets landed on our position. We quickly dashed into a trench to regroup. And, with missiles literally falling all around us, I turned to a fellow comrade-in-arms and said: "Do you think we should reevaluate our Zionist commitment?"[45]

It was only after the outbreak of the first Intifada that Rabbi Forman decided that the time had come to establish "a rabbinic voice for decency and humanity, as opposed to the shrill voice that emanated from a rabbinic establishment that seemed to justify, in the name of the Jewish tradition, all manner of human rights abuses."[46]

Since its foundation in 1988, 'Rabbis for Human Rights' has been constantly reporting and denouncing violations of human rights committed by the Israeli army and by some Israeli settlers against the Palestinian population of the oPt. Over the years, 'Rabbis for Human Rights' has grown and has organized itself into four different departments: the Educational Department, the Legal

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[43] Interview of the A. with Jeremy Milgrom, Jerusalem, 10 July 2012, (Hebrew).

[44] On "religious humanism," see Noam Zohar, *Life, Liberty and Equality in the Jewish Tradition*, (Jerusalem: Rabbis for Human Rights, 2006): 11-22.

[45] *Rabbis for Human Rights 20 Year Anniversary: Position Papers*, (Jerusalem: Rabbis for Human Rights, 2008): 24.

[46] Ibid., 25.

Department, the Economic and Social Justice Department and the Department of Rights in the Occupied Territories.[47]

To give just one example of the work of 'Rabbis for Human Rights' with the Palestinians of the West Bank, I would like to mention the association's olive harvest campaign, which is one of the most demanding activities that the members of 'Rabbis for Human Rights' carry out in the oPt. This activity began about 15 years ago with the aim of concretely supporting Palestinian farmers in harvesting their olives, especially in some areas of the West Bank, where they had problems accessing their lands due to Israel's military restrictions and to settlers' violence. As Rabbi Yehiel Greiniman, the director of the Department of Rights in the Occupied Territories, explained:

> Our activity consists in recruiting volunteers and in collecting money for the olive harvest. We are in contact with a certain number of Palestinian villages, whose number is variable from year to year. In some villages we cannot assure our physical presence, but we help them anyway in that we call the Israeli army or the Israeli police in order to facilitate the Palestinian farmers' access to their lands. Every year, during the olive harvest season, we organize 10, 15, 20 buses to the villages of the West Bank. Some of the volunteers harvest olives with the Palestinians, while others supervise. This activity is very helpful, because Hebrew-speaking volunteers are able to rebuke soldiers when they commit illegal acts. Sometimes the soldiers force us to go away, at other times they pay attention to what we say. So, in fact, this activity has a double aim: supporting the Palestinian farmers and educating the Israeli soldiers to respect human rights.[48]

'Eretz Shalom': Jewish settlers building bridges to the Palestinians in the West Bank[49]

As I discussed in the introduction to this paper, 'Eretz Shalom' is a very recent movement, not easy to analyze thoroughly, for several reasons that I will detail below. 'Eretz Shalom' ('Land of Peace'), which is the less well-known and the most unexplored of the religious peace movements that I intend to analyze here, was founded in 2009, in the settlement of Tekoa, which is located in the region of Gush Etzion. The members of this religious peace movement are

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[47] For more information about the tasks and the activities of each department, see 'Rabbis for Human Rights' official website at: http://rhr.org.il/heb/, accessed 31 May 2013.

[48] Interview of the A. with Yehiel Greiniman, Jerusalem, 2 July 2012, (Hebrew).

[49] 'Eretz Shalom' is more recent and less well-known than the other religious peace movements that I presented above. For more information, see the official website of 'Eretz Shalom' at http://www.eretzshalom.org/?page_id=66, accessed 31 May 2013.
Some clips taken from a documentary film on 'Eretz Shalom' are available at: http://myforumdaily.com/israel2/a-third-way-israeli-settlers-and-palestinians-as-neighbors/, accessed 31 May 2013.

mainly young neo-Hasidic settlers, who were born in, or have decided to move to, "Judea and Samaria", as they themselves call the West Bank, according to its biblical name.[50]

Before presenting the main features of 'Eretz Shalom,' I would like to observe that there are at least three reasons that make it difficult to write about this peace movement in a comprehensive way.

First of all, 'Eretz Shalom' was founded only about four years ago; this represents a hindrance for a researcher working on written and archival sources to analyze the role and the recent history of this movement. As mentioned above, for this reason, I have here integrated the material available online with a substantial number of oral interviews conducted in the summer of 2012. Secondly, we must not overlook the fact that the peacemakers of 'Eretz Shalom' are Israeli settlers, who are part and parcel of that complicated machinery which goes under the broad name of Israeli occupation, and that settlements are generally regarded as one of the main obstacles to peace between the State of Israel and the Palestinians.[51] Finally, given that the spiritual founder and promoter of 'Eretz Shalom' - Rabbi Menahem Froman - has died recently, the question remains as to how will this peace movement continue his legacy, or not.

Let us start indeed from this last point: the biography, the religious, social and political thought and the long-time peace activity of Rabbi Menahem Froman. Menahem Froman was born in Kfar Hasidim, a village located in Northern Israel, in 1945. During the Six Day War, he served as a paratrooper in the Israeli army. After the war, he returned to religion and joined 'Gush Emunim.' When he obtained his rabbinical ordination, he began to serve as a rabbi in the region of Gush Etzion, in the West Bank, and from 2003 until his death, occurred on March 4, 2013, he was the Chief Rabbi of the settlement of Tekoa. Despite his decision to live in a settlement in the oPt, he was considered as one of the most genuine peace activists in Israel, even by members of secular left-wing peace movements like 'Peace Now.'[52]

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[50] On the spread of Neo-Hasidism among the second generation settlers of the West Bank, on their worldview and lifestyle, see Yair Sheleg, "Neo-Hasic or Neo-Secular," *Haaretz,* 25 September 2003, http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/business/neo-hasidic-or-neo-secular-1.101199, accessed 31 May 2013. For a more comprehensive study of the emergence of Neo-Hasidism in the State of Israel, see Joanna Steinhardt, "American Neo-Hasids in the Land of Israel" *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 13/4 (2010): 22-42.

[51] On Israeli settlements and settlers regarded as an obstacle to the peace process between the State of Israel and the Palestinians, see for instance Peter Démant, *Settlers and Settlements Under Rabin and Peres: Obstacles on the Road to Peace*, (Amsterdam: Research Center for International Political Economy and Foreign Policy Analysis, 1996).

[52] Maayana Miskin, "Rare Peace Now Approval for "Settler" Rabbi: Peace Now Head Joins Right-Wing MKs in Eulogizing Proud "Settler" Rabbi as a Symbol of Peace," http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/165892#.UVVrHjfxpdj, accessed 31 May 2013. For a different view on some settlers from Tekoa and peace activism see the essay by Erin Dyer in this issue, pp. 162-184. On 'Peace Now' see the essay by Jon Simons in this issue, pp. 140-161. See also Kobi Nahshoni, Itamar Fleishman, Moran Azulay, "Right, Left

From the outbreak of the first Intifada, more than 25 years ago, Menahem Froman was for dialogue with all the Palestinian leaders and for respect of the political rights and the national symbols of the Palestinian people.[53] Unlike many, during the second Intifada, his commitment to peace grew even stronger. Especially during those years, Rabbi Menahem Froman travelled the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and even Jordan, to meet Palestinian leaders belonging to every political and religious movement, from sheikh Ahmed Yassin of 'Hamas' to Yasser Arafat of the PLO.[54]

One of the deepest reasons - which guided Rabbi Froman's peace activity for many years, and which lies at the core of the religious peace movement that he himself inspired - is the belief that the land does not belong to any human being.[55] As Menahem Froman expressed in his poem dedicated to the land, called *Bat Zugo* (His Wife):

<div align="center">

And you, bride of the Creator,
Wide as your horizon,
Deep as your heart,
And like Him.
Oh, how patient are you,
That you give ear to everything is said
About you and in your name,
But you keep silent.
All those who speak,
Walk their way to the land.
And all the words they say,
Go towards the silence.
They both gather towards the land.[56]

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In a recent interview, Rabbi Froman explained the meaning of these verses:

> Men speak a lot of words in the name of the land. In the name of nationalism and in the name of the land we speak a lot of words, while the land speaks the language of "silence". It keeps silent. It keeps silent.

Mourn   Rabbi   Froman's   Death"   http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4352549,00.html, accessed 31 May 2013.

[53] http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/1.1948086, accessed 20 March 2013, (Hebrew).

[54] On Rabbi Froman's thought and peace activity, see
http://www.haaretz.co.il/magazine/ayelet-shani/1.1774107,
http://www.holylandfilm.com/category/menachem-fruman/, both accessed 20 March 2013, (both in Hebrew).

[55] The idea that the land belongs to God can be traced back to *Leviticus* 25:23 "The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers." For a view of the same concept from a gender perspective see the essay by Valérie Pouzol in this issue, pp. 50-72.

[56] Menahem Froman, Hadassah Froman, *Man From the Land: Poems*, (Beit El: Sifriat Beit El, 1994), (Hebrew).

> It receives all these words and finally it houses also all those who have pronounced these words. They return to the land. They return to the land. Everything is possible to the Sovereign of the World. Everything is possible to His bride.[57]

The second point that I would like to consider is that 'Eretz Shalom' expresses a very comprehensive idea of peace that its members aim to promote not only between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs, but within every kind of human relationship.

Shivi Froman, the fourth of Froman's ten children, who especially in the last two years before his father's death had been very close to him and to his peace activity, explained the idea of peace embraced by 'Eretz Shalom' as follows:

> I think that faith is the only way to peace, be it peace between a man and a woman, peace between neighbors or peace between peoples. It is not possible to build peace without God's help. But what is peace? I do not think that making "peace" is to reduce the complexity to a single "piece". According to the interior meaning of the Hebrew language, "shalom" ("peace") does not stand for a single "piece", but rather it is constituted by many "pieces". So making peace means to find a way to let different elements create together one picture, without giving up their own features. This is what we call "hashlama" ("completion", "acceptance", "making peace"). Usually, it happens that two different elements merge into one. Or, on the contrary, it happens that they cannot find a way to get close to each other. The most wonderful thing happens when two different elements succeed in being tied to each other without changing their own nature. Only when two different elements can find a way to live side by side, something new comes into the world.[58]

According to the discourse of 'Eretz Shalom,' this concept of peace could and should be implemented within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well. Shivi Froman continued:

> This discourse is relevant to the relationship between us and the Palestinians, too. I absolutely do not think that we should merge into one single entity. God has created two different peoples. Each people has its own history and its own mission in the world. I do not think that God has committed a mistake in putting us together in the same land. That is the reason why I do not think that we should separate from each other. Therefore, I believe that our communal task is to try

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[57] http://news.nana10.co.il/Article/?ArticleID=962488, accessed 21 March 2013, (Hebrew).
[58] Interview of the A. with Shivi Froman, Jerusalem, 4 July 2012, (Hebrew).

and build together, Israelis and Palestinians, what God himself wishes
to be here, in this land.[59]

According to several members of 'Eretz Shalom,' a long-lasting solution to the
Israeli-Palestinian conflict does not lie in a territorial partition, but rather in
building a completely new and revolutionary society, composed by Israelis and
Palestinians who wish to live together in peace in the same land. That is the
deepest reason why 'Eretz Shalom' opposes every political solution calling for
an "artificial"[60] separation between the two peoples.[61]
The settlers of 'Eretz Shalom' believe that any peace process based only on
bilateral political agreements, including territorial compromise, is doomed to
fail, because it does not take into account two basic issues. First, that the
conflict does not have only political origins; this is the reason why those who
seek a solution cannot consider only political issues. Secondly, irrespective of
the solutions that political leaders will eventually be able to find, Israelis and
Palestinians will never be completely isolated one from the other; that is the
reason why it is urgent for them to recognize that the only way to build a long-
lasting peace is to learn coexistence.
This is how Gidon Elazar, a young member of 'Eretz Shalom,' explained these
concepts to me. Elazar was born in Jerusalem, in 1976. As a young man, he
had been a member of 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom.' After a period of
reassessment of his faith, he embraced a more spiritual and emotional
approach to Judaism and became a neo-Hasid. About four years ago, Gidon
Elazar, his wife Shulit and their two children, moved to the settlement of
Tekoa and joined 'Eretz Shalom.' In his own words:

> I think that there is room for everyone in this land. Or better, I believe
> that there is room for everyone, because I have no rational evidences to
> prove it. On the contrary, you could find many examples that prove
> that there is no room for two peoples in this land. Many people think
> that Rabbi Froman's peace activity is irrational, unreal, dream-like. On
> the contrary, I think that his view is the most rational and logical one.
> In fact, it does not matter what kind of fence will be put up and it does
> not matter where it will be put. Finally, we will nevertheless have to live
> together with the Palestinians. It does not matter where the borders will
> be and who will live on which side. In the end, we will anyway be here
> together with the Palestinians. We can recognize it now, we can

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Interview of the A. with Naftali Moses, Efrat, 9 July 2012, (Hebrew).

[61] On territorial partitions as bodily dismemberments from a historical perspective, see
Jonathan D. Greenberg, "Generations of memory. Remembering Partition in India/Pakistan
and Israel/Palestine" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 25/1 (2005): 89-
110. For an earlier view on territorial partitions, see the essay of Marcella Simoni in this issue,
pp. 73-100.

recognize it in the future, but in the end we will be forced to recognize that this is the situation.[62]

The movement applies the same approach to questions like the separation fence or the establishment of artificially drawn borders, which are not considered of any use to change the situation on the ground:

> Many people have a fantasy called "separation fence". The separation itself is a daydream. It is a daydream to believe that it will be possible to separate between the two peoples. Maybe we should really put aside this two-state idea, because it has been failing for dozens of years. Many people are in love with this idea: "We will put a wall, so we will imagine to be in Europe and not in the Middle East anymore." The members of «Eretz Shalom» say: "This is not Europe. This is the Middle East and it will continue to be the Middle East also after you will have built a fence." That is all. We have to learn to live with this awareness. One of the most foolish things here in Israel is that most of the Jews who live here do not speak Arabic. We do not speak Arabic, although all our neighbors are Arabs. We do not speak Arabic, because we want to keep on thinking that we are not here. We want to keep on thinking that we are elsewhere, that Israel is elsewhere, maybe in a cooler place.[63]

The members of 'Eretz Shalom' are convinced that it is an unavoidable task of religious people to bring peace to the peoples of the Holy Land and of the entire world, not through international political negotiations, but rather through a "bottom-up" process of peaceful cohabitation.[64]
The settlers of 'Eretz Shalom' have observed that, historically, every peace process that has been carried out "on the lawn of the White House" by well-known political leaders has provided no solution to the conflict on the ground.[65] For this reason they believe that peace will be possible only if the people who are directly involved in the conflict begin to meet each other within everyday contexts, without pretending to provide instant political solutions to the conflict. As Naftali Moses, a member of 'Eretz Shalom,' said: "There will not be peace now. Peace needs to be built little by little. So maybe there will be peace tomorrow or the day after tomorrow."[66]According to the worldview that I presented here, most of the activities of 'Eretz Shalom' are carried out on a grassroots level.

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[62] Interview of the A. with Gidon Elazar, Tekoa, 11 July 2012, (Hebrew).
[63] Ibid.
[64] Confront with the kabalistic concept of *Tikkun Ha-Olam* (Restoration of the World), which the members of 'Eretz Shalom' explicitly refer to.
[65] Interview with of the A. Naftali Moses, Efrat, 9 July 2012, (Hebrew).
[66] Ibid.

Since the foundation of the movement, the members of 'Eretz Shalom' have been organizing meetings between Israeli settlers and Palestinian villagers of the West Bank both in public and in private places. The main aim of these meetings was to give both to the Israeli settlers and to the Palestinian villagers of the West Bank the opportunity to get to know each other in ordinary contexts. The members of 'Eretz Shalom' believe that building trust on a personal level is an essential basis for a durable peace. It is important to highlight that these informal meetings involve entire families, including children, because according to 'Eretz Shalom' peace is to be built by all members of the society. Organizing meetings between settlers and Palestinians in the oPt is part of an unusual peacebuilding strategy, that contributes to demolishing some common stereotypes about who is a reliable partner for peace. In the same way as the movement considers Palestinians as reliable partners for peace, its activities show that, unlike what most people think, some settlers can build peace, too.

Gidon and Shulit Elazar provided direct evidence of such an encounter, telling the story of a meeting with a Palestinian family from the nearby village of Beit Ummar. In their story one can hear the difficulties of 'Eretz Shalom,' since it promotes a kind of peace activity that is not well considered by both the Israeli and the Palestinian social and political establishment:

> A short time ago, I, my wife and my children went to the village of Beit Ummar to meet a Palestinian family. Meeting one another is not easy at all. From a technical point of view, it is not easy to find a place where it is possible to meet each other. The prevailing atmosphere here does not regard this kind of initiative favorably.[67]

Some of the activities of 'Eretz Shalom' are planned, like Jewish-Muslim-Christian interreligious prayers,[68] entertainment and musical events coauthored by Israeli and Palestinian artists from the oPt/Judea and Samaria.[69] Other events are spontaneous and originate from personal friendships, like the meal to break the Ramadan and Tisha Be-Av fast, that took place on July 29, 2012 in the settlement of Tekoa. Israeli settlers and Palestinian villagers breaking fast together appeared as so exceptional that it even gained some media coverage.[70]

Finally, many projects are still in an early phase; among them the creation of a communal market where Israeli settlers and Palestinian farmers could sell their agricultural products; the opening of Arabic language courses for settlers held by Palestinian teachers; the co-publishing of a magazine called *Maktub* dealing

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[67] Interview of the A. with Gidon Elazar.

[68] http://www.terrasanta.net/tsx/articolo.jsp?wi_number=2586&wi_codseq=%20&language=en, accessed 24 March 2013.

[69] http://www.flickr.com/photos/jerusalem_peacemakers/sets/72157627209237971/detail/, accessed 24 March 2013.

[70] http://www.jerusalemonline.com/culture-and-lifestyle/israelis-and-palestinians-break-their-fast-together, accessed 24 March 2013.

with Jewish and Arabic poetry, literature and culture;[71] the shared farming of a field.[72]

As I discussed at the beginning of this essay, many aspects of the peace activity carried out by the members of 'Eretz Shalom' need to be problematized in a wider way. For example, it could be helpful to explore more comprehensively the effectiveness of the peace-building strategy that the members of 'Eretz Shalom' propose; the relationship between the settlers of 'Eretz Shalom' and their Palestinian partners; the influence that the peace activity of 'Eretz Shalom' exercises on the rest of the settler population. There are some of the directions that any research on their activity and impact needs to eventually address, most likely in a close future when more evidence will be available.

Conclusions - The importance of grassroots peace movements within the Israeli-Jewish religious and traditional context

I would like to conclude this paper by briefly illustrating the psychological and practical value of the Jewish-Israeli religious and traditional peace movements analyzed here in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict resolution process.

> Peace must be made among peoples, not just governments. No one step can change overnight what lies in the hearts and in the minds of millions. (…) I have suggested principles on territory and security that I believe can be the basis for talks. But, for the moment, put aside the plans and the process. I ask you, instead, to think about what can be done to build trust between the people. (…) That is where peace begins – not just in the plans of leaders, but in the hearts of people; not just in a carefully designed process, but in the daily connections that take place among those who live together in this land, and in this sacred city of Jerusalem. (…) You must create the change that you want to see.[73]

These words, addressed to about 600 students from universities and colleges across Israel, were pronounced by US president Barack Obama at the Jerusalem Convention Center, on 21 March 2013. Regardless of the political implications of Barack Obama's recent visit to Israel and to the oPt, which is not the topic of this paper, I would like to take the above-mentioned quotation

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[71] The co-publishing of this magazine is already in an operative phase. Mention of it can be found at http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/heaven-s-field-organic-farm, accessed 6 June 2013.

[72] For more information about this project, see http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/70399516/a-third-way-israeli-settlers-and-palestinians-as-n/posts/138818, accessed 24 March 2013.

[73] Barack Obama's speech at Jerusalem Convention Center, 21 March 2013. For the full text of United States president's speech in Jerusalem, see http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/mar/21/barack-obama-speech-jerusalem-text, accessed 25 March 2013.

as a cue to stress on the importance of grassroots peace initiatives between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

In his speech, Obama did not state that internal political leaders, foreign governments and international institutions cannot help advancing peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Naturally, the support of all these institutions is of primary importance for the peace process in the Middle East. Still, as Obama highlighted, peace must grow, above all, in the hearts of the common people who live in the State of Israel and in the oPt.

Here lies therefore one of the factors that points at the importance of the Israeli-Jewish religious and traditional peace and human rights movements that I presented here as grassroots peace-building groups; their value as promoters of conflict-resolution within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been acknowledged by several scholars.[74] While this points can be relevant to many grassroots peace movement, secular or religious, a second point can be made as to the specific value of religious peace-building.[75]

As Yehezkel Landau - chairman of 'Oz Ve Shalom-Netivot Shalom' between 1982 and 1991 - wrote in his report about interreligious peace-building in Israel/Palestine, mainly based on interviews that he conducted with clerics, educators and peace activists from September 2002 to June 2003:

> Even though the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is primarily a political dispute between two nations over a common homeland, it has religious aspects that need to be addressed in any effective peacemaking strategy. The peace agenda cannot be the monopoly of secular nationalist leaders, for such an approach guarantees that fervent religious believers on all sides will feel excluded and threatened by the diplomatic process. Religious militants need to be addressed in their own symbolic language; otherwise, they will continue to sabotage any peacebuilding efforts. (…) Politicians and diplomats need to tap the insights and the experience of these religious professionals. The efforts described here deserve greater media coverage and philanthropic support. As the fate

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[74] On the effectiveness of grassroots peace-building initiatives within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, see *Bridging the Divide: Peacebuilding in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, eds. Edy Kaufman, Walid Salem, Juliette Verhoeven, (London: Lynne Rienner Publisher, 2006); *Beyond Bullets and Bombs: Grassroots Peacebuilding Between Israelis and Palestinians*, ed. Judy Kuriansky, (Westport: Praeger, 2007); Julia Chaitin, *Peace-Building in Israel and Palestine: Social Psychology and Grassroots Initiatives*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). On the importance of grassroots peacebuilding initiatives in any conflict resolution process, see *Local Peacebuilding and National Peace: Interaction Between Grassroots and Elite Processes*, eds. Christopher R. Mitchell, Landon E. Hancock, (New York: Continuum, 2012).

[75] On the specific value of religious peacebuilding, see *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding*, ed. David R. Smock, (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2002); *Religion and Peacebuilding*, eds. Harold G. Coward, Gordon Scott Smith, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004); Ina Merdjanova, Patrice Brodeur, *Religion as a Conversation Starter: Interreligious Dialogue for Peace Building in the Balkans*, (New York: Continuum, 2009); Katrien Hertog, *The Complex Reality of Religious Peacebuilding: Conceptual Contributions and Critical Analysis*, (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010).

of the Oslo process shows, peacemaking that prescribes only political, military and economic arrangements is doomed to fail; leaders on both sides must take into account the feelings, attitudes, yearnings, and symbolic images that Israelis and Palestinians harbor.[76]

According to Landau, there are two basic aspects that need to be taken into consideration to develop an effective peacemaking strategy between Israelis and Palestinians.

The first refers to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict not only as a political dispute and therefore it must be recognized that the solution to it must go beyond the political domain. The second is the need to find a way to make the religious believers, which represent about one-third of the Israeli population,[77] feel involved and not excluded or threatened by a peace process shaped only by secular political leaders.

In this paper I tried to outline some of the main religious, political and social issues that have been elaborated and acted upon by some Orthodox and traditional Jews in Israel. As it is obvious, many aspects of the Israeli-Jewish religious peace activism still need further exploration: for example it could be interesting to bring back into the narrative of the conflict, and possibly also into the present political discourse, the history of a religious grassroots work that aims at building bridges between conflicting populations starting from the philosophical heart of the matter; to explore and discuss the complexity of the positions of these movements vis-à-vis the Israeli authorities; to look at these movements through the eyes of the majority of the Israeli population; and finally, to investigate how these movements impact on the relations with Palestinians. In this respect, my hope is that this paper can be a starting point for a more comprehensive study of a thriving reality, little-known and yet not so marginal.

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[76] Yehezkel Landau, *Healing the Holy Land: Interreligious Peacebuilding in Israel/Palestine*, (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2003), 5. By Yehezkel Landau on this topic, see also Yehezkel Landau, "Blessing Both Jew and Palestinian. A Religious Zionist View," in *Walking the Red Line. Israelis in Search of Justice for Palestine*, ed. D. Hurwitz, (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1992), 119-27; Yehezkel Landau, "A Practical Connection between the Heavens and the Earth in Israel/Palestine," in *Understanding One Another in Israeli Society*, ed. Ron Kronish, (Jerusalem: ICCI, 1997), 19-23; Yehezkel Landau, "A Holistic Peace Process for the Middle East," in *How Long Lord? Voices from the Ground and Visions for the Future in Israel/Palestine*, eds. Maurine and Robert Tobin, (Cambridge: Cowley Publications, 2003), 233-37.

[77] According to a survey conducted by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics in 2009, the Jewish population of the State of Israel is composed by the following groups: 8% Ultra-Orthodox Jews, 12% religious Zionists, 38% traditional Jews (of which 13% religious traditional Jews and 25% non-religious traditional Jews), 42% secular Jews. According to these data, if we add together all the Israeli Jews who have a direct connection to religion, we find that they represent about one-third of the Jewish population of the State of Israel. This survey, entitled *The Observance of the Jewish Tradition and the Religious Changes within the Jewish Population of Israel*, is available at http://www1.cbs.gov.il/reader, accessed 26 March 2013, (Hebrew).

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Promoting Peace: *Peace Now* as a graphic peace movement, 1987-1993

by *Jon Simons*

Abstract

'Peace Now,' the leading Israeli peace organization, has mobilized the public to press governments to reach peace agreements, protest wars and oppression of Palestinians, obstruct settlements in the Occupied Territories and develop dialogue with Palestinians. Focusing on 1987-93, this essay conceptualizes the advocacy of peace by 'Peace Now' as public relations activity that promotes images of peace. It communicated its ideas by means of slogans in the form of material signs which were figured graphically in print media, on posters, flyers, placards and stickers. The images of peace that 'Peace Now' promoted belong to the category of political images, which are not simply pictures or visual images, but condensations of complex ideas, conceptions and experiences of peace. 'Peace Now' promoted three main images of peace from 1987 to 1993: peace as negotiation and compromise; peace as the ending of the oppression of occupation; and peace as separation between Israelis and Palestinians. While there are ambiguities within and tensions between all three images, the key trouble for the advocacy of peace of 'Peace Now' was that its third image of peace as separation undermined the other two, ultimately creating a recipe for 'unilateral peace.'

- **Pressing for peace, protesting war, obstructing settlements and developing dialogue: an historical overview**
- **The Medium of Peace: Public Relations and Political Images in the Public Sphere**
- *Peace Now's* **Images of Peace**

  A. *Peace as negotiation and compromise*
  B. *Peace as the ending of the oppression of occupation*
  C. *Peace as Separation*

- **Conclusion: Dilemmas of action, divergence of images**

Pressing for peace, protesting war, obstructing settlements and developing dialogue: an historical overview

'Peace Now' was Israel's largest and most broadly supported peace group during the years of 1987-93, attracting 50,000-80,000 to a demonstration on 23 January 1988 against the government's response to the first Intifada, and tens of thousands to a joyful celebration of the Oslo agreement on 4 September

1993.[1] The story of 'Peace Now' over this period has been well documented already, so in the first section of the article I provide only a brief summary of the group's activities prior to and during 1987 to 1993.[2] In the second section, I turn to the main focus of this article which is on the means, or more precisely the media, by which 'Peace Now' promoted its message of peace, engaging in public relations as it sought to persuade and mobilize Israeli publics. In accord with its public relations role, the organization promoted three main 'images' of peace in these years, not all of which accorded with each other, which are discussed in the third section of the article. By focusing on 'Peace Now''s promotion of political images of peace, this article indicates deep ambiguities in the group's peace imagery that undermined its advocacy. The essay is based on archival research, both visual and documentary, supplemented by existing secondary sources, but would undoubtedly be enriched by interviewing activists of the time and reviewing media reports.

I focus on 1987-93 because it is the period in which the greatest opportunity for peace, understood in terms of territorial compromise and mutual recognition of Israel and the Palestinians, was possible. In other words, if the goal of peace of 'Peace Now' were to be achieved, this would have been the time. Established in March 1978, 'Peace Now' began as a pressure group on the Israeli government in the context of stalled negotiations between Egypt and Israel, following President Sadat's dramatic visit to Israel in November 1977. In so far as the Israeli government did agree to withdraw from the entire Sinai Peninsula, including from Israeli settlements, in the Camp David Accord of 17 September 1978, the movement appeared to be successful, both in terms of impressing Israeli Prime Minister Begin that there was a great deal of public demand for an agreement, and in embodying an Israeli consensus.[3]

'Peace Now''s core agenda following the Camp David agreement was to press for the implementation not so much of the peace with Egypt as the clauses relating to the West Bank and Gaza, concerning Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinian people.[4] From the start, the group considered Israeli settlements, especially those championed by the religious Zionist, right-wing, settler 'Gush Emunim' (Bloc of the Faithful) movement in the Occupied Territories, to constitute the main obstacle to a comprehensive peace.[5] Since

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[1] Mordechai Bar-On, *In Pursuit of Peace: A History of the Israeli Peace Movement*, (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute for Peace, 1996), 309-10; Reuven Kaminer, *The Politics of Protest: The*

[2] See Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*; Tamar Hermann, *The Israeli Peace Movement: A Shattered Dream*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009); Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*; and Tzaly Reshef, *Peace Now: From the Officers' Letter to the Peace Now*, (Jerusalem: Keter, 1996) (Hebrew). Readers familiar with the history of 'Peace Now' may prefer to skip this section of the article.

[3] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 112; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 56.

[4] See the "Camp David Accords" in *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and Readings on Society, Politics, and Foreign Relations, Pre-1948 to the Present* (2nd Edition) eds. Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (Waltham, MA; Brandeis University Press, 2008), 376-83. Reshef, *Peace Now*, 128.

[5] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 111; Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 89; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 31; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 59.

August 1978 'Peace Now' had protested in the Occupied Territories against such settlements, but their activity increased after the credit given to Begin's government for the agreement with Egypt ran out in December 1978.[6] 'Peace Now' thus consolidated as an organization as it opposed new settlements, attempting to portray 'Gush Emunim' as extremists and itself as expressing the view of the political center, by remaining within the law as it protested and avoiding confrontations with the army (in which citizens serve as reservists).[7] However, the group was unable to prevent the settlements in the Occupied Territories from continuing even at the time that the settlements in Sinai were being removed by the government in the face of right-wing opposition, and the negotiations about the future of the Occupied Territories were suspended in December 1980.[8] Moreover, the group's activities had all but ceased for some months before January 1982, prior to and following the June 1981 parliamentary elections.[9] To some extent the group did sustain its anti-settlement activity at the same time as protests about the Lebanon War and its aftermath continued, notably at a demonstration against the Har Bracha settlement on Israeli Independence Day, 18 April 1983.[10] David Hall-Cathala notes that it is usual for a social movement that cannot attain its goals to adjust them.[11] 'Peace Now' did not abandon its goal of stopping the settlements and pushing for a broader peace agreement, but it did adjust the means and focus of its process to achieve those goals.

'Peace Now' activities increased greatly because of The First Lebanon War that began in June 1982. Although 'Peace Now' was not the first Israeli peace group to demonstrate against the war, its largest ever demonstration (also supported by all the political parties from Labor to the left) on 25 September 1982, in the wake of the Sabra and Shatila massacre, attracted around 250,000 people (although a legendary figure of 400,000 has entered public memory). The following day Begin agreed to set up a commission of inquiry,[12] and in February 1983 Defense Minister Sharon was forced to resign his post in light of that report and further demonstrations. Begin resigned as Prime Minister in September, perhaps in part as a response to additional protests.[13] On the one hand, it can be argued that 'Peace Now' was the main articulator of protest against the Lebanon War, and that such protest created a public climate for Israeli military withdrawals without any political gains from some of Lebanon in August 1983 and then from all but a Security Zone in 1985. On the other hand, 'Peace Now' could not claim to be expressing a public consensus against

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[6] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 54-55, 60.

[7] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 61-62, 66.

[8] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 125, 120.

[9] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 131-33; David Hall-Cathala, *The Peace Movement in Israel, 1967-87*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 56; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 82-85. As Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 25 puts it: "the voice of protest is hushed when electoral canons are being fired."

[10] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 126-28; Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 174.

[11] Hall-Cathala, *Peace Movement in Israel*, 60-61.

[12] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 155; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 106 - 108.

[13] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 116-17.

the war, given the size and vociferousness of support for Begin and Sharon, including a hand grenade attack at the end of a 'Peace Now' demonstration on 10 February 1983 in Jerusalem that killed one protestor, Emil Grunzweig.[14] Nonetheless, 'Peace Now' appeared to be an effective social movement in pressing for peace and opposing war.

Although 'Peace Now' was dedicated to pursuing peace as an Israeli interest,[15] it necessarily had to address the question of with which Palestinians Israel should negotiate, given that there was no Palestinian government. From the autumn of 1978, the movement's line was that the government should negotiate with whichever Palestinians adopted negotiation as the path to resolve the conflict, and thereafter contacts with Palestinians developed.[16] Public activity declined after the campaign against the Lebanon War, because public attention (and some of the activists' energy) focused on the July 1984 parliamentary elections, and because the ensuing national unity government was headed by Shimon Peres of the Labor Party.[17] However, especially from the autumn of 1984, behind the scenes the small leadership cadre were busy meeting representatives of the Palestinians from the Occupied Territories, making connections between them and other Israelis including Labor politicians, while increasing their understanding of each other's positions.[18] These dialogues were to prove vital to the character of 'Peace Now' activities during the first Intifada, and to a significant change in its political stance. Indeed, the movement had already oriented itself more towards the Palestinians than it had originally been. When 'Peace Now' re-launched itself at the start of 1982, rather than confront the right-wing opposition to the dismantling of the Sinai settlements directly, the group began to focus on the 'moral cost' of occupation in response to disturbing reports from the Occupied Territories about punitive house demolitions and shooting of demonstrators. On March 27 1982 around 80,000 Israelis, including 26 Labor Members of the Knesset, demonstrated with 'Peace Now' against the government's Iron Fist policy in the Territories.[19]

When the first Intifada broke out in the Occupied Territories in late December 1987, 'Peace Now' again became frequently and regularly active. It was not long before the group was leading large-scale demonstrations, also attended by other and more radical peace groups, against the national unity government's repression of the Palestinian uprising. As well as big events such as the 23 January 1988 demonstration in Kings of Israel Square in Tel Aviv, attended by 50-80,000 people, in this third peak of 'Peace Now''s history, some 200,000

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[14] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 99, 110-115; Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 146; Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 92.

[15] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 30.

[16] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 78-79.

[17] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 193; Hall-Cathala, *Peace Movement in Israel*, 60; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 98-99.

[18] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 214, 217; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 141-44.

[19] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 134; Hall-Cathala, *Peace Movement in Israel*, 57; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 90.

Israelis participated in various vigils, conferences, public discussions and other demonstrations.[20] The group's dialogues with Palestinians, most of who identified with the PLO, also continued, taking a dramatic turn following a change in PLO policy that was announced in various ways during the latter half of 1988. Once the PLO leadership had recognized Israel and in effect committed itself to a two-state solution to the conflict based on UN resolutions, 'Peace Now' also changed its direction by openly calling on the Israeli government to negotiate with the PLO, holding a well-attended demonstration in a rainy Tel Aviv to back its call on 24 December 1988, while also protesting the administrative detention of Palestinian leaders in the Occupied Territories.[21] The group's change of line also stole some thunder from more radical peace groups that had already advocated negotiations with the PLO and a two-state solution.[22] 'Peace Now''s focus shifted to cooperative activities with Palestinians in the West Bank, and rather less co-ordination of these activities with the army than previously, including a series of 'Days of Peace' in 1989 in which Israelis and Palestinians were variously brought together by the organizers or kept apart by the army.[23] The pinnacle of joint activity also involved European peace activists as well as a broader coalition of Israeli peace groups in a human chain around the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem on 30 December 1989, although media reports tended to focus on an outbreak of police violence at one section of the chain.[24] 'Peace Now' continued in 1990 with protests against the government's foot-dragging in response to a US peace initiative and its investments in settlements, especially by establishing a sustained and professional Settlements Watch project, while also responding to settler activities.[25]

However, the prompt for one of the biggest of 'Peace Now''s demonstrations in 1990 did not bode well. There had never been a majority of Israeli public opinion behind 'Peace Now''s and other peace groups' opposition to military repression of the first Intifada, with as many Jewish Israelis responding chauvinistically to what they took to be Palestinian hostility to Israel. This rightward shift was also reflected in Labor's weaker position in the national unity government following the elections of November 1988 (a government which Labor left in March 1990).[26] As the first Intifada grew more violent and Israeli civilians were also hurt, among the Israeli acts of retaliation was the shooting dead in May 1990 by an extremist of seven Palestinian workers from the Occupied Territories working inside Israel. Although some 50,000 joined the protest of outrage, 'Peace Now' had itself become a target of the extreme

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[20] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 230; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 99-100; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 148-151.

[21] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 246-51; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 105-11; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 151-59.

[22] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 120-21.

[23] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 108, 117-18; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 162-69.

[24] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 264-64; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 165-67; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 175-82.

[25] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 266-69; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 172-73; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 199-200.

[26] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 270; Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 98; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 156, 199.

right's violence.[27] It became all the more difficult for 'Peace Now' to persuade broader swathes of Israeli public opinion that the Palestinians were not hostile to them following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. The PLO supported Saddam Hussein and the Palestinians with whom 'Peace Now' had been cooperating more or less followed the line of their national leadership. Some influential Israeli public figures were scathing in their condemnation of the Palestinian position, which in their view undermined the credibility of the PLO's commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. 'Peace Now''s leadership, however, preferred to heal the rift and continue the dialogue despite the difference of opinion.[28] But the atmosphere for cooperation and dialogue became more difficult as violence against Israeli citizens and violent clashes between Palestinians and Israeli police in Jerusalem peaked in October 1990.[29] The government response was to close entry to Israel by workers from the Occupied Territories, which 'Peace Now' regarded as the opening for a call for separation between Israelis and Palestinians (into two states) as the basis for peace, as expressed by a demonstration in Jerusalem on 3 December 1990.[30]

Yet, in face of the growing anti-Arab racism in Israel 'Peace Now' had also strengthened its very weak relationships with Palestinian citizens of Israel, culminating in a joint human chain mass event on 13 January 1991 in the north of the country, just two days before the ultimatum for Iraqi forces to withdraw from Kuwait.[31] There was a hiatus in activity during the course of the war amid media reports of Palestinians celebrating as Scud missiles fell on Israel, prompting one commentator to declare that the missiles had killed 'Peace Now.'[32] In the post-Gulf War environment in which the US administration opened a new peace initiative, 'Peace Now' returned to its pattern of pushing the government for peace and trying to rally public support.[33] This time 'Peace Now' worked with its Palestinian allies while attempting to build a broader coalition under a campaign of 'Time for Peace' which drew 80,000 to a demonstration in Tel Aviv on 26 October 1991 on the eve of Prime Minister Shamir's departure for the Madrid conference.[34] The group also kept up its attention on settlements, finding an audience for its reports not only in Israel but also the US. Israel needed the US government to guarantee loans it needed to finance of the massive wave of Jewish immigration from the former USSR, but the US administration linked the loan guarantees to Israeli expenditure on the settlements.[35]

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[27] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 185-86; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 173.

[28] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 272-74; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 189-93; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 191-95.

[29] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 276; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 197-98; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 184-85.

[30] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 277, 284; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 199-200; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 188.

[31] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 278; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 196; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 189-90.

[32] Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 107; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 202; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 196-97.

[33] Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 108.

[34] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 287-89, 292; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 212-14.

[35] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 285-86; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 201-6.

There was the usual drop in activity prior to the June 1992 elections following which a bloc of pro-peace parties, 'Meretz', joined the new Labor-led government.[36] Hoping for much from this government, 'Peace Now' zigzagged between supporting its pursuit of peace in the face of mounting right-wing opposition, and opposing its continuation of settlement activity, as well as the deportation of 400 alleged 'Hamas' activists in December 1992.[37] But the group mounted no concerted objections to the July 1993 military operation against Hezbollah in Lebanon, which prompted the formation of a new more radical, small but effective peace group, 'Gush Shalom', which did protest and was also critical of the Oslo process.[38] When news of the Oslo agreement broke, 'Peace Now' was in effect fulfilling a role of cheerleader to the government, at a time of majority public support, matched by determined right-wing opposition.[39] As the year 1993 drew to a close, 'Peace Now' understood it would have to continue if not intensify its public campaigning for the peace agreement in the face of an increasingly hostile political atmosphere, as it experienced great difficulty in countering the right on the streets.[40]

Although in 1993 a chronicler would be tempted to conclude a look at 'Peace Now' optimistically,[41] with the benefit of hindsight it is clear that 'Peace Now' failed in its public relations campaign in the face of slow negotiations to implement the Oslo accords, increased terror attacks by 'Hamas' and 'Islamic Jihad', as well as the vicious opposition of the right that found expression in the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin on 4 November 1995.[42] 'Peace Now' had some successes in having its ideas adopted by governments and publics both prior to 1987-93, notably in the 1978 Camp David accords and the establishment in 1982 of a committee of inquiry into the Sabra and Shatila massacres that paved the way for Sharon's and Begin's resignations and perhaps even the Israeli withdrawal from most of Lebanon. It also had a major success in these years in the form of the 1993 Oslo agreement with the PLO, yet the movement had achieved neither a fundamental shift in Jewish Israeli public opinion about Palestinian hostility to Israel, nor had it committed future Israeli governments to a path of peace modeled on the Oslo accords and a two-state solution to the conflict.[43]

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[36] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 295-97.

[37] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 300-304; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 220-21.

[38] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 308; Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 108-9; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 220-21.

[39] Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 109-10; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 218-19

[40] "Activity report for the months of November and December," Peace Now archive, file # 5,3,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva; Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 135-36; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 221.

[41] See Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 318-322; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 216.

[42] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 316-16.

[43] Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 111-14, 120-73, refers to the period after the Oslo accords, from September 1993 to May 1996, as a 'rest area zone' in which there was still substantial yet wavering public support for the Oslo agreements but an over-estimation on the part of 'Peace

The Medium of Peace: Public Relations and Political Images in the Public Sphere

Having presented an historical overview of 'Peace Now' prior to and during 1987-93, I now turn to the key issues of this article, namely the manner in which *Peace Now* operated as a peace group. Book length studies of 'Peace Now' have tended to consider it in the framework of social scientific literature on social movements, considering its relative success or failure according to criteria such as its ability to influence government policy and disseminate its views in the political culture.[44] These are significant issues that scholarship should address, but not the only ones, there being additional, valuable research which concerns the symbolic and cultural aspects of 'Peace Now''s activities.[45] This article is a contribution to such cultural-historical research, focusing on the manner in which 'Peace Now' addressed its Israeli publics, its interventions in the public sphere and in particular the images of peace that it advocated. In this section I characterize 'Peace Now''s advocacy of peace as public relations activity promoting images of peace.

'Peace Now', as does any peace group or social movement, needs not only to have ideas and messages, but also a means by which to convey them. This may seem to be such an obvious point that it is not worth mentioning, yet, as Régis Debray has argued in his work on 'mediology', if one is to answer how certain ideas such as those of Christianity or socialism became powerful social forces, one must understand how cultural ideas are transmitted and the nature of the 'mediasphere' through which they flow.[46] Such a consideration is certainly pertinent for 'Peace Now', whose core leadership wished from the start to avoid the process of carefully defining the 'correct' ideological position on what sort of peace should be achieved. By contrast, more radical groups criticized it for not developing its positions based on close political analysis

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Now' and other moderates in the peace camp that the Oslo process was inevitable. She argues that as late as 1997 the movement continued to assess incorrectly both the public mood and the extent to which a Likud-led government under Prime Minister Netanyahu was obliged to continue the process. See pp. 157-60.

[44] See especially Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 12-44, 240-66; but also Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 315-332; Hall-Cathaler, *Peace Movement in Israel*, 21-23, 195-98. There are also article length studies that consider *Peace Now* as a social movement in comparative perspective, such as David Newman and Tamar Hermann, "A Comparative Study of Gush Emunim and Peace now," *Middle Eastern Studies* 28/3 (1992): 509-30.

[45] Of note is the research of Michael Feige: "Peace Now and the Legitimation Crisis of 'Civil Militarism'" *Israel Studies* 3/1 (1998): 85-111; "Rescuing the Person from the Symbol: 'Peace Now' and the Ironies of Modern Myth" *History & Memory* 11/1 (1999): 141-68; *One Space, Two Places: Gush Emunim, Peace Now and the Construction of Israeli Space,* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2002) (Hebrew).

[46] Régis Debray, *Media Manifestos: On the Technological Transmission of Cultural Forms*, trans. Eric Rauth (London: Verso, 1996).

guided by ideological principles.[47] Yet, even activists in the more radical groups such as Reuven Kaminer acknowledged that *Peace Now*'s focus on achieving broader influence rather than ideological correctness was crucial for shifting the Israeli public towards accepting negotiations with the PLO: "Only Peace Now could rally enough of the public to make a difference."[48] Kaminer is disapproving when he writes that: "On a day to day basis, Peace Now's policies were really the carefully chosen slogans it raised at its demonstrations."[49] Yet, 'Peace Now''s mode of communicating and disseminating its message explains its ability to rally the public on occasion.

'Peace Now' was (and remains) 'essentially a movement of slogans.' Describing its early years, historian Mordechai Bar-On notes that 'Peace Now' "devoted many of its meetings to devising clever short phrases and slogans appropriate for a specific occasion."[50] Although the same core group who would devise the slogans, acting like a group of copywriters, were professionals, academics, and intellectuals, they understood that they needed simple slogans to mobilize mass protests.[51] The focus on slogans was also a way to sidestep the diversity of opinion within the group, which initially expected no more by way of ideological commitment than agreement with the slogan 'Peace is Better than the Greater Land of Israel', the latter being the settlers' vision of what Israel should become.[52] A dominant figure in the leadership of 'Peace Now,' Tzaly Reshef, used a verbal image of the movement as a bus whose direction is defined in the most general terms possible in order that its passengers (supporters) would remain on it. Nobody left the bus when the group sharpened its opposition to the settlements, whereas recognition of the PLO was a change in direction that caused at least one veteran of the movement to get off the bus.[53] Reshef himself was aware of the limitations of repeating simple slogans, but also understood their value.[54]

'Peace Now' did not so much express its ideas through slogans as it fashioned its ideas by formulating slogans. It solicited the agreement of members of the Israeli public to its slogans, which appeared in notices in the newspapers, on billboards, on public notice boards, on flyers distributed on the street, on bumper stickers, on the placards and banners held up at demonstrations and street vigils, and sometimes in the printed and audio-visual media reports of

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[47] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 99-103; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 34, 37-38.

[48] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 112.

[49] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 113.

[50] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 106.

[51] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 189.

[52] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 38. Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 102 translates the same slogan as 'Peace is Better than another Piece of Land' in an effort to retain in translation some of the similarity of sound in Hebrew of the words 'peace' (*shalom*) and 'whole' (*shlema*), the 'Whole Land of Israel' being the literal translation of the Hebrew expression for 'the Greater Land of Israel' that includes the Occupied Territories.

[53] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 38, 61, 157-58.

[54] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 48.

the events of 'Peace Now.'[55] In effect, 'Peace Now' was engaged in public relations campaigns for the positions and ideas it promoted, using the approaches and techniques associated with commercial advertising for political purposes. Significantly, 'Peace Now' considered itself to be operating antagonistically in a public sphere conceived as 'the street', often in fierce competition with right-wing campaigns, as in 1993.[56]

'Peace Now' operated on the basis of the appropriateness of 'public relations' modes of address for discourse in a democratic public sphere. Yet, there is a strong and prevalent view that public relations are not compatible with democratic politics, a position articulated clearly by Jürgen Habermas in his classic case against the 'intrusion' of manipulative public relations into democratic politics and in favor of a normative, Kantian notion of 'critical publicity', the principles of which inhered in the reading publics of early modernity.[57] Habermas criticizes the political use of advertising techniques, appealing images and visual, stylistic modes of communication in the place of verbal reasoning. However, there is a more compelling case that democratic publics have subsequently been constituted by media technologies that are not only verbal, but also audio-visual. There has been an incremental equivalization of 'public' and 'popular' both in relation to the expansion of the electorate and the 'democratization' of culture. Culture itself has become more 'popular,' and rather than being depoliticized, is precisely the site for a struggle for hegemony in democratic systems.[58]

Much of the struggle for political-cultural hegemony is conducted through competing images – of justice, of the appropriate limits of government, of the purpose of education, and of peace. The images of peace discussed in this essay belong to the category of political images, which are not simply pictures or visual images, but condensations of complex ideas, conceptions and experiences of peace. The notion of a political image is both startlingly simple and yet also incredibly complicated. Political images are perceptual, mental and verbal as well as visual images. They are abstract notions that come into being only when materialized as signs in any form or medium. Political images are compelling ideas that carry emotional appeal, condensing concepts into

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[55] Lynn Renée Bloch has argued that bumper stickers have been a particularly fruitful way for Israelis to express their political opinions forthrightly since 1977. See her "Rhetoric on the Roads of Israel: The Assassination and Political Bumper Stickers," in *The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin*, ed. Yoram Peri, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000), 257-262.

[56] "Summary of Coordination Meeting – 25 March 1993" (Hebrew), Peace Now archive, file # 7,3,93, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

[57.] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, (Polity Press: Cambridge, 1989), Chapters I and II.

[58] I have argued for the democratic potential of popular mediated culture in "The Radical Democratic Possibilities of Popular Culture," in *On Radical Democracy: Politics Between Abundance and Lack*, eds. Lars Tønder and Lasse Thomassen, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2005), 149-66; "Popular Culture and Mediated Politics: Intellectuals, Elites and Democracy," in *Media and the Restyling of Politics*, eds. John Corner and Dick Pels, (Sage: London, 2003), 171-89; and "Governing The Public: Technologies Of Mediation And Popular Culture" *Cultural Values* 6/1&2 (2002), 167-81.

performances of style and character, crystallizing ideas in fragments of cultural symbolism. Not only objects of analysis, political images are actors that compete with each other in public spheres and on public screens.[59] Political images are neither superficial nor misleading versions of political reality, but vital components of political discourse. In promoting images of peace, 'Peace Now' used the currency of contemporary political discourse.

Yet, an implicit version of Habermas' theory guided some of 'Peace Now''s original leadership based in Jerusalem, who regarded themselves as 'the word people.' They were comfortable with activities such as discussion and the dissemination of written material that suited their academic and professional backgrounds. By contrast, the Tel Aviv activists who came from the world of arts and entertainment favored non-conventional events and visual displays. As the spectacle of a human chain of 20,000 people passing a letter over twenty kilometers to the Prime Minister's office while holding up 'Peace Now' banners grabbed media attention in 1978, 'Peace Now' leader Reshef realized that the group could not rely only on well-reasoned texts to get its message across.[60] Michael Feige characterizes 'Peace Now' as deploying a "discourse … devoid of pathos, shunning dramatic metaphors' and instead basing its advocacy of peace and territorial compromise pragmatically on 'economic, demographic and universalistic reasons."[61] According to Feige, the movement was "trapped in the contradictions of modern politics, trying to advance *logos* without the aid of *mythos*."[62] Perhaps that is so for the particular case of memorialization of Emil Grunzweig, but it is probably more appropriate to characterize 'Peace Now' as in practice or implicitly rejecting the premise that reasoned public discourse must be verbal, non-metaphorical and devoid of pathos.

The formulation of 'Peace Now''s main public positions and messages as slogans indicates that the group did not for the most part attempt to practice a discourse of reasoned argument but instead produced an easily digestible discourse subject to either agreement or rejection. If one (or one's friends) did not agree with a slogan, one most likely did not come to the demonstration, or vice versa. Yet, slogans are not disembodied ideas but also have to be embodied as material signs on newspaper pages, noticeboards, bumper stickers, placards and so on. In other words, the slogans must be shown repeatedly in the public sphere, somewhat like ubiquitous advertising slogans. The translation of slogans into material signs, with or without the addition of visual images, adds connotations and levels of meanings to the purely verbal

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[59] For a more expansive discussion of political images, see Jon Simons, "From Visual Literacy to Image Competence," in *Visual Literacy*, ed. J. Elkins, (New York: Routledge, 2008); and on peace images, see Jon Simons, "Peace Now or Never: Images of Peace in the Israeli Peace Movement," in *Representations of Peace and Conflict,* eds. Stephen Gibson and Simon Mollan, (Palgrave-Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2012).

[60] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 45-46.

[61] Feige, "Rescuing the Person from the Symbol," 152.

[62] Ibid., 161.

message.[63] The choice of font and the layout of even a verbal text are among the features that add significance and meaning to a slogan displayed as a graphic image.[64]

The significance of slogans as graphic images is tied to the very identity of 'Peace Now', indeed to its most recognizable image, its logo. 'Peace Now' acquired its logo and name by accident at its first demonstration on 1 April 1978, when the core organizing group based in Jerusalem arrived in Tel Aviv to find that the group there were distributing placards designed by graphic artist David Tartakover reading 'peace now.' There were misgivings that the slogan detracted from a conception of peace as a long-term Israeli interest that would take much time and effort to achieve, because of borrowed American emphasis on "now." Yet, the name stuck and the sign became the group's name and logo.[65]

The logo consists simply of the Hebrew word for 'peace' in black in the Biblical Koren font placed above the word for 'now' in red in the contemporary headline-style Haim font.[66] The combination connotes both a contrast between a biblical, perhaps divine notion of peace and the secular demand for its immediate achievement. Michael Feige observes that 'Peace Now''s main innovation was in relation to the temporality of peace being achievable in the short-term.[67] The peace that 'Peace Now' demands is different from the sort of transcendental, metaphysical, messianic peace evoked by its opponents in 'Gush Emunim',[68] and yet the spiritual value of peace is to be actualized somehow in the secular present. It remains ambiguous whether the transcendence of peace *can* be made actual, or must remain eternally untouched by secular actuality. An additional ambiguity inheres in the use of the alarming black and red colors, which signify the urgency of peace at the time of the negotiations with Egypt. The red, however, also connotes the political left, rather than the blue and white national colors of Israel. More recent graphic designs used by 'Peace Now' have indeed employed the national colors in order to promote the patriotism of the group, including the lettering of the logo, much to the chagrin of the original designer who intended the red hue to indicate the revolutionary character of the demand for peace.[69] Whether 'Peace Now' speaks for a mainstream, consensual, Zionist politics or challenges that consensus is an ambiguity written into its very logo. The

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[63] Roland Barthes, "Rhetoric of the Image," in Id. *Image, Music, Text* (London: Flamingo, 1984).

[64] Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (London: Routledge, 1996).

[65] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 29-30, 88.

[66] 'David Tartakover' on the Tipografia Ivrit blog: http://tipografiaivrit.blogspot.com/search?q=Tartakover, accessed 10 July 2012.

[67] Feige, "Peace Now and the Legitimation Crisis of 'Civil Militarism'," 92-93.

[68] See David Newman, "Conflicting Israeli Peace Discourses," *Peace Review* 9/3 (1997): 423; and Adi Ophir and Ariela Azoulay, "Peace, How are You?" *Plastika* 2 (1998): 76-80 (in Hebrew).

[69] Interview with David Tartakover, Tel Aviv, 16 December 2012.

following discussion will uncover similar ambiguities within and between the peace images of 'Peace Now.'

Figure 1. Peace Now logo. There is no copyright on this image which is in the public domain. The *Peace Now* logo was designed by David Tartakover in 1978 and can be found on his web site at: http://www.tartakover.co.il/ (accessed 13 July 2012).

'Peace Now''s practice in the public sphere established continuity between the words of its slogans and their graphic figuration in print media, on posters and flyers, and on stickers. Ideas were formulated as graphic images, sometimes along with pictorial images, all of which were disseminated across a public sphere in which what was to be shown was both textual and visual at the same time. In developing a clear and coherent promotion campaign for a potential agreement in April 1993, it was proposed that 'Peace Now' prepare a variety of publicity materials: not only stickers, posters and roadside banners, but also a petition, postcards to the Prime Minister, two bulletins for activists (as well as an effort to recruit more activists and prepare them for action), and four different pamphlets to be distributed by activists to the broader public.[70] This continuity between slogans, graphic images, and more detailed textual explanation of the organization's ideas was especially apparent when 'Peace Now' changed its position, as in December 1988 when it began to advocate

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[70] "Work plan for *Peace Now*: 1 December 1992 – 3 April 1993" (Hebrew), Peace Now archive, file # 1,2,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

negotiation with the PLO.[71] It should also not be overlooked that the group held many public discussion meetings such as a series in 1992-93 in development towns, as part of a recruitment campaign.[72] Overall, then, 'Peace Now' operated according to a conception of continuity between verbal and visual modes of address in the public sphere, as well as the appropriateness of 'public relations' modes of address for discourse in a democratic public sphere. It did not undermine reasoned, democratic discourse by doing so, but found a proper idiom for public address. In the following section I analyze the political peace images of 'Peace Now' by discussing one of its key forms of public address, namely its graphic images as they appear on posters held up at demonstrations, posted to billboards, and sometimes printed in newspapers. This graphic focus by no means exhausts the material signs through 'Peace Now' advocated peace, and hence I supplement the analysis with some textual evidence, but such a focus offers very clear insight into the group's peace advocacy.[73]

Peace Now's Images of Peace

I identify three main political images of peace that 'Peace Now' promoted from 1987 to 1993: peace as negotiation and compromise; peace as the ending of occupation; and peace as separation between Israelis and Palestinians. I will discuss these conceptual images of peace through some of the material signs, the graphic images by means of which they were advocated in the public sphere.

A. Peace as negotiation and compromise

'Peace Now' advocated an image of peace as a process of negotiation and compromise both in relation to official government negotiations and to the organization's dialogue with leaders of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. To present such an image entailed also conceiving of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians (as well as other Arab nations) as amenable to such compromise, although this was not the emphasis of the group's campaigning. Baruch Kimmerling conceives of such a 'compromise orientation' as one of three main orientations within an overall social complex of 'civil militarism', all of which perceive Israel to be under a threat requiring the mobilization of resources for a military response. According to the compromise orientation, Israel's conflict with the Arabs is akin to other conflicts over concrete interests such as territory and boundaries, in which a

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[71] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 113.

[72] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 295.

[73] The material signs that should be taken into account in a full discussion of the images of peace advocated by 'Peace Now' would also include demonstrations at which speeches are made, banners displayed, songs are sung, public space is organized and filled, as well as research reports written and disseminated, opinions published and disseminated in print and electronically, legal action taken, education programs conducted and so on.

peace agreement based on territorial compromise will bring Israel security.[74] 'Peace Now' adhered to a pragmatic conception of peace (having never been a pacifist organization).[75] An aspect of that pragmatism was to pressure the government of the time to bring home positive results from which ever peace process and negotiations were on the agenda by mobilizing public support for the negotiations. Another way to put this is that 'Peace Now' orchestrated public relations campaigns to create an image of public enthusiasm for peace agreements, which it did quite successfully three times over the six year period of 1987-93.

The first occasion was on 12 March 1988 during American Secretary of State Schulz's peace initiative, on the eve of Prime Minister Shamir's visit to Washington. As many as 90,000 demonstrators rallied to the slogan of 'Peace Now' 'say yes to peace' in Tel Aviv.[76] The second occasion was once again a send-off for Shamir, on his way to the Madrid conference that kicked off the American peace initiative in October 1991. At this point 'Peace Now' was operating clearly along the lines of public relations when it underwent something of an attempted rebranding in its efforts to win public support for, and government commitment to, the US-backed peace process. Since late 1989, 'Peace Now' had hired its first professional staff, and it seems around the same time also started making use of professional advertising services. The idea was to appeal to a broader base by working under the banner of 'Time for Peace', but there was not much success in attracting those who identified with the Labor Party rather than the peace camp. Still, the campaign did build to a significant demonstration on 26 October attended by about 80,000 people.[77] The flyer calling for the rally uses 'Peace Now''s logo colors and presents the new logo of 'time for peace' in white letters in the lower black band, in the Biblical font in which 'peace' had appeared previously. Significantly, the flyer makes a bid for consensus through the bold central claim that 'Israel wants peace', the first two words appearing in black and the word 'peace' appearing in red. The name of a publicity company, Zarfati Shternshus, also appears vertically on the notice. The theme of the temporal attainability of peace contained in the group's name is present even if the word 'now' is missing. The smaller letters at the top of the notice declare the group's differentiation from the right: 'In the face of doubters, opponents and expansionists on the right, come to demonstrate.' 'Peace Now' figured itself as representing the national consensus, and the settlers as being beyond it. Yet, a deep ambiguity troubles

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[74] Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society, and the Military* (Berkeley, California University Press, 2001), 209-12, 223-25.

[75] Newman and Hermann, "A Comparative Study of Gush Emunim and Peace Now," 514.

[76] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 233; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 102-3; Untitled list of *Peace Now* activities from 1983-89, (English), Peace Now archive, file # 8,6,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

[77] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 287-88; Kaminer, 212-13. Kaminer claims that the 'Time for Peace' campaign made use of 'patriotic' blue and white colors, but I did not see examples of that in the Peace Now archives, which admittedly are not complete.

the temporality of 'Time for Peace', a phrase borrowed the *Book of Ecclesiastes* 3, 8. There is also according to the same piece of scripture a time for war. While the post-Gulf War international atmosphere prompted the 'time for peace' sentiment and the Madrid conference, the verse itself suggests that another change in circumstances would justify war.

Figure 2. 'Israel wants peace: Time for Peace.' Flyer, Peace Now archive, file # 1,33,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

The sheer presence of numbers at such a demonstration is the basis for the rhetorical claim of a national consensus for peace, and hence it is not a surprise that 'Peace Now' chose to represent its activities of 1991 in its 30 year exhibition with a photograph of that massive demonstration. Both the large banner and most of the placards in the picture repeat the slogan 'Israel wants peace', while an additional banner carries the message: 'The chance for peace must not be missed.'

Figure n. 3: Electronic image of a collage representing activities and events in 1991, Peace Now 30 year exhibition. Peace Now archive, catalogue # 7,2,2-121, dvd2, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

On the third occasion 'Peace Now' did not need to pressure the government to compromise during negotiations but instead congratulated the government on the secretly negotiated Oslo accords. On 4 September 1993, a large joyous crowd celebrated the agreement in Tel Aviv.[78] The main slogan for the event was 'The People stand for Peace', which had already been circulating in previous months as a response to the widely disseminated right-wing slogan against withdrawal from the Golan Heights, 'The People stand with the Golan.'[79] Additional slogans were also those already in circulation to build

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[78] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 309-10; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 219.
[79] In 1993 the visible, official peace process following the Madrid conference seemed to be leading towards an agreement with Syria, at least in the eyes of the right-wing public. Their slogans, stickers and posters of the time can be viewed at http://www.golan.org.il/1555/, accessed 13 July 2012.

public support for the peace process: 'there is a mandate for peace' and 'the right won't prevent peace.'[80] Those slogans can be made out in a photograph of the demonstration that appears on the cover of a 'Peace Now' report on its activities, as well as a large banner of the Labor Party's Young Guard. On all three occasions, 'Peace Now' orchestrated an image of massive public support for peace negotiation

Figure 4: 1993 demonstration. Peace Now 'Summary report of activities – 1993-94.' Peace Now archive, file # 1,33,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

However, at the start of the first Intifada, and again after the collapse of Schulz's peace initiative, there was no prospect of negotiation by the government, so 'Peace Now' had to engage in dialogue with Palestinians to

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[80] "Preparations for the demonstration on Saturday 4.9.93 – 'the people stand for peace'" (Hebrew), Peace Now archive, file # 5,3,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

construct an image of peace as negotiation.[81] Such dialogue was a shift in the movement's focus on the Jewish Israeli public, but enabled it 'to build in practice an infrastructure of peace relations.'[82] Above all, 'Peace Now' needed to show that there were Palestinians willing to engage with not only the radical, non-Zionist groups (for whom the official PLO stance prior to 1988 of a secular democratic state in all of Palestine was acceptable) but also with 'Peace Now' as a Zionist peace group.[83] This process had already begun towards the end of 1984, and by 1985 'Peace Now' was already campaigning for dialogue with Palestinians. A poster declaring that 'Now – it's time to sit down and talk' was published at least by January 1985, and retrospectively placed in a collage representing activities for 1987 in 'Peace Now''s 30 year exhibition.[84]

Figure 5: "Now – it's time to sit down and talk." *Peace* Now poster, 70 X 50 cm, design by Aryeh Agg. Peace Now archive, item # 14 in file # 5,96,120, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

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[81] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 187-88, reports that *Peace Now* waited for the failure of Prime Minister Peres' meetings with King Hussein of Jordan in 1985 before focusing on its dialogue with Palestinian leaders.

[82] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 141.

[83] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 143.

[84] A copy of the poster in English advertises a conference between several Palestinians and Israelis on 1 January 1985 at the Gerard Behar Centre in Jerusalem. "Press Cuttings" (Hebrew and English), Peace Now archive, file # 5,7,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Electronic Images of the exhibition of 'Peace Now' marking 30 years of its existence are also held in the archive, catalogue # 7,2,2-121, dvd2.

The poster draws on the well-known logo and branding of 'Peace Now' which appear at the bottom of the poster, which uses only the red and black of the logo, but also stresses the 'now' of the need to talk, as well as being translated into Arabic (although the Arabic for 'now' is misspelled). The chair and mosaic floor that are depicted figurally connote an old-style domestic building pre-dating 1948, called an 'Arab house' in Hebrew. [85] There is ambiguity in this image too. Does it signify the past presence of Palestinians in Israel and the possibility of a shared space, or Israeli ownership of the space (and a stereotypical view of such 'authentic' space)? The empty chairs are waiting to be filled, perhaps by regular citizens rather than politicians, as this is not an official setting. Yet, one wonders if dialogue can succeed in this detached space in which the chairs do not face each other.

The poster suited the position of 'Peace Now' at the time, before they wanted to be specific about which Palestinians should be the partners of dialogue, but by November 1988 that had changed when 'Peace Now' began a campaign to advocate negotiations with the PLO,[86] and hence the partner of dialogue became the focus of the campaign. A new slogan appears in a poster for a demonstration that month, declaring 'Talk peace with the PLO now', which again draws on the movement's logo and colors. Its demand is stated bluntly, its lack of ambiguity actually loosing 'Peace Now' some support, as noted above. Although in a less bold grey, the letters for 'with the PLO' interrupt 'peace' and 'now.' This image shows (rather than says) that the PLO (rather the settlements) might be the obstacle to peace.

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[85] Perhaps ironically, many of the homes in the area where the *Peace Now* offices in Jerusalem are located are such old-style houses. Many Palestinians lived in the area until being put to flight during the war of 1947-9.

[86] Untitled list of *'Peace Now'* activities from 1983-89, (English), Peace Now archive, file # 8,6,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

Figure 6: 'Talk peace to the PLO now.' *Peace* Now poster, design by David Tartakover,[87] 89 X 57 cm. Peace Now archive, item # 13 in file # 2,96,120, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

The government clearly did not agree with 'Peace Now''s demand or assessment of the situation, given that it had placed Faisal Husseni, the leading figure of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, in administrative detention following a significant conference meeting with 'Peace Now' in July 1988 in which he had clarified that an earlier statement by one of Yasser Arafat's advisers did indeed indicate that the PLO had recognized Israel.[88] Feeling responsible and angry, 'Peace Now' organized a demonstration on 6 August 1988 targeting the Tel Aviv home of the Minister of Defence, Yitzhak Rabin of the Labor Party, under the slogan of "Don't imprison them – talk with them!." The notice for the demonstration features a photograph of Faisal Husseini talking in front of the 'Peace Now' banner, as if he were actually speaking for the movement. Indeed, Reshef himself believed that if all Israelis

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[87] Although the artist's signature does not appear on the poster, it is displayed on David Tartakover's website: http://www.tartakover.co.il/ (accessed 13 July 2012).
[88] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 246; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 151-54.

could be brought to conferences with the 'non-terrorist branch of the PLO', they would all understand that there was a partner for peace, despite the government's denials and a law forbidding Israelis to meet with PLO representatives.[89] However, the demonstration in support of Husseini attracted only a few thousand, reflecting the movement's weakness when confronting Labour rather than Likud politicians, but also the dilemma that 'Peace Now' constantly faced in promoting peace as dialogue when the Palestinians were regarded by so many Israelis as hostile and violent.[90] For Husseini to appear to be speaking for 'Peace Now', while getting in the way of 'peace now', was too much for 'Peace Now''s broader public.

Figure 7: 'Don't imprison them – talk with them!' Detail from electronic image of a collage representing activities and events in 1987, Peace Now 30 year exhibition. Peace Now archive, catalogue # 7,2,2-121, dvd2, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

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[89] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 160.
[90] Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 89, 99.

In order to promote an image of peace as reconciliation and dialogue there also had to be experiences of those concepts to symbolize. A milestone in 'Peace Now''s efforts to bring Israelis and Palestinians together during the first Intifada was an event to create a human chain around the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. The event was planned over months not only by 'Peace Now' but also by Palestinian counter-parts and European peace activists.[91] Hence, the promotion of the event did not employ the colors of the 'Peace Now' logo, though the large letters reading 'Time for Peace' in Hebrew uses the same font that the word 'peace' was usually displayed in. Blue is used to symbolize Israel colours, and green and black both appear in the Palestinian flag. The theme of temporality is sustained from previous slogans by proposing that peace can be brought in the coming year, and the final phrase of the text at the bottom speaks of joining hands in the hope of peace now.

Figure 8: '1990: Time for Peace.' Poster, 70 X 50 cm. Peace Now archive, item # 11 in file # 5,96,120, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

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[91] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 264; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 163-65; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 176-81.

However, the predominant images of the event were not of negotiation and compromise. Although for the most part it was a festive occasion on a sunny afternoon, the police attacked protestors in one section with tear gas, water cannon and rubber bullets. From the perspective of 'Peace Now' this was an undesirable outcome and hence much effort was put into blaming the police for the violence (which was the finding of a commission in April 1990).[92] Yet, from the point of the view of both some Palestinian and European protestors, as well as more radical protestors, such repression of peaceful demonstrations by the Israeli authorities was not uncommon, while exposing the violence of the authorities was an aim of their protest.[93] As we shall see shortly, 'Peace Now' had no problem with portraying the occupation as oppressive and the settlers as dangerous, but it consistently wished to sustain an image of itself as moderate and mainstream, which its leaders believed rested on avoiding confrontations with the state authorities.[94]

Another human chain event that 'Peace Now' led but was co-organized through a broader coalition was held in January 1991. To a large extent 'Peace Now' had overlooked relations between Israel's Jewish majority and its Palestinian minority. [95] But in the increasingly chauvinist atmosphere in Israel during the first Intifada in which all Palestinians, whether citizens of Israel or residents of the Occupied Territories might be subject to attack by Jewish extremists, 'Peace Now' felt the need to develop ties with Palestinian citizens of Israel. The timing of the event proved to be awkward: it followed the crisis of relations with Palestinian interlocutors over the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and occurred just a few days before the ultimatum for Iraqi withdrawal. Yet, it was well attended, so its anti-racist message must have resonated.[96]

The poster for the event was even less marked as a 'Peace Now' image than the '1990: Time for Peace' poster. Its emphasis is more figural than the generally slogan-based designs for the movement's publicity, as it is left to the text around the picture in the center to utter the call to 'come and give a hand to a Jewish-Arab peace chain' and to list the organizations participating (as well as the date and location). The dove-as-hand image invokes conventional icons of peace, combining them together to symbolize the coming together of Jewish and Palestinian Israelis, as seen in the juxtaposition of the blue and the green. Yet, there is only one hand, as if only of the two sides is rooted in the green earth, as if the two cannot join hands as equals.

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[92] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace,* 265; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 180-82.

[93] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 166-67.

[94] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 48, 61-62, 66, 120, 125, 159, 166. Whether or not Reshef and the leadership were correct in their assessment is another matter.

[95] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 142.

[96] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace,* 278; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 196; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 189-90.

Figure 9: 'Spreading peace.' Poster, 70 X 35 cm, design by Rafi Ettinger. Peace Now archive, item # 11 in file # 2,96,120, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

B. Peace as the ending of the oppression of occupation

Although 'Peace Now' had thought of itself as an extra-parliamentary group expressing a long-term Israeli interest in peace agreements as the best means to achieve security for Israel, even before the first Intifada it devoted energy to protesting the 'moral cost' of occupation for both Israeli occupiers and Palestinian occupied. [97] In part 'Peace Now' had wanted to demarcate between itself as a Zionist peace group and other, more radical groups that tended in their opposition to the occupation to identify with and express solidarity for the Palestinians.[98] Yet, its supporters often wished to express outrage about military and settler violence against Palestinians in the occupied territories, and

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[97] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 30, 90.
[98] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 224, Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 261.

hence 'Peace Now' also worked in tandem with more radical groups such as the Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University in March 1982.[99] When the first Intifada erupted 'Peace Now' was not the first or most vocal of the peace groups protesting the repressive military response to the uprising,[100] but it held a first, small demonstration of about 1,500 in Tel Aviv on 19 December 1987 under the slogan 'Why are the territories burning' (attended mostly by more radical activists) and another much larger demonstration with 50-80,000 people on 23 January 1988. On both occasions the flyers and slogans blamed the violence on the government's unwillingness to negotiate and compromise over the territories, meaning that the 'peace as compromise' image was at play. But significantly, at the December event, both a Palestinian Israeli (Ahmad Abu Asneh), and a Palestinian doctor from Gaza (Zakariyya al-Agha) spoke from the platform, indicating a degree of solidarity with Palestinian suffering.[101] 'Peace Now' continued to demonstrate against the repression of the first Intifada. On the uprising's second anniversary, 9 December 1989, it held a torch-lit demonstration in Jerusalem attended by 3,500 people who walked silently while carrying pictures of the 143 Palestinian and Israeli children who had been killed so far in the uprising.[102] The poster (and flyer) calling for the demonstration is distinctly verbal in orientation, lacking much by way of visual design, reminiscent of the wall posters used by the ultra-Orthodox community. This was to be a small event compared to the upcoming 'Time for Peace' event at the end of the month, and so the poster was of the sort to be posted on public billboards on campuses and around the city, the red paper calling attention to the notice. Using the font of the 'now' in the 'Peace Now' logo, it declares in bold letters at the top: 'And we all remain silent' and then the large print continues below with a call to a protest march, listing time and place, underlined by the 'Peace Now' logo in black letters. The smaller print in between picks up the 'we' of the first line, involving the reader in a sense of responsibility for silence about the two-year long Intifada, the trampling of human rights, oppression of the Palestinian people, the erosion of ethics, asking how many need to be killed before hearts are opened, until when will 'we' allow (Prime Minister) Shamir to lead us into a political stalemate. The text then returns to the point about silence in the face of global changes. After a line break but still (oddly) in small letters, it reads: 'Come to demonstrate with us in a cry to end the killing and to speak peace with the PLO now.' This

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[99] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 34.

[100] There were many other protest groups that either sprang up or gained strength (and then sometimes declined) during the first Intifada and until the Oslo agreement, and so there is not space in this article to discuss them. See Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, chapters 11-14; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, chapter 3-14; Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 98-110. There is also a large body of journal articles and other research documents about these smaller protest groups, for which the bibliographies of these books are helpful.

[101] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 99-100; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 149-51.

[102] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace,* 263-64; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 163; Untitled list of *Peace Now* activities from 1983-89, (English), Peace Now archive, file # 8,6,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

poster has to be read rather than taken in at a glance (as a glance would not reveal the purpose of the demonstration, other than that it is organized by 'Peace Now'). The text suggests a collective civic responsibility for the suffering of the Intifada and for the occupation, while proposing that there is a political alternative of peace. But the image of peace as negotiation is downplayed compared to the implicit understanding that occupation must be ended in order to bring peace now.

Figure 10: 'And we all remain silent.' Poster, 50 X 35 cm. Peace Now archive, item # 4, file # 8,96,120, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

In addition to contrasting peace with occupation, 'Peace Now''s image of peace as the ending of occupation also casts the settler-occupiers as the enemy. A key motivation for establishing the movement had been to counter 'Gush Emunim' with a 'sane' version of Zionism.[103] That theme is also prominent in a June 1989 poster designed by David Tartakover that was used by 'Peace Now' for fundraising (the small vertical script on the left side provides the

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[103] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 15, 27, 37; Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 90.

movement's bank account details for donations). The poster features a photograph of a notorious settler leader, Rabbi Levinger, grinning with pistol in his hand, decontextualizing him against a stark red and white background, while the bold script labeling him reads 'Shooting and Laughing.' The phrase is a variation on the expression 'shooting and crying', which refers to the practice of executing violence and then bemoaning it later. Already the title of a book of columns by journalist Nahum Barnea, the phrase was also the title of a controversial rock song (that was banned by army radio) by popular musician Si Hi-man in 1988, protesting the violent repression of the Intifada.[104] The poster demonizes Levinger, and by implication the settlers in general, as lacking even the conscience to agonize over their violent behavior. As in much anti-occupation imagery, peacefulness is not symbolized by the image, which pictures antagonism to those held responsible for the absence of peace.

Figure 11: 'Shooting and Laughing.' Poster, designed by David Tartakover, 1989, 96 x 68 cm. Peace Now archive, item # 2, file # 2,96,120, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

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[104] Nahum Barnea, *Shooting and Crying: On Politicians, Generals, Journalists and other Narcissists* (Tel Aviv: Kinneret Zmora Dvir, 1981) (Hebrew); Si Hi-Man and the Local Band, 'Shooting and Crying' on the album, *The Second Record*. NMC Music Ltd., 1988; song available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQ52NvoNXGo, accessed 14 February 2012; for more about the context and reception of the song, see Scott Streiner, "Shooting and Crying: The Emergence of Protest in Israeli Popular Music" *The European Legacy* 6/6 2001.

'Peace Now' was also busy protesting the settlers and their activities on the ground, of which there were many, as is evident in a newspaper notice calling on supporters to a protest vigil in opposition to a ceremony to be held in the presence of government ministers to dedicate some Torah scrolls at Joseph's Tomb in Nablus, on 3 May 1990. This was a period of intense confrontation between 'Peace Now' and the radical right in a series of small protests on site. At the top of the notice in large letters is the slogan 'The graves of our fathers or the lives of our sons', a slogan which had been used as early as March 1978, then in protest against Prime Minister Begin's apparent preference to keep the site of the graves of the Biblical forefathers in Hebron at the expense of a peace agreement with Egypt.[105] The rest of the text declares that the ceremony will celebrate the annihilation of the peace process, lists recent settlement activities in the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City, Dugit and Joseph's Tomb, accuses the government of preferring fetishes to peace and settlements to immigration, and calls on the reader to 'come and denounce the abomination of Shechem [the Hebrew name for Nablus] – because peace is better than the greater land of Israel.' The term 'abomination' references heathen practices, Shechem also being the name of a Biblical character who 'defiled' Jacob's daughter Dinah and was then slaughtered in revenge along with his father and kinsmen by Jacob's sons Simon and Levi.[106] Also of interest is the handwriting on the archive copy of the notice, which refers to the five different newspapers in which it appeared on 2 May, from the mass circulation «Yediot Ach'ronot» to the 'Kibbutz Ha'artzi' movement's newspaper, «Al Hamishmar». However, 'Peace Now' had to appeal to the High Court against the military authorities in order to be allowed to protest at the site, and only tens of demonstrators were permitted to be there under a compromise agreement. In the face of such constant provocations, 'Peace Now' established its permanent Settlement Watch project, which is today the mainstay of the group's activities.[107] 'Peace Now' had consistently regarded the settlements as an obstacle to peace, but in figuring peace as the ending of occupation it expanded both its willingness to identify with the Palestinian victims of occupation and its sense of the damage done to Israeli ethics. Yet, once again, the newspaper notice did not symbolize peacefulness but antagonism to the settlers, divisiveness rather than peace between sons, while also suggesting that a choice must be made between attachment to Judaic tradition and peace.

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[105] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 102, 268.
[106] Genesis, 34.
[107] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 200-201.

Figure 12: 'Graves of the Fathers.' Newspaper notice, May 3 1990. Peace Now archive, file #
1,28,92, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari
Institute, Givat Haviva.

C. Peace as Separation

A very different sense of the harm being done to Israelis prompted 'Peace Now' to promote another image of peace as separation between Israelis and Palestinians during the first Intifada. The context was the nasty atmosphere in October 1990 when violence against civilians on both sides escalated, and in response to stabbings of Israelis by Palestinians from the Occupied Territories the Israeli government closed off those areas, thereby blocking all those who crossed from there into Israel daily from earning a livelihood. 'Peace Now' activists saw this as an opportunity to build on public sentiment and re-draw the 'green line', meaning the effective boundary of Israel that had been established by the armistice agreements of Israel with Egypt and Jordan after the 1948 war and held until the June 1967 war. The Palestinian leader Faisal Husseini also accepted the notion of separation in principle, but the more radical and leftist Israeli groups did not regard such separation as a step to peace or a value but as a measure taken in a spirit of anti-Arab racism at a time when the voices on the right were proposing the 'transfer' (meaning ethnic cleansing) of Palestinians. 'Peace Now' held a demonstration in Jerusalem on 8 December 1990 under the slogan of 'Part ways for/to peace' and published a pamphlet titled 'We can't go on like this.' [108]

The slogan found its way to a poster that cleaves very closely to the 'Peace Now' logo, adding in a different and slighter font the word 'to part ways' (or separate), the three words reading together 'part ways for peace now.' The blunt message was intended to articulate between the concept of separation and peace, even as 'Peace Now' was developing its links with Palestinian Israelis in preparation for the January 1991 event against racism. Moreover, the linkage between separation and peace was no mere temporary tactic. Writing after Rabin's assassination, at the end of his history of 'Peace Now', Reshef writes that 'there will be no peace without separation' and that 'separation is needed to enable the two people to recover from the traumatic history of the relations between them.'[109]

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[108] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 284; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 197-201; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 188.
[109] Reshef, *Peace Now*, 222-23.

Figure 13: 'Part Ways for Peace.' Poster, 70 X 50 cm. Peace Now archive, item # 16, file # 5,96,120, Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva. Reproduced by permission of the Yad Yaari Institute, Givat Haviva.

Conclusion: Dilemmas of action, divergence of images

'Peace Now' operated as a public relations agency advocating peace. This mode of operation suited its mode of organization, which was not a mass party-like movement, but one in which a relatively small, socially homogenous, central leadership group reached consensus and directed the timing and type of activities, reinforced from late 1989 by a professional staff.[110] This was a 'low cost' approach to building and periodically mobilizing a substantial public following that depended on quite a close group assessing which particular political messages and images of peace would resonate among the public at which particular times. Such assessments are akin to advertising agencies

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[110] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 103-5; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 115-16; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 43-44.

figuring out which campaigns will boost products and brands, or entertainment producers estimating which films, songs or television programs will be popular. *Peace Now* had quickly established a brand and a recognized logo that it redeployed throughout 1987-1993 as way to underline its calls to its supporters and sympathizers. In the absence of today's social media, and without the financial resources of commercial and entertainment industries, *Peace Now* gauged public opinion sometimes by trial and error, sometimes by beginning campaigns in small ways and building to large rallies such as the one in October 1991, and by consulting public opinion polls.[111] The organization acted across a vibrant public sphere, disseminating its messages graphically across public and private billboards, on bumper stickers and flyers, on roadside banners and flyers, in the 'image events'[112] of its demonstrations, as well as public discussions and printed material. Implicitly at least, 'Peace Now' had grasped that rather than relying on face-to-face communication between members of a mass party style organization, it could rely on various modes of verbal and visual communication. It had considerable success in mobilizing public support for peace as compromise and negotiation, as well as protests against oppressive occupation and settlements that conveyed a non-pacific image of peace as the ending of occupation.

However, 'Peace Now' also confronted the limitations of its specific public relations approach to promoting peace. The public relations task of 'Peace Now' entailed not only promoting peace but changing the image that many Jewish Israelis have of the conflict, to conceive it as a conflict amenable to compromise. During 1987-93, 'Peace Now' was successful to some extent in doing that, by promoting the PLO's change of line as an opportunity for peace. However, 'Peace Now' could not frame public interpretation of all the developments of this period in terms that fitted a pragmatic, compromise orientation to the conflict. In particular, at the end of 1990 and into 1991 when there were increased attacks by Palestinians on Israeli civilians, when the Palestinian national leadership supported Saddam Hussein and the Israeli media reported Palestinians rejoicing as Scud missiles fell on Israel, the case that Palestinians were not hostile to Israel was hard to make in the face of contrasting images of the Palestinians and the conflict.

'Peace Now' was very successful in branding peace, in associating peace and itself, but it was fair less successful in attaching that brand to some sort of emotional experience of peace, or some deep cultural association with its brand of peace. To some extent, this is a common problem encountered by groups who have to deal with the difficulty of symbolizing peace, because of its iconographic poverty, especially with regard to any notion of 'positive peace'

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[111] Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 117.

[112] See Kevin DeLuca, *Image Politics* (New York: Guilford Press, 1999) for the conception of social movement protests as 'image events.'

rather than the mere absence of war, or in Israel's case, occupation.[113] But it is also the case that 'Peace Now' did not dig deep enough into Israel's cultural repertoires of 'peace', especially its Judaic sources, to compensate for that problem, and for the relative infrequency and insignificance of activities that brought Jewish Israelis and Palestinians together in experiences of co-existence.[114] 'Peace Now''s inattention to Israel's Jewish culture draws attention to the group's other image problems, as commentators have explained: being seen as unpatriotic, disloyal, defeatist, naïve, liberal, Western, Ashkenazi, elitist, middle class, and secular. [115] As Hermann notes, 'Peace Now' always suffered both from sociological alienation from broad sectors of the public, and political and ideological distance.[116] By its very nature the Israeli peace movement as a whole and 'Peace Now' in particular were out of step with the Jewish Israeli consensus on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Even though 'Peace Now' embraces what Kimmerling refers to as the compromise orientation, which is one of three 'ideal types' of Jewish Israeli political orientations to the conflict within Israeli 'civil militarism', it is still mostly at odds with the other two orientations of 'conflict' and 'security.'

So, although 'Peace Now' at times tried to present itself as representing the Israeli consensus and the settlers as being beyond it, it could not do so consistently and persuasively. Moreover, in its promotion of peace through an image of opposition to occupation, it tended to posit settlers as dangerous enemies. Whereas the image of peace as compromise posited turning Palestinian enemies into neighbors, this negative image of peace pulled against that pacific orientation. From within the Jewish Israeli consensus, it thus appeared as if 'Peace Now' would make peace with Palestinians but were 'at war' with (at least some) Jews. In addition, as we have seen, the image of peace as compromise as given in graphic images was itself often ambiguous, open to doubt about the possibility of achieving peace in the present or doing so with the Palestinians.

Most significant, however, was the tension between the images of peace as compromise and as anti-occupation, and the image of peace as separation. When 'Peace Now' introduced the last image, it did so as a response to the public mood that Israel could withdraw from Occupied Territories out of its own security considerations, and at the same time preserve the principle of compromise (by relinquishing some presence in the occupied territories), so the image was not in need of much promotion. However, it was also an image

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[113] See David Barash (ed.), *Approaches to Peace: A Reader in Peace Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) both for the common distinction between 'positive' and 'negative' peace and also for the perception that peace is boring, an unworthy subject for cinema, unlike war.

[114] See also Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Dialogue, Conflict Resolution, and Change: Arab-Jewish Encounters in Israel* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999) for a critical analysis some coexistence activities.

[115] Bar-On, *Pursuit of Peace*, 121; Hermann, *Israeli Peace Movement*, 241; Kaminer, *Politics of Protest*, 22; Reshef, *Peace Now*, 119.

[116] Hermann, *Israeli Peace* Movement, 241.

at odds to a significant degree with the other two images of peace. If negotiation and compromise would bring peace (and security along with it), then why would the two peoples need to separate? The image of peace as separation allows for a continuing perception of Palestinian hostility to Israel, and hence also for a peace that does not have to be achieved through negotiation and compromise, since separation can be imposed unilaterally. Certainly, the principle of two states for two peoples and territorial compromise entails some types of separation, such as the dismantling of the Israeli settlements in the future Palestinian state. Yet, with hindsight and in light of both the building of the separation wall and the unilateral disengagement from Gaza, it is also clear that separation of that sort has not brought peace any closer.[117] It is an image that justifies continued restriction and occupation of Palestinians, as they are hostile enemies. Peace as separation has become a recipe for the oxymoron of 'unilateral peace.'

Acknowledgements

Jon Simons is Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and Culture, Indiana University, Bloomington. His research and teaching focus on the interface between media, social and cultural theory, with a particular interest in popular, mediated, democratic politics and images. In the summer of 2009 he began a study of images of peace used and advocated by the Israeli peace movement, followed by a research trip in the summer of 2011. The project analyses critically the images

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[117] For a fuller discussion of the ramifications of peace as separation, see Simons, "Peace Now or Never."

(visual, pictorial, conceptual, ideological) of peace that are advocated by the peace movements and assess the role of those images in constructing peace. He continued his research in Israel in the autumn of 2012 as a Lady Davis Fellow, affiliated with the Hebrew University's Department of Communication and Journalism. He writes a blog connected to this research project: http://israelipeaceimages.com/

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Memory and Mobilization? Identity, Narrative and Nonviolent Resistance in the Palestinian Intifadas

by *Julie Norman*

Abstract

To what extent did first Intifada memories and experiences influence nonviolent activism in the second Intifada? Specifically, how did prior individual or collective identities contribute to activists opting for nonviolent strategies in the post-Oslo period, and how effective were such identities in mobilizing others? This article examines how activists' lived experiences with resistance in the first Intifada influenced their decisions regarding tactics and strategy in the second Intifada. It also discusses the limitations of using memory for mobilization in the face of new challenges, arguing that nostalgia for past eras can be a double-edged sword in motivating participation in later attempts at nonviolent struggle. The study is based on interviews with activists in the West Bank conducted by the author during the second Intifada.

- **Introduction**
- **Methodology**
- **Theoretical Framework: Strategic Nonviolent Action and the Palestinian Intifadas**
- **Remembering the First Intifada: Golden Age of Resistance?**
- **Historical Narrative and Contemporary Activism**
- **Power of the Past? Limitations of Memory in Political Mobilization**
- **Re-Imagining the Now: Challenges and Opportunities**
- **Conclusion**

Introduction

Many scholars and activists have emphasized the importance of mobilizing memory to fuel processes of social change. This process typically involves the intentional recall of an event or experience, related to a past grievance, abuse, or violation of rights, which might serve as a catalyst for new processes of activism. In other words, historical memory might contribute to the development of an injustice issue frame, which is necessary for mobilization.[1]

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[1] For more on movement frames, see William A. Gamson, "Constructing Social Protest," in *Social Movements and Culture*, eds. Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1995).

In the case of Palestine for example, the interest in documenting the history of the Nakba represents an attempt to mobilize memory of Palestinian displacement to effectively document the past, but also to influence current framings of the conflict.[2] There is another process at work in Palestine however that is related to but distinct from mobilizing memory. Rather than (or in addition to) focusing on the memories of dispossession or victimization, many Palestinian activists also actively engage in remembering high points of Palestinian activism and resistance. For many of today's activists, this process of remembering mobilization relates primarily to the first Intifada, a peak period of popular resistance that many recall with pride and even nostalgia.

Indeed, according to interviews conducted by the author, most adult activists who were active in organizing community-based resistance during and after the second Intifada referred specifically to their first Intifada experiences as activists and/or prisoners in informing their efforts in the second Intifada. To be sure, their initiatives were motivated largely by an effort to reclaim the spirit of resistance and solidarity remembered from the first Intifada. The fact that these memories might be more idealistic than the reality is secondary to the fact that these memories drive current mobilization efforts for some by recalling an earlier culture of resistance.[3] In this way, these activists have not just been mobilizing memory, but rather remembering mobilization as a means of engaging community members, especially youth, in popular resistance.

Yet is the memory of resistance enough to mobilize others, especially in regards to youth who have inherited the memories but were not born or old enough to remember that earlier period? Does it matter if historical memory is always 'true' in the factual sense or if it is influenced by the glow of 'nostalgia?' This article examines these questions by exploring the opportunities and limitations of mobilizing the memory of past tactics, strategies, and movement frames in later periods of activism by examining how first Intifada identities and narratives influenced resistance in the period during and after the second Intifada. I argue that positive memories of resistance can and do influence later activism for some individuals, but the role of memory is limited in mobilizing others for collective nonviolent action, especially in situations of protracted conflict and political constraints.

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[2] See for example Laleh Khalili, "Places of Memory and Mourning: Palestinian Commemoration in the Refugee Camps of Lebanon" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 25/1 (2005): 30-45; Julie Peteet, "Refugees, Resistance, and Identity" in *Globalization and Social Movements: Culture, Power, and the Transnational Public Sphere*, eds. John Guidry, Michael D. Kennedy, and Mayer N. Zald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000); Rosemary Sayigh, *Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries*, (London: Zed, 1979).

[3] For more on distinguishing between types of memory, see Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "Internal and External Collective Memories of Conflicts: Israel and the 1948 Palestinian Exodus" *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 6/1 (2012): 126-140. Nets-Zehngut distinguishes between popular, official, autobiographical, and historical memory, and also between internal and external sub-memory.

Methodology

This article relies largely on semi-structured interviews conducted by the author, grounding the research in personal narratives about involvement in nonviolent popular resistance. As Clandinin & Connelly (2000) argue, narrative research is uniquely capable of capturing individuals' stories and investigating how they perceive their experiences in the temporal, spatial, and personal-social dimensions.[4] Furthermore, when considered collectively, interviews can indicate how individual, group, and cultural stories and identities intersect to inform social phenomena and are in turn informed by that phenomena. To be sure, narrative research inherently probes beyond the mere reporting of events, and even beyond the individual's role in or opinion of such events. Rather, because interviews rely on the story-telling aspect, the participant's interpretation of the phenomena, as well as his/her interpretation of his/her role in the phenomena, narrative research offers multiple dimensions of analysis. As Ricoeur explains, narratives are both lived and told, mediating between the world of action and the world of recollection/interpretation.[5] Accordingly, narratives include dialectics that combine innovation and sedimentation, fact and fiction, and neutral description and ethical prescription.[6] In addition, narratives undergo further interpretations by both the researcher and the reader. Although some researchers may worry that the various levels of interpretation in narrative research undermine its validity a method, I deliberately included elements of interpretation and perception in this research to allow for the investigation of the roles of memory and identity.

I conducted total of 88 interviews during three to six month visits to the West Bank and East Jerusalem between May 2005 and August 2007, with 61 interviews conducted during the main fieldwork period of March through August 2007, 19 interviews conducted between May and August 2006, and 8 interviews conducted between May and July 2005. I then returned to the region in the summers of 2008-2010 and 2012 for other research on nonviolence that also informed this study. I aimed to achieve diversity of participants in terms of geographic location, profession, gender, religion, age, political affiliation, and socioeconomic class as reflected in the tables below.[7]

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[4] D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*, (San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers, 2000).

[5] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative I*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

[6] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative III*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); *Oneself as Another*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[7] It should be noted that the numbers listed do not include the countless informal conversations I had with individuals in shops, cafes, busses, etc., which informed my overall research experience, and some of which are incorporated into my fieldnotes. The numbers also do not include individuals who participated peripherally in the actual interviews, such as co-workers who added their input during interviews conducted in offices, or family members who

Table 1. Interview Participants: Gender and Location

	Male	Female	Total
Urban	48	14	62
Village/Rural	22	2	24
Refugee Camp	2	0	2
Total	72	16	88

Table 2. Interview Participants: Date and Organizational Affiliation

	Professional (Paid/NGO)	Grassroots (Volunteer/CBO)	Political (PA/Political Party)	Total
Summer 2005	8	0	0	8
Summer 2006	9	10	0	19
Spring-Summer 2007	17	39	5	61
Total	34	49	5	88

Theoretical Framework: Strategic Nonviolent Action and the Palestinian Intifadas

Although the term 'nonviolence' has many meanings, the idea of strategic nonviolent action forms the foundation for the kinds of resistance discussed in this study. According to Gene Sharp, strategic nonviolence is based on the idea that "the exercise of power depends on the consent of the ruled who, by withdrawing that consent, can control and even destroy the power of their opponent."[8] From this viewpoint, it is believed that "governments depend on people, that power is pluralistic, and that political power is fragile because it depends on many groups for reinforcement of its power sources."[9] Thus, people can transform situations of oppression by withdrawing their consent

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commented during interviews conducted in participants' homes. These comments were documented in the interview notes.

[8] Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973), 4. The influence of Gene Sharp on the Palestinian nonviolent movement is discussed also in the essay by Erin Dyer in this issue, pp. 162-184.

[9] Ibid., 8.

through refusal of cooperation, withholding of help, and disobedience and defiance.[10]

Direct action refers to strategic nonviolent tactics that deliberately challenge the authority of the oppressor. Direct action is usually the most visible form of popular resistance and is the approach typically associated with civil resistance. Nonviolent direct actions can include acts of omission, when people refuse to perform acts that they are required to do by practice, custom, or law; acts of commission, when people perform acts that they are not usually expected or allowed to perform; or combinations of the two. Both acts of omission and acts of commission can be categorized in the areas of protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and intervention. [11]

Acts of protest and persuasion include public actions such as mass demonstrations, marches, and vigils; formal statements such as petitions, declarations, and public statements; symbolic acts such as displaying flags, colors, and symbols; and communicative acts such as hanging banners and posters, distributing newspapers and leaflets, and holding meetings and teach-ins. While often used strategically throughout nonviolent movements, acts of protest and persuasion usually emerge early in a struggle, and can function as tools for mobilization and consciousness-raising.

Protest and persuasion techniques have several objectives. First, actions of this nature seek to provide a signal to oppressive forces that the participants seriously object to certain policies or acts. Moreover, these actions serve to show the wider oppressed population that the opposition movement is challenging the oppressor, thus encouraging others to critically analyze their situation and, ultimately, work for change. Finally, persuasive actions can raise consciousness about the situation outside of the region, thus calling attention to the situation and increasing international solidarity. In these ways, protest and persuasion tactics serve as challenges to the oppressor on the one hand, and as appeals for local participation and external support on the other hand.[12]

In the case of Palestine, regular Friday marches and demonstrations in protest of construction of the separation barrier during the second Intifada illustrated this form of nonviolence, publicly voicing opposition to the barrier while also attracting local and international support.

Often considered the most powerful category of nonviolent tactics,[13] noncooperation includes acts of social, political, and economic noncooperation. Social noncooperation includes acts such as shunning and ostracism, suspension or boycott of social events, and disobeying social norms,

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[10] Ibid., 64.
[11] Ibid., 68-69.
[12] Ibid., 68-69.
[13] Robert Helvey, *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: Thinking about the Fundamentals*, (Boston: Albert Einstein Institution, 2004).

thus marginalizing the oppressive community. Acts of economic noncooperation, including boycotts, strikes, and nonpayment of taxes, aim to impair the means available to a government to provide goods and services to its supporters, thus decreasing supporter loyalty. In addition, reducing government means can ultimately hinder its ability to carry out oppressive policies. While nearly all non-violent acts are political to a degree, acts of political noncooperation refer specifically to actions that aim to reject the authority of the occupying power, such as withdrawal of political support, boycott of government bodies, and refusal to recognize government institutions.

The objective of noncooperation is to make it difficult for the government to function by withdrawing the people's consent to the occupying power. While impairing the oppressor, noncooperation can also increase solidarity within the community and strengthen civil society.[14] In the case of Palestine, acts of noncooperation such as strikes and internal boycotts did take place during the second Intifada, however, because of the effective separation of the Israeli and Palestinian populations, these actions often went unnoticed in Israel. However, there were still numerous incidents of noncooperation, including many daily interactions between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers at checkpoints.

Intervention refers to acts of civil disobedience, such as sit-ins, pray-ins, defiance of blockades, land seizure, hunger strikes, and use of alternative social, economic, transportation, and communication systems.[15] Interventionist tactics aim to disrupt established practices and policies with the aim of creating new relationships, institutions, and patterns of behavior.[16] Because they are more confrontational, interventionist acts often put activists at greater risk for repressive responses, including detention, arrest, personal injury, and even death. However, because they are provocative, interventionist actions are sometimes more effective than other tactics in forcing attention on the issue.
Even when the oppressive power responds to interventionist tactics with violence, such harsh responses can bring about change by initiating political jiu-jitsu. According to Helvey, political jiu-jitsu occurs when 'negative reactions to the opponents' violent repression against nonviolent resisters is turned to operate politically against the opponents, weakening their power position and strengthening that of the nonviolent resisters.'[17] In this way, harsh responses by an occupying power to activist tactics can convince other bodies, such as international organizations, institutions, and states, to put pressure on the regime or lend support to the movement. For example, the May 2010 Israeli raid on the Mavi Marmara, which resulted in the deaths of nine activists, also brought international attention to the situation in Gaza, as well as the efforts of

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[14] Ibid.
[15] Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action.*
[16] Helvey, *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: Thinking about the Fundamentals.*
[17] Ibid., 150.

the Free Gaza movement and the global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) campaign.

Acts of protest and persuasion (such as marches, demonstrations, and protests), noncooperation (such as boycotts and strikes), and direct intervention (including civil disobedience) characterize some of the most visible nonviolent tactics in Palestine and elsewhere. This article focuses primarily on mobilization related to these direct actions, but also explores indirect actions, including civil society initiatives and everyday acts of resistance, which characterized the broader sphere of nonviolence in Palestine in both the first and second Intifadas.

The largely non-violent nature of the first Intifada (1987-1993), especially in its early years, has been documented by numerous scholars. Mary King provides perhaps the most comprehensive study on the use of nonviolence in Palestine during the first Intifada, concluding that Palestinians at that time "conceptualized new ways of waging struggle for basic civil and political rights and in so doing reshaped the sources of power within Palestinian society, causing shifts away from adherence the dogma of military means [and] building leadership structures that emerged from the organizing of a civil society."[18] Other scholars have likewise examined the nonviolent nature of the first Intifada. As Souad Dajani summarizes, "Stone-throwing demonstrations and individual armed attacks (…) notwithstanding, the intifada was consciously and deliberately envisioned as an organized and universal unarmed civilian struggle against the Israeli occupation."[19] Ackerman and DuVall also explain how "Palestinians from every walk of life were willing to protest, strike, and improvise" in the first Intifada.[20]

In contrast to the non-violent foundation of the first Intifada, the second Intifada (2000-2008) was characterized by heightened use of violence from both sides, resulting in the deaths of 4,826 Palestinians and 482 Israelis (as of December 2008), many of whom were civilians, with thousands more wounded.[21] As Andoni explains, "Intifada 2000 started explosively, with many confrontations and high casualties, quickly escalated into militant clashes… and then normalized into less intense clashes with frequent military operations

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[18] Mary Elizabeth King, *A Quiet Revolution: The First Palestinian Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance*, (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 343.

[19] Souad Dajani, "Nonviolent Resistance in the Occupied Territories: A Critical Reevaluation," in *Nonviolent Social Movements*, eds. Stephen Zunes, Lester R. Kurtz, and Sarah Beth Asher, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 52-74. 58. Se also Andrew Rigby, *Living the Intifada*, (London: Zed, 1991).

[20] Peter Ackerman, and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 420.

[21] See 'B'tselem, Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories,' Fatalities, http://www.btselem.org/statistics/fatalities/any/by-date-of-event, accessed 23 May 2013.

from both sides."[22] Israeli strategies included military raids and incursions, air strikes, and targeted assassinations, as well as home demolitions, curfews, arrests, detentions, and use of checkpoints, while Palestinian tactics included suicide bomb attacks, as well as the use of imported assault rifles, hand grenades, and homemade Qassam rockets. This resulted in the Intifada becoming a cycle of violence between armed groups such as 'Hamas', 'Islamic Jihad', and 'Al-Aqsa Brigades' and the IDF, with both sides justifying their violent actions by the violence of the other.

Despite the prevalence of armed resistance, Palestinian nonviolent activism was by no means absent during the second Intifada. Despite the apparent dominance of violent resistance during the second Intifada, nonviolent resistance did, and continues to, take place throughout Palestine in various forms. Perhaps most notably, direct action campaigns, consisting of acts of protest and persuasion, boycotts, and civil disobedience, have emerged in numerous villages, usually led by local popular committees.[23] While these campaigns typically have transpired in response to the construction of the separation barrier, [24] the village campaigns have come to constitute a nexus of resistance to the occupation itself. Successful campaigns were coordinated in many areas of the West Bank, in villages like Bil'in, near Ramallah, Budrus in the northern West Bank, and Al-Tawani in the south. However, widespread popular participation in nonviolent resistance remained fragmented and limited, in contrast to the mass mobilization of the first Intifada.

Remembering the First Intifada: Golden Age of Resistance?

The first Intifada (1987-1993) did not emerge spontaneously, but rather built on years of resistance and organizing from political movements, civic organizations, unions, and individual activists. The actual start of the Intifada is typically referenced as 9 December 1987, following an automobile collision between an Israeli truck and two cars of Gazan laborers, whose funerals turned into mass protests in Gaza, especially in Jabaliya refugee camp. Protests then broke out across the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt), as Palestinians from

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[22] Ghassan Andoni, "A Comparative Study of Intifada 1987 and Intifada 2000," in *The New Intifada*, ed. R. Carey, (London: Verso, 2001), 209-218, 212.

[23] Many village-based campaigns have been supported by international groups like the 'International Solidarity Movement' (ISM), the 'Palestinian Solidarity Project' (PSP), and the 'Christian Peacemaker Teams' (CPT), as well as by Israeli groups like 'Anarchists Against the Wall,' 'Ta'ayush,' and 'Peace Now.' The efforts of these groups are worthy of additional discussion, but are beyond the scope of this article. For more on international interventions, see Nancy Stohlman and Laurieann Aladin, *Live from Palestine*, (Cambridge: South End Press, 2003).

[24] The separation barrier, still under construction in some areas, is a 723-kilometer long barrier that the form of a six-to-eight meter concrete wall in some parts and barbed wire and electric fence in others. The barrier roughly separates 1967 Israel and the West Bank, but it is not built directly on the Green Line, the recognized border between Israel and the West Bank.

all walks of life participated in the 'shaking off' (the literal translation of *intifada*) of the occupation. Acts of defiance included shouting and wailing to prevent soldiers from entering people's homes, blowing car horns at designated times, wearing the Palestinian *kuffiyeh* (traditional headdress), burning tires, and writing on public walls. Flying the Palestinian flag, which was illegal, was also encouraged as a symbol of resistance. Other nonviolent tactics included methods of resistance such as demonstrations, sit-ins, marches, mock funerals, and teach-ins. In addition to boycotting Israeli products, economic noncooperation extended to strikes, withdrawal of work from Israeli factories and farms, and withholding taxes.[25]

While trying to frustrate Israeli systems, Palestinians were at the same time creating alternative institutions in the forms of specialized committees in towns, villages, and camps throughout the oPt. These committees performed a variety of functions, from providing humanitarian aid to mobilizing and organizing the general population, to serving as an alternative civilian administration. Perhaps one of the most noteworthy groups to emerge during this time was 'Al-Qiyada al-Wataniyya al-Muwahhada lil-Intifada', the 'Unified Nationalist Leadership of the Uprising' (UNLU). Comprised of representatives from all the major political parties, including 'Fatah', the PFLP, the DFLP, and the PCP, the UNLU became the primary initiator of calls for action and civil disobedience, which it disseminated through a series of leaflets of communiqués. As Mattar writes, "The leaflets, usually two pages in length and giving instructions for the coming week or two weeks, announced… strikes, mass demonstrations, and other protest activities. Most of the directives issued by the UNLU advocated civil disobedience and called for action of a nonviolent character."[26] According to a report completed by the Palestine Center for the Study of Nonviolence, over 95 per cent of the 163 actions called for in the initial 17 leaflets were specifically nonviolent, and over 90 per cent of the 291 calls in leaflets 18-39 were nonviolent.[27] The UNLU complemented the popular committees, or community leadership councils, that organized actions, provided social relief, and functioned effectively as government institutions at the local level, especially in villages and non-urban areas.[28]

Many activists noted the strong sense of a collective national identity that emerged during the first Intifada. According to Polletta and Jasper, collective identity is 'an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution.'[29] Similarly, Melucci

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[25] Julie M. Norman, *The Second Palestinian Intifada: Civil Resistance*, (London: Routledge, 2010); Mary E. King, *A Quiet Revolution: The First Palestinian Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance*, (New York: Nation Books, 2007); Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

[26] Phillip Mattar, *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*, (New York: Facts on File, 2005), 228.

[27] Souad R. Dajani, *Eyes Without Country*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 194.

[28] Norman, *The Second Palestinian Intifada*, 25-26.

[29] Francesca Polletta, and James M. Jasper, "Collective Identity and Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 27 (2001): 283-305, 285.

describes collective identity as a process that extends across time and space, involves a network of active relationships, and contains a sense of emotional investment that establishes a common unity between individuals.[30] Though dynamic in nature, collective identity "channels words and actions (…) [and] provides categories by which individuals divide up and make sense of the social world."[31] In this way, the first Intifada translated the collective identity of national struggle into a veritable *movement* identity, a shared identity based on participation in a movement.

Many activists remembered their experiences in the first Intifada with an element of nostalgia, noting the empowering effect of reclaiming the Palestinian movement for the people, and thus restoring to it a sense of united hope and optimism. As Mahmoud, an activist, explained:

> The Palestinian people have a long history of resistance, but the highest point of our resistance was the first intifada (…). Our resistance then was unprecedented, in that we used stones and simplicity in confronting a big army, and we faced guns with our chests open to them. The intifada is deeply rooted in people's minds as the main resistance. We mobilized all the people in the streets, and mobilized the entire community for confrontation.[32]

With this spirit of community solidarity, the first Intifada translated the idea of national struggle into a veritable movement identity, a shared identity based on participation in a movement.[33] As Nour, another activist described, "It was the intifada of the people… If there was a demonstration, you wouldn't only see the younger generation, you would see mothers, old people, the whole village participating."[34] Majdi, a nonviolence trainer in Bethlehem likewise recalled, "Everyone was together. You could go to any house if you needed to eat or you needed to sleep, and people would welcome you. Whether you were Christian or Muslim, it didn't matter, because all were open to each other."[35] Another activist, Alex, added that communities worked together to become self-reliant, holding classes for students in different houses when schools were closed, and planting gardens to grow food. As he summarized, "We knew how to make a community together, and to support each other for food, shelter, education, everything."[36]

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[30] Alberto Melucci, "The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements" Social Reserch 52/4 (1985): 789-816.

[31] Francesca Polletta, and James M. Jasper, "Collective Identity and Social Movements," 298.

[32] Interview of the A. with Mahmoud, Ramallah 11 June 2007. (Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from activists are from interviews with the author, and names have been changed or omitted to maintain anonymity.)

[33] See Gamson, "Constructing Social Protest," for more on movement identity.

[34] Interview of the A. with Fuad, Ramallah 4 June 2007.

[35] Interview of the A. with Majdi, Bethlehem 16 May 2007.

[36] Interview of the A. with Alex, Bethlehem 30 April 2007.

The emphasis on civil-based, unarmed resistance in the first Intifada proved to be both individually and collectively empowering, thus further reinforcing a veritable movement identity. As Majdi recalled, "The best part was that Palestinians were in control of their own revolt (…). You could feel the pride, because we were in action."[37] Abu-Nimer agrees, describing the first Intifada as an excellent example of a political movement in which the masses of people were able to take control of their destiny and bring political change into their environment by organizing themselves to fight oppression using nonviolent tactics."[38] The first Intifada thus not only strengthened local communities, but also contributed to the articulation of a national Palestinian identity of resistance. As Majdi commented, "My generation was organizing people for the national aspiration and revolting against the oppression of the occupation. We were sending out a message saying, 'Hey, we are a people here'."[39] Although the idea of a Palestinian nation was not new, the shared experience of popular resistance in the first Intifada firmly articulated a collective identity of resistance.

The shared experience of popular struggle also informs the individual identity of activists. As Polletta and Jasper note, participation marks activists' personal identities even after the movement ends.[40] This was the case for many activists in Palestine, particularly those who were youth during the time, as the first Intifada provided them with a sense of purpose and a place in society. As Nour remembered, "When you were holding the flag, you felt like you were deciding things, coordinating things, and deciding where the cause was going. It was a great feeling."[41] Likewise, Majdi recalled, "There was such a feeling of power, and of love, and of friends. The feeling was beautiful. I found myself there, and I found the Palestinian way."[42] As Polletta and Jasper suggest, "Core collective identity continues to shape an individual's sense of self."[43] In this way, the collective experience of resistance in the first Intifada informed the individual identity of then youth activists, who drew from that experience to initiate popular struggle in the second Intifada.

Historical Narrative and Contemporary Activism

Activists' experiences in the first Intifada influenced their actions in the second Intifada in several ways. Primarily, prior experiences often had an impact on decisions of individual participation, that is, *if* former activists would engage in

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[37] Interview of the A. with Majdi.

[38] Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam*, (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2003): 180.

[39] Interview of the A. with Majdi.

[40] Polletta and Jasper, "Collective Identity and Social Movements," 296.

[41] Interview of the A. with Nour, Ramallah 4 June 2007.

[42] Interview of the A. with Majdi.

[43] Polletta and Jasper, "Collective Identity and Social Movements," 296.

resistance. However, even more importantly, first Intifada memory also proved instrumental in *how* activists decided to resist, illustrated in efforts to bring back former community-based tactics and organizational models; and also in how activists attempted to mobilize their communities, by seeking to recreate the collective activist identity.

In terms of tactics, interviews indicated that first Intifada experiences as activists, militants, or prisoners were instrumental in motivating resistance leaders to reclaim a space for popular resistance in the second Intifada. The majority of civil resistance leaders in the second Intifada based their actions on a core activist identity that they attributed to their involvement in the first Intifada. As Nour commented, "During the first intifada, I felt that I did something, and it gave me a commitment to continue. I felt something in my heart, and I adopted that feeling afterwards."[44] This activist attributed his motivation for his efforts during the second Intifada to a foundation of activism developed during the first Intifada. Likewise, when describing his decision to launch the Stop the Wall campaign, which employs unarmed protest, boycotts, and other nonviolent strategies to challenge the separation barrier, Mahmoud stated, "We created the campaign out of our experiences (…) looking to get back the way of resistance that we admired."[45]

Many first Intifada activists thus sought to bring back some of the unarmed tactics used in earlier years, aiming to reclaim a space for popular resistance in the new Intifada based on first Intifada memories. For example, in some villages, first Intifada generation activists were instrumental in initiating campaigns of weekly demonstrations by re-establishing the local popular committees, which had been essential in coordinating resistance efforts in the 1980s. As noted above, many of the campaigns emerged in response to the construction of the separation barrier, but they developed into nodes of resistance to the occupation itself. For example, the village of Bil'in, located 12 kilometers west of Ramallah, has been holding weekly demonstrations against the wall and the occupation since January 2005, and has served as a gathering place for activists (Israeli and international as well as Palestinian), and has also served as a model for other village campaigns.[46] Village resistance included conventional acts, such as protests, marches, and boycotts, but also included creative acts such as erecting "scales of injustice," creating make-shift playgrounds in separation barrier construction sites, dressing up as the "oppressed" race in the popular film *Avatar*, and building a house overnight on land slated for confiscation to ensure access.[47] While these actions included many young people, as well as many Israeli and international supporters, the popular committee leading the actions was largely comprised of activists with

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[44] Interview of the A. with Nour.
[45] Interview of the A. with Mahmoud.
[46] See Maia Carter Hallward, "Creative Responses to Separation: Israeli and Palestinian Joint Activism in Bil'in" *Journal of Peace Research* 46/4 (2009): 541-558.
[47] Ibid.

first Intifada experience, who were seeking to reclaim the spirit of creative activism.

Not all second Intifada leaders came from the same activist background. Indeed, many of the older civil resistance leaders in the second Intifada were former militants who had engaged in various forms of armed struggle, mostly through the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in the years prior to the first Intifada. Yet even some of these activists with militant backgrounds made a conscious decision to use unarmed tactics in the second Intifada over armed resistance, considering it to be more personally empowering and collectively strategic for Palestinians. As Hassan, an activist based in a village near Bethlehem, stated, "I became interested in a new kind of resistance, and started investing in new groups… As the situation changes, we must react also, and change to resist in different ways. So I still consider most of my work to be resistance against the occupation."[48]

While some activists who had militant backgrounds made a more deliberate decision to engage in unarmed resistance than those without such direct experiences with violence, they still saw strategic nonviolence as a natural extension of their former resistance, and considered it to be in accordance with the activist identity cultivated in the first Intifada. Indeed, the notion of 'engagement' was a primary draw of popular resistance for some activists who saw civil resistance as more empowering and strategic than violence by enabling people to take action to change their situation. Khaled, an activist-journalist based in Hebron, commented that he did not feel this same sort of empowerment from armed resistance, in which he stated, "the gun was leading us, not the other way around."[49] He thus sought to sustain the sense of resistance that he remembered from the first Intifada, but through alternative means.

Several activists noted that they gained experience with unarmed resistance tactics in prison, in which nonviolence was the only means of struggle available. Hassan, who had been affiliated with Islamic Jihad spent significant time in both prison and administrative detention, where his six-month term was renewed repeatedly, resulting in him being held in jail for several years without charge. He used his time to organize demonstrations and hunger strikes with the other prisoners, and managed to produce some small results regarding their treatment. As he explained, nonviolence was the only option for resistance in jail:

> In jail you don't have anything you can use to throw at the soldiers or use to resist violently. What are you going to use? Even if we had something that would work, you needed to hold on to everything you had, so we just didn't do it. Yet through this other kind of [unarmed]

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[48] Interview of the A. with Hassan, Husan, 1 March 2007.
[49] Interview of the A. with Khaled, Hebron, 12 June 2007.

> resistance, even in jail, we still had a way to struggle, and we still produced spots of hope.[50]

Activists' time in prison clearly affected their later activism, by giving them experience with alternative forms of struggle and different ways of thinking. Despite suffering abuses and having severe grievances, many former prisoners chose unarmed resistance as their preferred means of struggle, seeing it as more strategic than violence, and incorporating the memories of those resistance experiences into their activist later identity.

Activists' decisions to engage in civil resistance in the second Intifada were clearly informed by their sense of an activist identity, shaped by memories of experiences in the first Intifada. Whether their prior participation involved civil resistance, armed struggle, or time in prison, these activists' prior experiences influenced not only their choice to resist in later years, but also their decisions to employ unarmed tactics and seek to rebuild a more widespread popular movement.

Power of the Past? Limitations of Memory in Political Mobilization

While memories of first Intifada certainly influenced some individuals, how far does 'remembering mobilization' actually extend? Indeed, if the first Intifada attracted participation from the majority of the population, there are clearly many Palestinians who did participate in the first Intifada who did not actively engage in the second Intifada. Furthermore, the youth demographic, while growing up with stories of the first Intifada, did not share those same memories, and while they still heard of experiences from older family members, the nostalgic glaze on these memories may have actually made such activism appear nearly impossible to reclaim. Finally, new realities of repression of activism from both the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and the Palestinian Authority (PA) have frustrated attempts to reclaim civil resistance, even when community members have succeeded in mobilizing memory.

To be sure, while many of the challenges faced by activists resulted from internal factors, nearly all activists commented that mobilization for nonviolent resistance in the second Intifada was hindered by new realities on the ground, most notably in terms of movement restrictions, as well as new policies of repression, including increased use of force at demonstrations and widespread imprisonment. In regards to movement restrictions, the separation barrier, checkpoints, and roadblocks fragmented the movement by limiting contact amongst Palestinians, and between Palestinians and Israelis.[51] These limitations

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[50] Interview of the A. with Hassan.

[51] According to Israeli human rights group 'B'tselem,' as of November 2008, the IDF maintained 63 permanent checkpoints within the West Bank, 49 of which were regularly staffed. In addition, according to the UN 'Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA), the IDF maintained flying, or surprise, checkpoints throughout the West

decreased mobilization for and coordination of resistance efforts, by making it difficult for activists to plan and participate in actions, and by restricting the types of actions that could be implemented.[52] Meanwhile, beatings, detentions, and arrests were commonplace at weekly demonstrations at villages like Bil'in, and punishments often extended beyond the events themselves, in terms of denial of permits to village residents to access work, school, or hospitals.

While some activists expressed concern for their own wellbeing, they also explained that the IDF often targeted their family members as another tactic of intimidation. As Yousef, an activist in the South Bethlehem area recounted,

> Recently they broke into my brother's house next door during the night and arrested him, and he is still in jail. They shot one of the panes on his door and said they would keep shooting out the glass unless he came out, then they arrested him. I heard the commotion and was about to go outside, but when I saw them, I stayed hidden. But I would prefer it was me who was arrested, and not my brother.[53]

Activists themselves were frequently arrested as well, with nearly all those interviewed for this study having spent time in administrative detention or prison, ranging days to years. According to 'B'tselem', approximately 8,000 Palestinians were under the custody of Israeli security forces in 2008, nearly a third of those in detention.[54] As Naser, another activist, stated, "People often ask, 'Where is the Palestinian Gandhi?' My response is that there are hundreds of Palestinian Gandhis, but they are all in the prisons."[55]

It should be noted that the risks of personal injury or imprisonment were not so different from the first Intifada. Indeed, as mentioned above, much of the collective identity formed in the first Intifada grew from experiences of shared hardship or time spent the jails. However, for many, the cost-benefit analysis of such risks was different in the second Intifada context. Many first Intifada activists, who had in fact risked their lives and livelihoods in the 1980s, were frustrated with the outcomes of the first Intifada and the subsequent Oslo period. Rather than seeing their sacrifices lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state, these activists perceived a worsening of conditions with

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Bank, which are temporary, staffed checkpoints set up for several hours and then dismantled, averaging 89 per week between September 2007 and April 2008. Further restrictions on movement within the West Bank, documented by OCHA in October 2008, included physical barriers such as roadside fences, trenches barring vehicles from crossing, locked entrance gates to villages, and dirt and debris piles blocking roads or entrances to villages, with a monthly average of 537 obstructions documented. Additionally, as reported by 'B'tselem,' 430 kilometers of roads within the West Bank were restricted or forbidden to Palestinian traffic as of July 2008.

[52] See Norman, *The Second Palestinian Intifada*, for more on the effects of movement restrictions.
[53] Interview of the A. with Yousef, Um Salamouna, 2 May 2007.
[54] B'Tselem, "Statistics on Palestinians in the custody of Israeli security forces," http://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners, accessed 20 March 2013.
[55] Interview of the A. with Naser, Bethlehem, 4 April 2007.

increasing settlements, a declining economy, and steps towards democratic self-governance frustrated by both the Israeli occupation and the PA. As Zeinab, an activist and journalist, commented, "The biggest challenge is to feel that your work is actually going somewhere. I look at the accumulation of my work, of trying to communicate rights, justice, and the right picture of Palestine, and I wonder sometimes if it has really amounted to anything."[56] Some in the older generation thus experienced a sense of activism fatigue that altered the form or extent of their resistance, indicating how the memory of the idealism of past activism can also temper later actions. Furthermore, for both the older and younger generations alike, the cost-benefit analysis of participating in activism was further problematized by the social and economic hardships of daily life for most Palestinians during the second Intifada. As many activists noted, the majority of Palestinians did not have the liberty to engage in a long-term campaign because the situation made even day-to-day survival a struggle for many, regardless of location. As Alex explained, "It's hard for people to work for a goal that seems far-off. It's gotten to a point where most people need to work and are more focused on that. People need to think about food before strategy."[57] Majdi agreed, noting that, during the second Intifada, "because of the severity of the conditions, the need for survival was so huge that we couldn't really attract the human resources from the community that we need for civil-based resistance."[58] This did not mean that individuals divorced themselves from resistance, but rather shifted their focus from protests and demonstrations to daily struggles. As Wendy Pearlman notes, "for most Palestinians, 'participation' in the [second] uprising meant suffering through checkpoints and repression, and pledging to continue doing so until independence was achieved."[59] In this way, much of the struggle in the second Intifada took the form of *sumud*, or steadfastness, rather than direct action or resistance.

Direct crackdowns on activists, combined with the struggles of daily life, certainly contributed to the lack of popular mobilization in the second Intifada. However, it is possible that such challenges might have been overcome with a more political unified leadership. Indeed, as noted above, the UNLU proved essential in the first Intifada in organizing widespread participation and enabling the movement to withstand both internal challenges and external shocks. In contrast, in the second Intifada, the PA proved unable or unwilling to play this role, and political factions were focused more on internal competition than uniting to resist the occupation. As Pearlman states, "the Palestinian national movement no longer possessed the organizational structure necessary for nonviolent protest on a national scope. The social ties, norms, strategic clarity, and dense network of civic groups that generated

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[56] Interview of the A. with Zeinab, Jerusalem, 10 April 2007.
[57] Interview of the A. with Alex.
[58] Interview of the A. with Majdi.
[59] Wendy Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 163.

cohesion and facilitated broad based nonviolent [action] in 1987 were scarce in 2000."[60] To employ Pearlman's useful terminology, while the movement was 'resilient' in the first Intifada, able to withstand challenges such as crackdowns, imprisonment, and economic hardship, the national movement in the second Intifada was 'brittle,' crumbling and fracturing under similar pressures.[61] This was due in part to the inherent structure of the PA as a state-like institution operating under a military occupation, however, activists also expressed disillusionment and frustration with the individuals and parties within the PA. As Zeinab commented, "The political parties in recent years have been part of the corruption (…). They could play a much larger role, as they did in the first intifada. People feel the absence of a charismatic leader who could lead people with a common vision."[62]

In regards to the PA specifically, many Palestinians not only perceived a lack of leadership for resistance, but also a complicity between the PA and Israel and the PA and the international community. As Monjed, an activist in Bethlehem, explained, "For the seven years of Oslo, it was like the leadership was giving the people sedatives, and people became content with the promise that everything would be better, and they stopped resisting. So in reality, the PA was shutting up the resistance before the wall."[63] According to Parsons, the PA adopted a 'mandate for social demobilization'[64] that it applied to violent and nonviolent activists alike. This phenomenon has become more visible in recent years as some IDF mandates have shifted to PA security forces. As one activist described a demonstration in 2012:

> After the confrontation started with the Israeli soldiers, the Palestinian [security forces] came and occupied the street, closed the street, and pushed people back. They were actually protecting the Israeli watchtowers. This kills the readiness to resist, because people don't want to make a battle with the PA. At the end, all of us are Palestinians (…) but it puts people in a dilemma.[65]

To return then to the cost-benefit analysis of political struggle, even if individuals can commit to facing the risks of imprisonment or loss of livelihood, the chance of resistance being successful when the Palestinians' own leadership is quelling protests makes activism seem futile. When

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[60] Ibid., 162.

[61] Pearlman writes, "The more cohesive the movement, the greater will be its ability to bend like rubber in the face of repression, and thereby preserve its organizational structure and strategy. The more fragmented the movement, the more repression will cause it to shatter like glass" (21).

[62] Interview of the A. with Zeinab.

[63] Interview of the A. with Monjed, Bethlehem, 31 May 2007.

[64] Nigel Parsons, *The Politics of the Palestinian Authority: From Oslo to Al-Aqsa*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 175.

[65] Interview of the A. with Sami, Bethlehem, 19 June 2012.

combined with a common public perception of nonviolence as passivity at best and 'domestication'[66] at worst, it is clear that the memory of mobilization from the first Intifada was not enough to re-spark a widespread movement in the face of contemporary challenges.

Re-Imagining the Now: Challenges and Opportunities

It is clear that the 'memory of mobilization' was a motivating factor for many individual activists seeking to reclaim a community spirit of resistance in the second Intifada. However, it is also evident that the activist identity shared by many of these individuals was more visible at the personal level than the collective level, as a widespread popular movement never truly emerged in the second Intifada. In other words, memories of past mobilization proved instrumental in influencing individual participation in the second Intifada, but activists were unable to leverage those memories for collective resistance. Such limitations were due in part to the physical barriers, socioeconomic conditions, and political constraints discussed above that made resistance difficult or unfeasible. Yet it is also important to consider the challenges and opportunities inherent in attempting to use memory and history for mobilization.

Indeed, while memory can act an inspiration, it can also function as a burden or weight. As noted above, the fact that first Intifada mobilization did not yield the anticipated outcome of an independent Palestinian state may have contributed to a sense of 'activism fatigue' for some. In this way, recalling past sacrifices and struggle dampened the will to mobilize for some, since it appeared that such sacrifices were in vain.

Another challenge of using the past for mobilization is distinguishing between historical reality and memory. While the majority of activists interviewed spoke of being disillusioned with the 'peace process' during the Oslo period, nearly all recalled the first Intifada itself with a sense of nostalgia, remembering it as a golden age of sorts. Was this actually the reality at the time? For the purposes of later mobilization, it can be argued that individual memory of the past is just as important, if not more so, than historical reality. Memory provides retrospective rather than direct accounts, in that, as Davis argues, "events earlier in time take their meaning and act as causes only because of how things turn out later or are anticipated to turn out in the future."[67] Indeed, as noted above, it is precisely the empowering memories of first Intifada struggle that inspired many activists to continue resistance. Yet, nostalgia can be a double-edged sword, as, for others, it can lend an era a sort of mystical quality, implying a sense that it can never be regained. This was indeed the case for

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[66] Ava Leone, "Civic Education in Post-Oslo Palestine: Discursive Domestication," in *Nonviolent Resistance in the Second Intifada: Activism and Advocacy*, eds. Maia Carter Hallward and Julie M. Norman, (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2011), 13-31.

[67] Joseph E. Davis, *Stories of Change: Narrative and Social Movements*, (Albany: SUNY, 2002), 12.

many individuals who saw the 1980s as such a distinctly memorable period that it would be futile to try to recreate it in the contemporary political context.

This double-edged sword of nostalgia applies to youth as well. While many second Intifada youth did not have direct memories of the first Intifada, they had grown up with friends and family members who related stories from that time. For some, these stories were inspiring narratives that motivated youth to engage in activism themselves in the second Intifada. Yet, for others, stories of the past suggested a climate of resistance that they could never hope to achieve in their present reality. No matter how much they were willing or able to mobilize, there was a sense that they would never be able to recreate that golden age.

Is it ever possible then to leverage the memory of mobilization for collective action? I argue that activist memory can still function as a source of inspiration, but it requires remaining grounded in the reality of the past as well as the present. That is, looking to the past not as a broad, idealistic expanse, but as a resource for drawing real lessons about strategies and tactics, and adapting and applying those lessons creatively to present realities.

Many groups are already doing this. For example, the 'Lajee Center' in Aida Camp near Bethlehem works with youth to record stories of the past while also confronting the realities of the present. Youth have produced short films, radio broadcasts, and photo essays that document community experiences extending from the Nakba to the second Intifada, yet also explore issues affecting them presently, including women's rights, access to education, access to water, and youth imprisonment, approaching these current issues as part of a broader historical narrative. Regarding the issue of imprisonment in particular, community members with experience in prison have worked with the younger generation to not only share their stories, but to prepare youths for the potential experience of arrest and interrogation through drama and role-playing. One young man described how participating in these activities made him better prepared to handle interrogations and avoid collaborators when he was later arrested.[68] The older generations are not just remembering experiences for memory's sake, but are passing on lessons learned about struggle and resistance that are necessary for today's youth. The 'Lajee Center' has also been successful in linking oral history with new media, such that youth can explore themes of the past while gaining technical expertise in video production, photo editing, and website development. This approach again accounts for present realities in which many youth are engaging in media activism instead of, or in addition to, traditional tactics such as demonstrations and boycotts.[69]

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[68] Interview of the A. with Yared, Bethlehem, 29 June 2012.
[69] For more on the 'Lajee Center,' see http://www.lajee.org/, accessed 18 May 2013

Other community groups are also seeking to link the past to the present in specific ways. 'Stop the Wall' (STW), though focusing on the current issue of the separation barrier, designed a program for youth during the second Intifada that consisted not only of learning about the history of Palestinian struggle through lectures, but actually taking trips throughout the West Bank to talk to activists, visit sites of past struggles, and view the effects of measures like the separation barrier.[70] As Ahmed, the youth coordinator for Stop the Wall commented, "If we want to educate youth (…) we should teach them about the history of the struggle, about the leaders, and about why we have spent our lives fighting."[71]

These initiatives and others[72] manage to leverage memories without falling victim to the 'nostalgia effect.' They accomplish this first by focusing on specific issues and incidents, rather than 'The Past' as a broad, elusive whole, allowing for more nuanced understandings of the processes, strategies, and tactics that were (or were not) successful in previous times of struggle. Second, these initiatives do not make the mistake of overemphasizing the past to the exclusion of the present. Rather they approach historical narratives as tools for better understanding and engaging with the present. In this way, they remain grounded in current realities, recognizing that past modes of resistance, while providing guidance, cannot be replicated without adapting to present constraints and opportunities. To be sure, in the present context, the influence of recent uprisings in the Arab world and the climate of civil-based resistance in the region may yet re-open a space for popular struggle in Palestine and a renewed interest in past lessons of mobilization.

Conclusion

Historical memory of activism can play a role in subsequent efforts to mobilize for popular resistance. In the case of Palestine, this was true at the individual level for many first Intifada activists whose experiences in the 1980s influenced their decisions to organize or participate in civil resistance in the second Intifada. Indeed, these activists were motivated not only to respond to grievances imposed by the occupation, but to re-engage their communities with the spirit of collective activism that resonated so strongly in the past.

However, many individuals with first Intifada experiences did not have this response, indicating that the influence of memory varies by individual. Furthermore, activists proved unable to leverage past memory for mobilization

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[70] For more on 'Stop the Wall,' see http://www.stopthewall.org/, accessed 18 May 2013

[71] Interview of the A. with Ahmed, Ramallah, 11 June 2007.

[72] In another example, the 'Jenin Freedom Theatre' combined artistic and mobile elements to organize 'freedom rides,' in which actors, musicians, puppeteers, and other performers traveled around the West Bank and engaged community stories of loss and suffering through drama and music. For more on the 'Freedom Theatre,' see http://www.thefreedomtheatre.org/, accessed 18 May 2013.

at the collective level, failing to attract widespread participation in civil resistance in the second Intifada.[73] It is thus important to be cautious when evaluating the influence of historical memory on later mobilization in protracted conflicts. First, the nostalgic glow that often accompanies historical memory can make efforts to reclaim the same spirit seem naïve or futile. Second, the past may not be powerful enough to override present grievances and political constraints, especially in the absence of unified leadership, worsening economic conditions, and continued violence, arrests, and oppression.

I thus conclude that, in Palestine, the memory of past resistance has functioned as an inspiration for some individual mobilization, but efforts to draw from the past have not yet yielded widespread collective resistance, due largely to the political realities of the present. However, as noted above, many villages, organizations, and individuals are leveraging the past effectively, suggesting that there is potential in using historical memory to inform current creative activism. As James Green writes, the past can be powerful in "building the progressive movements of the present and the future. Ongoing struggles for (…) justice are seen as extensions of older stories still unfolding."[74] In the case of Palestine, past memories of mobilization alone may not be enough to inspire a widespread, collective nonviolent movement, but such memories, still unfolding, can be instructive in inspiring tactics and strategies as the struggle adapts to new challenges.[75]

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[73] It should be noted that some villages such as Budrous, Bil'in, Biddo, and others did mobilize successfully, but these cases were very localized, and activists emphasized that a true national movement failed to emerge.

[74] James Green, *Taking History to Heart: The Power of the Past in Building Social Movements*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 21.

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Hope through Steadfastness: The Journey of 'Holy Land Trust'

by *Erin Dyer*

Abstract

Established in 1998, 'Holy Land Trust' (HLT) serves to empower the Palestinian community in Bethlehem to discover its strengths and resources to confront the present and future challenges of life under occupation. The staff, through a commitment to the principles of nonviolence, seeks to mobilize the local community, regardless of religion, gender, or political affiliation, to resist oppression in all forms and build a model for the future based on justice, equality, and respect.
This article places the work of HLT in the literature of nonviolent action and amid the nonviolent movement set by predecessors in the tumultuous history of Palestinian-Israeli relations. HLT programs and projects are presented to demonstrate the progression of nonviolent resistance from lofty goals to strategic empowerment. In a region so often defined by extremes, HLT embodies the Palestinian nonviolent resistance movement.

Introduction
- Part I: Theories of Nonviolent Action in a Palestinian Context
- Part II: The Emergence of 'Holy Land Trust' in the Context of Palestinian Nonviolence
- Part III: Active Nonviolence Today: Programs & Projects of 'Holy Land Trust'

> *A. Nonviolence*
> *B. Travel and Encounter*
> *C. Non-Linear Leadership Development Program*

- Conclusion: The Vision of Holy Land Trust and Palestinian Nonviolence

Introduction

Sumud, or steadfastness, is a uniquely Palestinian strategy to resist occupation by remaining present on the land despite the continued hardships experienced in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). In short, *sumud* "suggests staying put, not

giving up on political and human rights."[1] The term gained usage after 1967 when "*Sumud* Funds" were created in Jordan to "make the continued presence of Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem economically possible" during rapid settlement building and Palestinian emigration.[2] *Sumud*, transformed from a top-down strategy, is "neither new nor static. Just as Israel's policies in the [oPt] have changed, so have *sumud* policies and strategies."[3] The *sumud* strategies discussed in this paper relate to "hope-based nonviolent strategies" that highlight the power of the common citizen.[4]

The first Intifada (1987 – 1993), triggered by political inefficacy and growing restrictions on the Palestinians, was largely peaceful and incorporated nonviolence, but still resulted in over 1400 Palestinians and nearly 300 Israelis dead across Israel and the oPt.[5] With the second Intifada (2000 – 2005), tensions unresolved from Oslo re-emerged with disastrous consequences for Israelis and Palestinians alike. In stark contrast to the first Intifada, the second Intifada was exponentially more brutal, with a figure of more than 5000 Palestinian and 1100 Israelis dead as a result of military operations, search and arrests, undercover operations, targeted killings, terrorism, and internal Palestinian political conflict.[6]

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[1] Toine van Teeffelen, "Sumud: Soul of the Palestinian People" *This Week in Palestine*, 130 (2009),
[2] Teeffelen, 2009; Hillel Frisch, "Sumud Versus Settlements: Communal Conflict in the Holy Land," *Jerusalem Letter*, 22 January 1984, http://jcpa.org/article/sumud-versus-settlements-communal-conflict-in-the-holy-land/, accessed 14 March 2013; and Toine van Teeffelen and Fuad Giacaman "Sumud: Resistance in Daily Life," Excerpt from *Challenging the Wall: Toward a Pedagogy of Hope*, Arab Educational Institute Culture and Palestine Series, Arab Educational Institute, Bethlehem, 2008. http://www.palestine-family.net/index.php?nav=65&hits=20&searchword=sumud&searchbtn=1&pageflip=68-18&did=4988-1&searchResult=searchResult; accessed 14 March 2013. Jean Zaru, *Occupied by Nonviolence: A Palestinian Woman Speaks* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008), 73.
[3] Frisch, "Sumud Versus Settlements: Communal Conflict in the Holy Land," 1.
[4] Teeffelen and Giacaman, "Sumud: Resistance in Daily Life."
[5] Figures from 'B'Tselem, The Israeli Information Center on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,' http://www.btselem.org/statistics/first_intifada_tables, accessed 11 May 2013. oPt is the term used by the United Nations to refer to the areas beyond the "Green Line" that are occupied by Israel, consisting of the West Bank and Gaza and includes East Jerusalem.
[6] The end of the second Intifada is unclear. 'B'Tselem' statistics detail fatalities from the outbreak of the second Intifada until Operation Cast Lead in 2008. Some commentators marked the end in 2004 after the death of President Yasser Arafat, infighting occurred between Palestinian political parties, and talks between Israeli and 'Fatah' leaders resumed. Yet others consider 2005 the year that ended the extreme violence, following the completion of Israel's unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip in August 2005. See 'European Institute for Research of the Mediterranean and Euro-Arab Cooperation' (MEDEA), "The Second Intifada," http://www.medea.be/en/themes/arab-israeli-conflict/second-intifada/, accessed 23 May 2013; Inigo Gilmore, "Palestinian ceasefire ends four-year Intifada," *The Telegraph* http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/1482803/Palestinian-ceasefire-ends-four-year-intifada.html, accessed 23 May 2013; 'United Nations Office for the Coordination

In the face of the violence seen in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, the evidence of nonviolence can be easily overlooked. Yet the nonviolent resistance movement across Palestine and Israel is more dynamic and creative than ever. One of these organizations promoting nonviolence is 'Holy Land Trust', and its executive director Sami Awad. Sami was born in 1971 in the United States. His parents are both Palestinian. His father, Bishara, was nine years old when Sami's grandfather was shot in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and his family left their home in West Jerusalem, becoming refugees in the Jordanian-controlled Old City. Sami's mother, Salwa, is from the Gaza Strip. When the family returned to Palestine, Sami's uncle Mubarak Awad shaped his keen interest and involvement in nonviolence. Mubarak received a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from St. Louis University and naturalized as a citizen of the United States, and returned to Jerusalem in 1983. He returned to find that Palestinians "internalized the occupation," blaming Israelis for anything including juvenile delinquency, poor schooling, and dirty clinics.[7] When Mubarak advertised a 3-day workshop on "getting rid of the occupation," hundreds arrived to either protest his efforts or as eager participants.[8] Eventually, he caught the attention of a Palestinian academic in Washington, DC, introducing Mubarak to nonviolence scholar Gene Sharp, who then encouraged Mubarak to travel to India to learn about Gandhi. Once back in Jerusalem, Mubarak established the 'Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence', and organized many activities to promote nonviolent resistance and activism.

Sami would frequently take part in the activities organized by his uncle before Mubarak was arrested and subsequently deported to the United States in 1988. "This was a turning point in my life. I no longer focused solely on doing good work, but began questioning why the other side was afraid of nonviolence and why the other side was resisting nonviolence. Those questions made me devote my life to studies and work in this field. The deportation of Mubarak Awad totally

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of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA), *Israeli-Palestinian Fatalities Since 2000 – Key Trends*, http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/BE07C80CDA4579468525734800500272, accessed 11 May 2013; 'Palestinian Centre for Human Rights Gaza' *Statistics Relating to the Al Aqsa (Second) Intifada*,
http://www.pchrgaza.org/portal/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3044:statistics-related-to-the-al-aqsa-second-intifada-&catid=55:statistics&Itemid=29, accessed 11 May 2013. Similar to the violence from the first Intifada, as detailed by Ronald Stockton, "Intifada Deaths" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 19/4, (1989): 101-108.

[7] Milton Viorst (April 1988), "Letter from Jerusalem: Faced with a growing sense of hopelessness, the Palestinians try a new approach," *Mother Jones Magazine* 13/3 (1988): 22-23, http://books.google.com/books?id=NOcDAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA21, accessed 14 April 2013. See also Gershom Geromburg, "The Missing Mahatma: Searching for a Gandhi or a Martin Luther King in the West Bank" *The Weekly Standard*, April 2009, 14/28, http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/016/329fvswo.asp?page=36, accessed 14 April 2013.

[8] Gershom Geromburg, "The Missing Mahatma."

changed the course of my life, and I steered my studies towards political and international studies."[9] Educated in the United States, Sami earned a Bachelor's degree in politics from the University of Kansas in 1994 and a Master's degree in International Relations, specializing in Peace and Conflict Resolution from American University in Washington DC before returning to Bethlehem in 1996.

Sami founded the Palestinian not-for-profit organization 'Holy Land Trust' in 1998 to strengthen the community to address the present and future challenges affecting society. To do so, the organization is rooted in nonviolence and the spirit of *sumud* to empower individuals to become the positive influence on a healthier and self-sufficient Palestinian population. Lessons from past nonviolent movements, such as the collective action of Palestinian cities and villages in the first intifada, and strategic non-violence campaigns like those of Mubarak Awad, taught the organization about the necessary planning and organization to lead a truly nonviolent organization from theory into practice. While not a religious organization, HLT "aspires to learn from spiritual teachings of all faiths that bring unity to humanity" and draws special inspiration from the teachings of Jesus Christ.[10]

More than challenging the Israeli occupation, "when we talk about nonviolence as a form of resistance we also mean it as a way to build our society."[11] The culture of nonviolence, as promoted through the popular resistance movements of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. and the nonviolent activism promoted through the works of Gene Sharp, directs the organization in its vision for individuals, the community, and Palestinian society. Incorporating nonviolence into daily life has the potential to transform the anger, weakness and helplessness seen in Palestinian society into self-reliance, strength, clarity and confidence.

Through nonviolence, HLT creates a space and the leadership for Palestinians to engage with envisioning their future. HLT has evolved into managing five main programs and overseeing various projects and collaborations between internationals and Palestinians. An organization founded on nonviolent principles requires the willingness of Palestinians to become involved in the day-to-day operations of the organization, regional cooperation within the oPt and Israel, and international partnerships for support. Ultimately, HLT is committed to a just vision of the future. Rather than being stuck in the injustices of the past or advocating a specific end result for Palestinians, HLT encourages Palestinians to become the constructive change to Palestinian society in the present. By building on past lessons of nonviolence and incorporating *sumud* into their daily work, HLT provide the practical tools and training for Palestinians to have hope in their

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[9] Sami Awad, *Interview with Just Vision*, 2007,
http://www.justvision.org/portrait/76150/interview#endnote_1 accessed 11 May 2013.
[10] http://www.holylandtrust.org/index.php/about 2008, accessed 14 April 2013.
[11] Sami Awad, *Interview with Just Vision*.

future.

Part I: Theories of Nonviolent Action in a Palestinian Context

To begin, this paper will discuss the theoretical foundations for the nonviolent movements before moving on to the specific examples found of the oPt. These are found mainly through the literature of the nonviolent action pioneer Gene Sharp, as well as Johan Galtung and John Burton in terms of conflict theory. The importance and need for nonviolence in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine is evident. As Johan Galtung argues:

> In multidimensional, protracted social conflicts like this one, where traditional approaches have consistently failed to bring peace, an alternative to deadlock led by citizen-based initiatives is imperative.[12] Furthermore, in a conflict marked by considerable power asymmetries, where the roots of the conflict are structural and based in the institutions of occupation, negotiations and problem-solving techniques alone are insufficient.[13]

Therefore, nonviolent action is vital to address the sources of conflict and to assist in developing viable options for peace. Strategic nonviolent resistance consists of techniques to allow ordinary individuals to discover and utilize their strength and power without the use of violence. Gene Sharp describes nonviolence resistance as when one "chooses to fight with superior weapons, not the oppressors' violence but psychological, moral, socio-economic and political weapons which one's people can be strong."[14] Nonviolence results in the empowering and strengthening of the people when clear and effective in terms of purpose, strategy and goals. Sharp identifies the main sources of nonviolent weaponry as a means to transform power relations between different groups: symbolic weapons, such as petitions, speeches, marches, and displaying flags; noncooperation, including boycotts, civil

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[12] Kumar Rupesinghe, "Mediation in Internal Conflicts: Lessons from Sri Lanka," in *Resolving International Conflicts*, ed. Jacob Bercovitch, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), 153, as cited in Stephan, Maria Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land: How Popular Nonviolent Struggle Can Transform the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" *Journal of Public and International Affairs*, 14 (2003), 1-26, 3, http://www.princeton.edu/jpia/past-issues-1/2003/9.pdf, accessed 23 May 2013.

[13] Johan Galtung, "Cultural Violence" *Journal of Peace Research* 27/3 (1990), 291-305. And *Conflict: Human Needs Theory*, ed. John W. Burton, (London: Macmillan, 1990) as cited in Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land," 3.

[14] Gene Sharp and Afif Safieh, "Gene Sharp: Nonviolent Struggle" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 17/1 (1987), 42. The influence of Gene Sharp on the Palestinian nonviolent movement is discussed also in the essay by Julie Norman in this issue, pp. 140-161.

disobedience, and strikes; and nonviolent intervention methods to "disrupt the operation of the system" such as hunger strikes or building new economic institutions.[15] Ultimately, the theory of nonviolent direct action is "grounded in the theory of power: namely, that all rule, no matter how tyrannical, is based on the consent and obedience of the ruled. By temporarily withholding or denying crucial resources to the ruling authorities, ordinary people make occupations unsustainable and dictatorial rule impossible."[16]

Through successful strategic nonviolent action, methods are carefully thought out for their practicality, participants are committed to the goals of the movement, and the risk for harm from the opponent is well understood. Violence is a tool limited to a small portion of the population, namely young men. Nonviolent struggle, however, "enables every man, women [sic], child, and older person to participate in some way."[17] While violence may accomplish short-term goals, it does so at the great detriment to public sympathy and support for the resistance. "Repression of nonviolent struggle – particularly if it is brutal and appears to be unjustified – tends to arouse great sympathy for the nonviolent resisters, and increased participation in resistance."[18] Violent resistance will lead to international isolation and allows no option but for members of the opponent group to unify against the resistance.[19] Nonviolence, however, allows for members of the opponent group to consider the grievances of the resistant side, and contributes to international sympathy for repression of nonviolent struggle. Sharp describes this tactic as "political ju-jitsu, a key concept of nonviolent resistance whereby the strength of the opponent is turned back on itself and becomes a weakness and liability."[20]

Nonviolence is not without its criticism. The term for 'nonviolence' in Arabic is *la-umph* or no-violence. "Some argue that it sounds as if it is negating something, like the right to fight back. For this reason, activists use the terms 'civil resistance,' 'popular resistance,' or 'political defiance.' This is important, [Sami] Awad explains, because in the Palestinian Arab culture, pacifism is seen as a sign of weakness."[21] Additionally, Palestinians disagree on the understanding of what represents nonviolence in the resistance movement:

> There has been no agreement among Palestinians on what constitutes nonviolent actions. Some combine nonviolence with peacebuilding, avoiding stone throwing […]. Others consider nonviolent actions to

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[15] Ibid., 42-44.

[16] Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land," 6.

[17] Sharp and Safieh, "Gene Sharp: Nonviolent Struggle," 46.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land," 6.

[21] Ariah O'Sullivan, "Palestinian non-violent resistance catching on," *The Jerusalem Post*, February 15, 2012, www.jpost.com/LandedPages/PrintArticle.aspx?id=257932, accessed 17 February 2013.

exclude firearms, but they accept stones as legitimate means for intimidating rather than causing bodily harm. Some groups are satisfied with conducting nonviolent education and nonviolent training; and a fourth cluster links nonviolent resistance with the boycott against Israelis, including boycotting universities and the Israeli Peace Camp, and calling for divestments and sanctions with Israel.[22]

Similarly, a debate continues on Palestinians engaging 'the other' on international, national, and interpersonal levels – e.g. Arab states recognizing Israel, diplomatic meetings between Israeli and Palestinian officials, people-to-people initiatives that bring individuals from either side together, or Palestinians taking part in trade with Israelis. Anti-normalization is a "term that gained strength in the 1980s against accepting the status quo of the occupation," says blogger Aziz Abu Sarah.[23] It is a topic that regularly is debated within the Palestinian community. "In the Palestinian context, 'normalization' (*tatbi'a* in Arabic) has been defined as 'the process of building open and reciprocal relations with Israel in all fields, including the political economic, social, cultural, educational, legal, and security fields.'"[24]

> When we seek to normalize this relationship by giving each other equal standing and equal voice, we project an image of symmetry. Joint sports teams and theatre groups, hosting an Israeli orchestra in Ramallah or Nablus, all these things create a false sense of normality, like the issue is only a problem of recognizing each other as human beings. This, however, ignores the ongoing oppression, colonization, and denial of rights, committed by one side against the other.[25]

> In commemoration of the anniversary of the *Nakba*, we the undersigned Palestinian youth: […] Refuse to take part in whitewashing Israel's public image and therefore reject any Israeli-Palestinian meetings that do not

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[22] Omri Arens and Edward Kaufman, "The Potential Impact of Palestinian Nonviolent Struggle on Israel: Preliminary Lessons and Projections for the Future" *Middle East Journal*, 66/2 (2012): 231-52, 249.

[23] Aziz Abu Sarah, "What is Normal about Normalization?," *+972 Magazine* 21 December 2011. http://972mag.com/what-is-normal-about-normalization/31262/, accessed 14 April 2013.

[24] Walid Salem, "The Anti-Normalization Discourse in the Context of Israeli-Palestinian Peace-Building Varying attitudes towards anti-normalization exist among both Palestinians and Israelis" *Palestine-Israel Journal* 12/1 (2005), http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=334, accessed 16 March 2013. For more information on 'normalization' please see *+972 Magazine*'s article "What is Normalization?" December 21, 2011, http://972mag.com/what-is-normalization/31368/ accessed 14 April 2013.

[25] Omar H. Rahman, "Co-existance vs. Co-resistance: A Case Against Normalization," *+972 Magazine*, 9 January 2012, http://972mag.com/co-existence-vs-co-resistance-a-case-against-normalization/32076/, accessed 16 March 2013.

recognize our inalienable rights, and explicitly aim to resist Israel's occupation, colonization and apartheid. Israeli-Palestinian meetings that are not committed to such principles give a false picture of equality between the two parties by ignoring and legitimizing Israel's oppression of the Palestinian people. We will not contribute to any event that undermines our rights, or portrays Israel as anything but what it really is: an apartheid state.[26]

The anti-normalization discourse, however, is inconsistent in definition and practice. Islam, Arab Marxism, Arab nationalism, Palestinian nationalism, and a blend of ideological groups that subscribe to resisting 'cultural normalization' inform Palestinian perspectives of anti-normalization.[27] Four attitudes on anti-normalization are described by Riman Barakar and Dan Goldenblatt, co-CEOs of the 'Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information': (1) no dialogue, contact or relations with Israelis as they are the enemy, (2) no dialogue until the occupation has ended, (3) no relations with the Israeli government, but engagement with Israeli activist groups that work in tandem with Palestinian solidarity yet *not* people-to-people ventures, or (4) open coordination between Israeli and Palestinian organizations.[28] Such diversity in opinion results in contradictory descriptions and guidelines for anti-normalization efforts locally, regionally and internationally. Yet the continued debate has revived the focus on Palestinian frustrations at the perpetuation of the occupation and discussions on how to best achieve the goal of Palestinian self-realization.

These concepts and debates over of nonviolent action are a basis for what would emerge in the Palestinian nonviolent movements since the second Intifada.

Part II: The Emergence of 'Holy Land Trust' in the Context of Palestinian Nonviolence

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[26] 'Palestinian Youth Against Normalization' http://pyan48.wordpress.com/, accessed 11 May 2013.

[27] Salem, 2005.

[28] Riman Barakat and Dan Goldenblatt, "Coping with Anti-Normalization" *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics & Culture* 18/2/3 (2012), 90-91. Further, "One can perhaps place these different anti-normalization positions on a continuum or see them as a mixture of attitudes which include anti-dialogue, anti-status quo, the BDS [Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions] campaign and other derivatives of those positions" (89). It is important to note that IPCRI is considered by many anti-normalization activists to be a 'normalizing' organization, though the organization rejects this in the above article.

National liberation movements around the world in the 1960s and 1970s "advocated the use of extreme forms of violence, including killing non-combatants."[29] As Arens and Kaufman note, "But in the last decades, particularly since September 11, 2001, such violent strategies, while gaining media attention, did not lead to victories."[30] Palestine was no exception. Despite the bloodshed by combatants and the fruitlessness of political negotiations following both intifadas, nonviolent resistance has gained momentum across the oPt. Within the oPt, the history of the nonviolence movement has been in the form of creative resistance and civil disobedience since the 1930s, albeit alongside armed struggle, in the struggle against Zionism.[31] The literature of Gene Sharp and the liberation movements led by Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr. have influenced the modern nonviolent resistance movement in the oPt.[32] Sharp described nonviolent resistance as a strategy for transforming societal attitudes, institutions and power relations between different groups.[33] The nonviolence movement in the oPt has employed a variety of methods to address the occupation through grassroots initiatives. Maria Stephan reasons:

> By far the most impressive and strategically significant element of the first Intifada was the role played by grassroots organizations and local committees in mobilizing the Palestinian population to resist occupation.[34]

While it is disputed whether the first Intifada was "essentially a spontaneous outburst" and as such, lacked identifiable leadership in the beginning stages,[35] the early phase of the first Intifada was "a highly decentralized uprising consisting of local initiatives, led by local activists who acted upon the instructions handed down by the secular and Islamic groups leading the resistance (the 'United National Command' (UNC) and 'Hamas')."[36] The primary goals of the first Intifada were to seek negotiation to lead to the end of the occupation and the establishment a Palestinian state.[37] Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza strategized to sever economic ties with Israel, build institutions to provide public services, to engage in civil disobedience towards military authority, and to promote

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[29] Arens and Kaufman, "Potential Impact of Palestinian Nonviolent Struggle," 232.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Mubarak Awad, "Non-Violent Resistance: A Strategy for the Occupied Territories" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 13/4 (1984), 22 and Sharp and Safieh, "Gene Sharp: Nonviolent Struggle," 41.

[32] See Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land."

[33] Ibid., 5.

[34] Ibid., 7.

[35] Rashid I. Khalidi, "The Uprising and the Palestine Question" *World Policy Journal* 5/3 (1988), 501.

[36] Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land," 7.

[37] Khalidi, "The Uprising and the Palestine Question," 503.

Palestinian solidarity.[38] Palestinians practiced civil disobedience by disobeying curfew or orders from the Israeli military, enacting an economic boycott by refusing to pay taxes and declining to work on settlements, as well as "nonviolent demonstrations, sit-ins, marches, displaying the Palestinian flag, and mock-funerals."[39] Nearly all Palestinians were capable and willing to participate in the first Intifada, through protest, strike, and improvisation, due to its "nonviolent nature"[40] as Ackerman and DuVall have argued.

Khalidi notes a marked change of leadership during this time from previous nationalist notables, and included segments of civil society affected by "detention and recruited into the various Palestinian nationalist groups," including students, young professionals, and workers.[41] Women's committees, youth and student movements, prisoner organizations, trade unions, as well as medical, educational, and agricultural work committees developed during this time.[42] The decentralized nature of the community organizing included grassroots organizations such as "village, quarter, and camp popular committees, medical relief committees, agricultural production initiatives, and other new structures" that commanded powerful local support.[43] Popular committees allowed for participation in "backyard agricultural production, distribution of food and money, emergency medical services,"[44] preparing "Palestinians for the nonviolent resistance by distributing literature on the theories of nonviolence."[45] Establishing alternative institutions was an indication of the self-sufficient capacity of the resistance and the strength of civil society.

The new leadership also made use of the underground local structures of the PLO, in particular the four major groups: "Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), and the Palestinian Communist Party – and their affiliated youth, medical, and social universities."[46] These networks, developed in the focal points of Palestinian-

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[38] Shaul Mishal and Reuben Aharoni, *Speaking Stones: Communiques from the Intifada Underground*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1994), as cited in Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land," 6.

[39] Souad Dajani, *Eyes Without a Country: Searching for a Palestinian Strategy for Liberation*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 69.

[40] Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful*, (New York, St. Martin's Press, 2000), 420, as cited in Julie M. Norman, *The Second Palestinian Intifada: Civil Resistance*, (London: Routledge, 2010), 24.

[41] Khalidi, "The Uprising and the Palestine Question," 501.

[42] Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land," 7; Sara Cady, "Strategic Nonviolent Resistance in Palestine," *Journal of International Service* 19/2 (2010), 54; Khalidi, "The Uprising and the Palestine Question," 501.

[43] Stephan"People Power in the Holy Land," 7.

[44] Khalidi, "The Uprising and the Palestine Question," 502.

[45] Cady, "Strategic Nonviolent Resistance in Palestine," 54.

[46] Ibid.

Israeli confrontation, such as universities and prisons, had pre-established means of communication and trusted affiliates. Local leadership, therefore, by and large "generated its own legitimacy."[47]

Among the campaigns of these committees were pamphlets distributed throughout the oPt alerting Palestinians that "action was better than inaction, nonviolent resistance was less destructive then armed struggle and within the limited capacity of the disarmed Palestinians, and fighting with political weapons could be more effective than violence for redressing fundamental injustices."[48] These fliers were later credited to American-educated Palestinians Mubarak Awad, a psychologist schooled in the nonviolent techniques of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mohandas Gandhi, and Awad's cousin Jonathan Kuttab, a Palestinian lawyer who founded 'Al-Haq', a Palestinian human rights organization. As the nonviolent movement gained momentum, Awad and Kuttab offered nonviolent resistance workshops, published booklets, and distributed the work of Gene Sharp on addressing power and civilian strength.[49]

Awad's "Non-Violent Resistance" article in 1984 was informed by Sharp. In this piece, he outlines nonviolence as the most realistic strategy for resisting occupation due to then-present factors which placed limits on violent alternatives: (1) the 1.3 million Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip at the time were not a trained military and cannot legally possess weaponry, (2) Palestinians are under the authority of the Israeli military and the structure includes economic dependency on Israel, (3) Palestinians face a lack of leadership with the PLO representation because they have been expelled from Jordan, to Lebanon, or Tunisia, (4) the Israeli plan for the oPt is the change the character and demography of the landscape through imposition on land, water, institutions, and the rights of Palestinians, (5) Palestinians feel impotent to the changes to their land, (6) current prospects for the liberation of the oPt does not exist and cannot be expected from outside Arab countries or the PLO. Therefore, change must come from within. Nonviolence, importantly, removes the fear of 'Arab violence' in Israeli society and thereby makes the country less defensive about their Palestinian neighbors. Awad was firm with his promotion for direct nonviolent resistance, stating "For the Palestinians who are living in the West Bank and Gaza during this period, the most effective strategy is one of non-violence."[50]

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[47] Ibid.

[48] Mary King, *A Quiet Revolution: The First Palestinian Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance*, (New York: Nation Books, 2007), 127 as cited in Norman, 2010, 25.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Awad, "Non-Violent Resistance," 24.

The nonviolent resistance approach, according to Awad, is "a total and serious struggle, nothing short of real war" and "not an easy alternative."[51] As such, it requires training, discipline, and a high degree of organization to complete. The collective suffering during nonviolent resistance can be a tool for unifying Palestinians through "moral superiority."[52] Awad recommended several tactics to be used in future nonviolent resistance by Palestinians that were inspired by Sharp, including: demonstrations, obstruction, noncooperation, harassment, boycotts, strikes, support and solidarity, alternative institutions, and civil disobedience. These tactics could only be successful if engaged by those who were fully committed to a non-violent struggle.

Awad's writings presented nonviolent resistance as an accessible, practical strategy for ordinary Palestinians. In 1985, he established the 'Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence' (PCSN) in East Jerusalem to continue his work on promoting nonviolent action and began a village outreach campaign in the spirit of Gandhi's "constructive program."[53] "Social and political problems of a protracted nature require a long-term response," thus alternative institutions.[54]

> Most significant for Awad, Gandhi's village-based work program was a concrete way to proceed toward a new social order in the midst of the old, meaning that even while the Palestinians were still living under a belligerent occupation, they could create self-reliance through the establishment of institutions that were beyond Israeli control. The alternative institutions would rival previous entities and ultimately replace them, and the Palestinians would take charge through noncooperation and by creating new structures. The popular committees that would sustain the first intifada were alternative institutions.[55]

Awad adapted Gandhi's constructive programs, including a "'Library on Wheels', translating and spreading lectures and books advocating nonviolence to children across the West Bank and East Jerusalem" and clean up campaigns to protest closures of municipalities.[56] In early 1986, Awad was asked to demonstrate the nonviolence that he advocated and led the first successful march through the village of Taqu' to protest the appropriation of land by Israeli settlers. This is a small hamlet 12km south of Bethlehem, not far from the modern-day Gush

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[51] Ibid., 25.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Mary Elizabeth King, *A Quiet Revolution*, 145.

[54] Ibid., 145-146.

[55] Ibid., 146.

[56] Arens and Kaufman, "Potential Impact of Palestinian Nonviolent Struggle," 236.

Etzion settlement block.[57] Through the participation of over 300 local villagers, Israeli peace activists, foreign guests and PCSN staff in a nonviolent march, Palestinians who took part felt empowered, even if this experience did not change the status of the oPt.[58] A significant step for the Palestinian nonviolent resistance, "In the public record, this was the first time that a West Bank village recovered land that had been appropriated."[59] Soon after, villages facing similar issues sought out the nonviolence training of PCSN.[60] Nonviolent marches and protest involving Palestinians as well as Israeli and foreign participants have become a staple of the modern Palestinian nonviolent resistance. In the West Bank village of Budrus, nonviolent activists successfully protested the building of the security fence/wall on much of their agricultural land, and their story was captured in the 'Just Vision' film *Budrus*.[61] Protests occur often in villages across the West Bank and East Jerusalem where Palestinian land is threatened: Bil'in, Nabi Saleh, Sheikh Jarrah, al-Walajah, Al-Masarah, among many others.[62]

In 1988, six months after the start of the first Intifada, Mubarak Awad was charged with "fomenting a rebellion against the state" and deported to the United States on a technicality of overstaying a three-month visa.[63] "Private messages from President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz flickered over the airwaves to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir concerning Awad's case. The US Ambassador to Israel told Shamir, 'You need more Awads in Jerusalem, not fewer.'"[64] Awad's deportation only lent more credibility to his vision and further spread his methods of practical nonviolent resistance.[65]

Communities across the oPt began to implement nonviolent resistance tactics. In

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[57] There is an Israeli Tekoa settlement included in the Gush Etzion settlement block, which is located beside the Arab village of Taqu' (also spelled Taqu,' Tekoa, or Teqoa). For a different view on some of the settlers from Tekoa and peace activism, see the essay by Cristiana Calabrese in this issue, pp. 101-123.

[58] King, *A Quiet Revolution*, 147-148.

[59] Ibid., 148.

[60] Cady, "Strategic Nonviolent Resistance in Palestine," 54.

[61] Arens and Kaufman, "Potential Impact of Palestinian Nonviolent Struggle," 247. 'Just Vision' is a not-for-profit and non-partisan organization based in Washington DC, New York, Jerusalem that promotes Israeli and Palestinian nonviolence through film and media.

[62] Ibid., 246-247.

[63] Charles M. Sennot, *The Body and the Blood: The Middle East's Vanishing Christians and the Possibility for Peace*, (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Book Group, 2001), 157. Mubarak, a US citizen, had his Jerusalem residency revoked by Israel during the time he was in the United States and therefore was designated a foreign national.

[64] Catherine Ingram, *In the Footsteps of Gandi: Conversations with Spiritual Social Activists*, (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 2003).

[65] Cady, "Strategic Nonviolent Resistance in Palestine," 55.

Beit Sahour, Palestinians welcomed the participation of Israeli Jews and Palestinian women in ways that were not seen before in the Intifada.[66] Dialogue groups took place to encourage encounters between ordinary Israelis and Palestinians for discussions on how to bring about peace. The typical scenes of the Palestinian nonviolent resistance movement were demonstrated through the boycott of Israeli goods, illegally flying the Palestinian flag, ignoring military orders, destroying Israeli ID cards to enter Israel, and educating their children in underground schools, backyard gardening and secret dairy farms.[67]

Among the most notable acts of collective civil disobedience was the tax revolt in Beit Sahour for six weeks in October and November 1989. Beit Sahour, a prosperous and predominantly Christian village located beside Bethlehem, employed the motto "No Taxation Without Representation" as individuals withheld taxes and several hundred small businesses refused to pay the value-added-tax to Israel, to protest their taxes being used to finance the military occupation.[68] "In interviews many men said they would not pay taxes because they did not wish to finance their own occupation and, anyway, saw no benefit from the money they had already paid."[69] In response, the Israeli army put the village under siege and began to seize property in lieu of unpaid taxes. The siege ended after 42 days of defiance. The success of the Beit Sahour tax revolt lies in the creativity of the plan, the discipline of the residents, and the effective use of media to their benefit.[70] Yet not all Palestinian villages have the advantages of Beit Sahour, which is "a relatively wealthy Palestinian city located close to Israel with good access to Israeli peace groups and media."[71]

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[66] Sennot, *The Body and the Blood*, 155-157. For more on the complexity of Palestinian women's participation in activism, see Rabab Abdulhadi, "The Palestinian Women's Autonomous Movement: Emergence, Dynamics, and Challenges" *Gender and Society*, 12/6 Part 1 (1998), 649-673.

[67] Michael N. Nagler, Tal Palter-Palman and Matthew A. Taylor, *The Road to Nonviolent Coexistance in Palestine/Israel*, March 2007, www.matthewtaylor.net/nvcoexistpalisfinal.pdf, accessed 1 May 2013.

[68] Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land," 8; Anne Grace, "The Tax Resistance at Bayt Sahour" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 19/2 (1990), 101; Nagler, Palter-Palman and Taylor, *The Road to Nonviolent Coexistance in Palestine/Israel.*

[69] Alan Cowell, "Beit Sahur Journal; In a Tax War, Even the Olivewood Dove is Seized," *The New York Times*, 11 October 1989, http://www.nytimes.com/1989/10/11/world/beit-sahur-journal-in-a-tax-war-even-the-olivewood-dove-is-seized.html?n=Top%2fReference%2fTimes%20Topics%2fSubjects%2fT%2fTaxes, accessed 23 May 2013.

[70] Stephan "People Power in the Holy Land," 8.

[71] Ibid.; the Beit Sahour tax revolt was problematic for the PLO and Yasser Arafat. While Arafat aimed to take control of the intifada, an independent revolt like the one in Beit Sahour was seen as potentially divisive for Palestinians and could weaken the PLO's abilities to negotiate with Israel. Within the PLO, suspicions also arose with whether the Christian population of Beit Sahour were taking part in this resistance as a Western plan to destabilize the Intifada (Sennot, *The Body and the Blood*, 158).

Thus, the history of the HLT follows the history of the region: evolving out of the need for community empowerment in a time of extreme political, economic and social hardships. Sami Awad, the executive director, founded HLT in the midst of the dissatisfaction amongst Palestinians following the Oslo accords and preceding a violent second Intifada. HLT was born out of the combination of two programs: a continuation of the work of the PCSN in Jerusalem, and the 'Journey of the Magi', a pilgrimage throughout the biblical cities after the birth of Christ.

Upon completing his university education in the United States, Sami returned to Bethlehem and his vision to continue his uncle's work came to fruition when PCSN moved from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. Further, a partnership formed with Robin and Nancy Wainwright of 'Middle East Fellowship' (MEF), who had met with Sami in 1996 to discuss their vision to travel through the biblical cities for the millennium celebrations of the birth of Jesus. As a result, HLT and MEF had its first joint program in October 2000 through the 'Journey of the Magi pilgrimage', in conjunction with the 'Middle East Council of Churches'. Three groups of international pilgrims retraced the path of the Biblical 'wise men' over 1,200 miles through modern-day Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Israel and arriving in Bethlehem for Christmas with the intention to forge friendships between the pilgrims and their hosts. These pilgrims were among the only international visitors to risk entering Bethlehem during the turbulent time of the Second Intifada. Gifts were exchanged in honor of the occasion, and HLT arranged the donation of 2,000 olive trees to the people to replace those uprooted by military raids.[72] This was the start of a strong relationship between MEF and HLT to serve the communities of the Middle East in creative and nonviolent ways. MEF serve as a sister organization to HLT to provide support, in particular to the 'Palestine Summer Encounter Program' detailed in the subsection of 'Travel and Encounter', and to assist in overall fundraising for HLT in the United States.

For Sami, the commitment to nonviolence is also a means to build a stronger Palestine by enabling individuals to envision and create an independent, democratic society. To address the weaknesses in local society, the organization developed tools for empowering the local community: nonviolence programs, leadership programs, travel and encounter experiences, and independent media. Each of these programs engages with the community – both Christian and Muslim – in ways that support the themes of nonviolence whilst challenging individuals to become a source for change. Inspired by the nonviolent resistance movements in the past, Sami and the staff at HLT incorporate the strategies of nonviolence for

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[72] Journey of the Magi Website, *The Contemporary Story of the Journey of the Magi*, http://www.magijourney.org/contemporary.html, accessed 11 May 2013.

the contemporary needs of Palestinian society.

Part III: Active Nonviolence Today: Programs & Projects of 'Holy Land Trust'

HLT has internalized the successes and failures of past nonviolent movements. Among the successes of nonviolence in the uprising: focusing on the centrality of the Palestinian people and Israel; raising the financial, moral and public relations cost of the occupation and shattering the illusions regarding the irreversibility of changes introduced by Israel in the oPt since 1967; building the self-confidence and sense of unity of Palestinians to create economic infrastructure, self-reliance, and developing an understanding of nonviolent methods; and altering the Palestinian image and the occupation in international and Jewish public opinion, making prolonged occupation appear less attractive and sustainable.[73] There were also lessons in the failures of the nonviolence movement, including the need for practical strategies and attainable goals, the requirement of long term leadership and group cohesion to the nonviolent methods, and most importantly, the ability to neutralize Israeli fear.[74] "To be effective and truly facilitate change… Palestinians needed to remove the Israeli fear of Arab violence."[75] Resistance must be understood as "directed at the unjust policies and practices of the Israeli government, not at the physical well being of the Israeli people."[76] The second Intifada greatly challenged the ability to spread this message, but with the resurgence of nonviolent activism, it is possible to convey this message once again. With these teachings, Sami Awad founded HLT. No longer concerned with the criticisms of 'normalizing' relations with Israel or Israelis, HLT has reached an awareness of nonviolent resistance that focuses on the needs of the Palestinians while inviting the participation of Israelis and internationals when possible and appropriate. This form of engagement has been described as "co-resisting" rather than "co-existing" – that is, welcoming the inclusion of Israelis for the purpose of promoting Palestinian rights and to encourage the end of the occupation.[77]

The organization is represented by the spectrum of the community: refugees, villagers and city dwellers; Christians and Muslims; women and men; as well as the young, the old, and the handicapped. Nonviolence is available to all. HLT provide a myriad of services from their offices designed to strengthen the ties within the

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[73] Khalidi, "The Uprising and the Palestine Question," 506-508; Cady, "Strategic Nonviolent Resistance in Palestine," 57.

[74] Cady, "Strategic Nonviolent Resistance in Palestine," 57-58.

[75] King, *A Quiet Revolution*, 213; Cady, "Strategic Nonviolent Resistance in Palestine," 58.

[76] Stephan, "People Power in the Holy Land," 15.

[77] Rahman, "Co-existance vs. Co-resistance."

community and extending collaboration across borders. Nonviolence, leadership, and healing are the guiding principles to their work, and all of their projects address at least one of these values.

The work of HLT is supported by a range of donors, including governments, Christian organizations, charitable international development organizations, and individual donations or program fees.[78] Among the 15 donors listed in HLT's latest annual report, the organizations fell into the broad categories of direct government assistance for good governance, agricultural development, and youth development programs, Christian-centered aid, international development.[79] A sampling of specific donors include: the 'National Endowment for Democracy', a US-based non-profit that supports programs that promote democratic ideals and values; the 'Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace', an international development organization of the Catholic Church that addresses poverty, unfair social, political, and economic structures, and human dignity; 'Resource Center for Nonviolence', an American peace and social justice organization committed to nonviolent social change; and 'Wilde Ganzen Foundation', a Dutch organization that funds small-scale projects in disadvantaged communities with a Dutch partner.[80]

This section will highlight three of HLT's projects that are made possible through the funding by donors and the management by HLT staff: Nonviolence, Travel and Encounter, and the Non-Linear Development Program.

A. Nonviolence

A centerpiece of HLT is the commitment to nonviolence, and the staff believes that it is a lifestyle of consciousness. Internalizing the themes of nonviolence has been a challenge, and for many staff members, it is a lifestyle that requires an appreciation for theories of Jesus, Martin Luther King, Jr., Gandhi, and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (the 'Muslim Gandhi') as much as direct action, mobilization, and community outreach.[81]

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[78] Interview of the A. with Muhammad Ali, 17 April 2013. Specific financial contributions of each organization was not provided.

[79] Ibid.

[80] These organizations can be found online: 'National Endowment for Democracy,' www.ned.org , 'The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace,' www.devp.org/en; 'Resource Center for Nonviolence,' http://rcnv.org; Wilde Ganzen (Wild Geese in English), www.wildeganzen.nl, websites accessed 12 May 2013.

[81] Unlike the more notable figures of Jesus, King and Gandhi, Khan was a Muslim nonviolence practitioner from a region known for some of the most violent tribal societies in the world. Khan was a contemporary and friend of Gandhi. As a devout Muslim, he was profoundly inspired by his faith to create a 'nonviolent army' called The Khudai Khidmatgars ("servants of God") to renounce violence in response to British oppression in the remote Northwest Frontier of modern-

According to Mubarak Awad, there are many reasons to employ nonviolence, including: (1) it creates a constructive outcome, (2) it is a 'weapon' available to all, and (3) it is the surest way to achieve public sympathy.[82] HLT provides training to a variety of Palestinian organizations, villages, refugee camps and individuals of all religious denominations in nonviolent methods and strategies to involve the broader community.

Ongoing projects within the Nonviolence Department are creative methods to engage Palestinians in nonviolence training through local and international partnerships. These trainings occur multiple times a year, extending over a few days and can include 30-40 participants at each gathering.[83] Many of the nonviolence projects address the need for education programs for children and youth, as there are many affected by violence and trauma. In a recent UNICEF report, Palestinian children reported experiences of violence in amongst family, in school with peers and teachers, and with Israeli soldiers on their way to school.[84] Therefore, programs were developed to counteract the ill effects of violence and of the occupation on childhood by creating a culture of nonviolence in homes and schools. The aim of these programs is to generate a society that cherishes nonviolence from a young age and to encourage nonviolent behavior into adulthood.[85]

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day Pakistan. It was an unlikely collective at a time when British regarded the Pashtun tribes as 'savages,' but at "its height, Khan's Khudai Khidmatgars numbered more than 80,000." Khan served a total of 30 years in prison for protesting military dictatorships. Tim Flinders, "A Muslim Gandhi?" Badshah Khan and the World's First Nonviolent Army," *PeacePower. Berkley's Journal of Principled Nonviolence and conflict transformation,* 1/1 2005, http://www.calpeacepower.org/0101/muslim_ghandi.htm accessed 23 May 2013.

[82] Thomas Weber and Robert J. Burrowes, *Nonviolence: An Introduction, Section 2: Reasons for Nonviolence,* http://www.nonviolenceinternational.net/seasia/whatis/book.php, accessed 22 May 2013.

[83] See for example these published articles about HLT Nonviolence Training: *Nonviolence Communication Training in Bethlehem* http://www.holylandtrust.org/index.php/news/778-nonviolence-communication-training-in-bethlehem; *Nonviolence Training with the Palestinian Medical Relief Society (Health Clubs) in Dar-Salah,"* 21 June 2010; http://www.holylandtrust.org/index.php/news/22-nonviolence-programs/586-nonviolence-training-with-the-palestinian-medical-relief-society-health-clubs-in-dar-salah; *Nonviolence Training for Women in Beit Jala,"* 10 June 2010,. http://www.holylandtrust.org/index.php/news/28-other-activities/581-nonviolence-training-for-women-in-beit-jala, all accessed 12 May 2013.

[84] See 'United Nations Children's Fund' (UNICEF). *The Situation of Palestinian Children in the Occupied Territory, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon,* http://www.unicef.org/oPt/PALESTINIAN_SITAN-final.pdf, accessed 12 May 2013. For an analysis of Israeli women's NGOs and domestic violence see the essay by Valérie Pouzol, pp. 50-72.

[85] For more information on collaborations between HLT and charities dealing with children and youth, trauma and education, see 'Musicians Without Borders,' www.musicianswithoutborders.org, accessed 12 May 2013 and HLT Website, *Peacebuilders: Educating for Peace in Palestinian Schools,"*

B. *Travel and Encounter*

Travel and Encounter was established in 2000 to support the coordination for the 'Journey of the Magi'. Through an established partnership with MEF, HLT has been able to raise international awareness by providing cross-cultural and experiential learning opportunities in Palestine and Israel. Programs are tailor made for spiritual pilgrimages, olive harvests, spring break programs, volunteerism, or fact-finding missions, as well as the annual programs of Palestine Summer Encounter, Summer of Service (a Christian-centered program) and the Home Rebuilding Program. Its main aim is to establish personal connections through tourism between Palestinians and internationals to develop mutual respect and understanding.

Palestine Summer Encounter

Palestine Summer Encounter (PSE) is a joint project between HLT and MEF, creating the opportunity for internationals to become exposed to the Palestinian community and familiarize themselves with the politics, the people, the issues facing the local community, and be inspired to share this message when they return home. PSE invites internationals to live in Palestine over one, two, or three months. Each year since 2004, Bethlehem has welcomed between 30-75 international participants. MEF assists in promoting PSE, processing participant registration, as well as payments and scholarships for the program. Program costs for 2013 are US$2,030 for one month, US$3,390 for two months, and US$4,160, and are paid to MEF and then distributed to HLT. These fees pay for housing with Palestinian families, excursions, classes, medical insurance, basic mobile phones during the program, and materials for participants. Participants range in age, religious or secular backgrounds, and include students, professionals, and retirees. A majority of participants are from the United States, with the remaining numbers from Canada, Europe and Australia. The home stay is selected through consideration of participant requirements: language ability, proximity to volunteer placement, and requests to live with a family of a particular religious background or socioeconomic status such as a refugee camp. The host families are considered through their ability to host an international and economic need.

"Every participant serves their host community through a volunteer placement at a nonprofit organization, summer camp, municipality, school, hospital, church or community center."[86] The opportunity to learn from the community through a volunteer placement, up to five days per week, allows participants to gain further

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accessed 1 July 2012.

[86] PSE Website, *Volunteer Opportunities*, http://www.palestinesummer.org/volunteer, accessed 12 May 2013.

insight to daily life in Bethlehem.

PSE exposes participants to the perspectives of academics, diplomats, politicians, religious educators, and those working for peace. These voices are diverse, and include lectures on theology of the land, introductions to the Abrahamic faiths by Jewish, Christian and Muslim teachers, nonviolence in Palestine, the history of Zionism, and regional politics. PSE also exposes participants to Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations (for example: 'Al Haq', 'B'Tselem', 'Rabbis for Human Rights'), activist groups ('Christian Peacemaker Teams', 'Stop the Wall Campaign'), community development organizations (refugee camp organizations, 'Freedom Theatre Jenin'), a Jewish educational and conflict transformation organization ('Encounter'), and a prisoner support and human rights organization ('Addameer').[87] The program has also met with Israeli settlers in Ephrat and Hebron for opinions in stark opposition to what participants might be exposed to in Bethlehem. But PSE does not cater to extremes. The thrust of the program centers on the promotion of nonviolence, education, and mutual respect. Aside from hearing the perspectives of activists, development workers and academics, participants also study Arabic in the colloquial dialect so that participants may be better able to communicate and develop relationships with Palestinians.

C. Non-Linear Leadership Development Program
After the death of Yasser Arafat, there was a tangible absence of leadership in Palestinian society and politics.[88] The Making the Impossible Possible Campaign (MIPC) began in 2007 to facilitate developing and implementing a vision for the future through supporting emerging community leaders. HLT believes that "any true breakthrough in ending violence and achieving peaceful coexistence based on equality and justice requires a leadership committed to making what seems to be impossible a real possibility for both the Palestinian and Israeli communities." Therefore, HLT facilitates the emergence of new leaders who will support a nonviolent and transformative change towards lasting peace in both Israeli and Palestinian communities.

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[87] The websites of following organizations were all accessed on 1 July 2012. 'Al Haq' (www.alhaq.org); 'B'Tselem' (www.btselem.org); 'Rabbis for Human Rights' (http://rhr.org.il/eng/); 'Christian Peacemaker Teams' (http://www.cpt.org/); 'Stop the Wall Campaign' (http://www.stopthewall.org/); 'The Freedom Theatre' (http://www.thefreedomtheatre.org/); 'Addameer' (http://www.addameer.org/); 'Encounter' (http://www.encounterprograms.org/), accessed 14 March 2013.

[88] Dennis Ross, "After Arafat, What?," *Washington Post*, 5 November, 2004. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A26838-2004Nov4.html, accessed 22 May 2013; Lior Akerman, "Their Loss is Our Loss," *The Jerusalem Post*, 9 May 2013, http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/Their-loss-is-our-loss-312707, accessed 22 May 2013.

As a first step in the MIPC, HLT launched the Non-Linear Leadership Development Program (LDP). LDP was developed in 2010 as a personal development program to counter this vacuum of vision and to mend the divisions caused as a result of the absence of leadership. It coaches leaders from political, social and business sectors into a 'non-linear' leadership program. The methodology of the non-linear development program connects individuals with their potential for leadership, rather than building this practice from past (linear) experiences. The LDP generates participant leadership through energizing their creativity, intelligence, commitment and self-responsibility. Through creating visions and strategies of leadership and understanding what a leader does, the participant moves to serve the community as a member of a network of other budding leaders. The purpose of LDP is to give a voice to the moderate majority in Palestine who want a just peace, to establish initiatives that promote peaceful coexistence, and to rally the population to end resignation to the status quo.[89] The LDP provides the coaching for women and men, training on visions and practical strategies of leadership, and connects those trained in LDP through network meetings to build on ideas and methods to bring about constructive change.

Since 2010, "more than 225 participants continue to engage and support each other through [HLT's] non-linear network of leaders." Further, an impact of LDP's success has been the engagement of emerging women leaders. "The year 2012 featured the Women Leadership Development Project (WLDP) as an extension to our Non-linear Leadership Development Project (LDP), and around 560 women have participated in this project."[90] The interest amongst youth to become involved in and empowered through leadership development and nonviolence continues to grow.

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[89] Multiple polls support this assertion. A joint poll by the 'Program on International Policy Attitutes' (PIPA) and 'Search for Common Ground' (SFCG) showed that two years into the second Intifada in 2002, "80% of Palestinians would support a large-scale nonviolent protest movement and 56% would participate in it. (...) A 2008 study by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) complemented the SFCG survey, indicating that 70% of Palestinian young adults believed that the use of violence to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was not very helpful. More recently, a 2010 'Fafo' poll confirmed the sentiment expressed in the 2002 PIPA/SFCG poll in favor of nonviolent resistance. Seven in ten thought that Palestinians should resist Israel by putting more weight on civil, nonviolent means. Also, the poll found that a larger share of the population favored a halt in rocket attacks from Gaza at the time of the survey than a year previously (61%, up from 53%)." Arens and Kaufman, "Potential Impact of Palestinian Nonviolent Struggle," 243. The 2010 Fafo poll is taken from the Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, "Key Results from an Opinion Poll in the West Bank (February) and Gaza Strip (May) 2010," http://www.fafo.no/ais/middeast/opt/opinionpolls/palestinian_opinions_2010/Summary_2010_EN.pdf, accessed 23 May 2013.

[90] Interview of the A. with Muhammad Ali.

These programs provide an insight into the strategic framework HLT has employed for empowering Palestinians in nonviolence, to open their world with others and to develop leadership capacity for the present and future.

Conclusion: The Vision of Holy Land Trust and Palestinian Nonviolence

Every Friday at HLT, Sami Awad convenes a "vision meeting." Within this space, and through Awad's leadership, the organization is reminded of their commitment to community empowerment and development of a culture of nonviolence. The meetings are never structured the same, and visiting volunteers are welcome additions to Vision. While such meetings can serve to ensure each department is on task and organizational goals are discussed and met, Vision is also a time for introspection, reflection, active listening, support, guidance, and organizational strength. With the chaos of the office environment within the current circumstances, establishing this time as routine has resulted in a genuine office community.

The strategic plan of HLT is seen through their articulated tenets, namely nonviolence, leadership, and healing. They remain cognizant of the effects of the occupation on the occupied and the occupier, and they honor those who continue to work in the name of nonviolent action. Through their programs and projects, HLT are improving the nonviolent movement by having a vision, making attainable goals, and empowering the community to be a part of shaping their future.

As HLT continues to grow, it will undoubtedly change and develop their strategies as necessary for the community's needs. Nonviolence training is showing to be more important than ever.

The history of nonviolent resistance in Palestine is established and yet innovating. While it is unclear that a 'white Intifada' of a nonviolent nature will emerge as some academics suggest, the adaptation of nonviolence is part of the broader political interest of the Palestinian Authority.[91] In recent years, "nonviolent resistance became a reiterated official policy (…). This represents a positive shift in the instrumentality of a strategy that coincides with the goal of two states living in

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[91] Shaul Mishal and Doron Massa, "Pre-empting a White Intifada," *Haaretz*, 22 February 2010, http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/preempting-a-white-intifada-1.266068, accessed 14 March 2013, as cited in Arens and Kaufman, "Potential Impact of Palestinian Nonviolent Struggle," 240.

peace next to each other."[92] The increased interest and involvement of local nonviolent resistance at the official levels of the Palestinian Authority is encouraging, and shows that the *sumud* of the people has not gone unnoticed. Whether this results in a return to negotiations between the two peoples is unknown, but the dynamics of resistance are changing toward more peaceful, less threatening, and more empathetic messages.

Nonviolence has the potential to unite the people under a just cause without threatening their opponent. With continued uncertainty in the region, the leadership of Sami Awad and the work of all who serve for HLT provide the encouragement, training and support to maintain hope through steadfastness. The history of nonviolence in the oPt, and in particular HLT, is a glimpse into power of creativity when used to promote nonviolent resistance. Through their ongoing programs and projects, HLT enables the Palestinian community to discover their strengths and their voice. There is a viable and effective alternative to violence.

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[92] Ibid.

Panels for Peace:
Contributions of Israeli and Palestinian Comics to Peace-Building

by *Chantal Catherine Michel*

Abstract

Comics and graphic novels about the Arab-Israeli conflict constitute a small, but constantly expanding sub-genre. Most of them are statements for one of the two opposing sides and only very few comic book authors use their skills to contribute to mutual understanding, tolerance and peace. After discussing the value of comics as educational and peace-building tools, the article demonstrates how comics can, under the condition that the concerned grousp can access them, contribute to peace-building by briefly discussing the works of non-Israeli and -Palestinian authors, as well as by analyzing in depth comics by Israeli and Palestinian authors Uri Fink, Galit and Gilad Seliktar, and Samir Harb.

- Introduction.
- How can comics contribute to peace-building?
- Corpus of peace-building comics treating the Arab-Israeli conflict.
- Israeli contributions to peace-building.
- Palestinian contributions to peace-building
- Conclusion.

> *The first step of real peace is to know the other side, its culture and creativity.*
> *(Mahmoud Darwish)*

Introduction

Contributions to peace-building through comics is probably not the first thing that most people would associate with this medium, as unfortunately it still has – even 60 years after the publication of *Seduction of the Innocent*[1] - somehow the reputation to be an unserious, and sometimes even violence-glorifying part of popular culture which is loved by but not appropriate for children who are judged to be better off reading 'real' books.[2]

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[1] Fredric M. Wertham, *Seduction of the Innocent - The influence of comic books on today's youth*, (New York: Rinehart, 1954).
[2] Thierry Groensteen, "Why Are Comics Still in Search of Cultural Legitimization?," in *A Comics Studies Reader,* eds. Jeet Heer and Kent Worcester (Jackson: University Press of

But besides the fact that comics (the term *comics* is to be understood and henceforth used as a hypernym for any kind of sequential art[3] regardless of its provenance, publishing form, or content[4]) have never exclusively been produced for a juvenile readership, comics "are a language, with their own grammar, syntax and punctuation"[5] resulting in "a unique and powerful form of communication."[6] As the specific language of the medium comics results in other forms of narration,[7] comics offer a different access to information, memory, history, ideas or ideals as other media. Surely in great part thanks to Art Spiegelman's *Maus*[8], that won the Pulitzer Prize in 1992, not only has a great number of other gifted authors/artists treated in comics difficult and complex issues of historical, political, social and of other nature since then;[9] the

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Mississippi, 2009), 3-11, 5; see also Baptiste Campion, "Bande dessinée éducative et éducation par la BD - Des pratiques de terrain à une approche intégrée," in *Bande dessinée et solidarités - La BD, un miroir du lien social,* eds. Eric Dacheux and Sandrine Le Pontois (Paris: l'Harmattan, 2011), 137-150, 138.

[3] The definition of comics is subject to an ample debate, because there exists a great variety of different forms. For the purpose of this article, Will Eisner's definition should be sufficient: "sequential art" is "the arrangement of pictures or images and words to narrate a story or dramatize an idea." Will Eisner, *Comics and Sequential Art: Principles and Practices from the Legendary Cartoonist*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1985), 5. For a concise introduction to the difficulty of defining comics, see Thierry Groensteen, "The Impossible Definition," *A Comics Studies Reader*, 124-131.

[4] A large variety of terms refer to sequential art. *Comics*, for example, is usually applied to works of US providence (e.g. super hero comics), whereas *Bande Dessinée*, *Manga*, *Manwha* and *Fumetti* for instance refer to sequential art produced in France/Belgium, Japan, Korea and Italy respectively. These terms usually also indicate various forms and formats, as they are rooted in the histories and/or publishing traditions of this art form in different countries. Other terms such as *funnies* or *graphic novel* refer to the type of narration. Whereas the former usually refers to the American newspaper comic strips, but can also indicate a humoristic content, the latter serves as categorization of longer (fictional) narration. For readings about the history of comics, see, e.g.: Robert S. Petersen, *Comics, Manga, and Graphic Novels - A History of Graphic Narratives*, (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger, 2011); Laurence Grove, *Comics in French: The Bande Dessinée in Context*, (Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2010); *Manga: An Anthology of Global and Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Tony Johnson-Woods, (London, New York, Sidney, New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2010); Roger Sabin, *Comics, comix & graphic novels: a history of comic art*, (London: Phaidon, 2001); Robert C. Harvey, *The Art of the Funnies: An Aesthetic History*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994).

[5] Roger Sabin, *Adult Comics - An Introduction*, (London, New York: Routledge, 1993), 9.

[6] Randy Duncan and Matthew J. Smith, *The Power of Comics: History, Form, and Culture*, (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2009), 13.

[7] For further reading, see, among others: Thierry Groensteen, *Bande dessinée et narration*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2011); Thierry Groensteen, *The System of Comics*, (Print on Demand Edition. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2007).

[8] Art Spiegelman, *Maus I: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History*, (New York: Pantheon, 1986); Art Spiegelman, *Maus II: A Survivor's Tale: And Here My Troubles Began. From Mauschwitz to the Catskills and Beyond*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991).

[9] To cite but a few examples: Marjane Satrapi, *The complete Persepolis*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2007); Jacques Tardi, *C'était la Guerre des Tranchées*, (Paris: Casterman, 1993); Emmanuel Guibert, *La guerre d'Alan*, (Paris: L'Association, 2012); Jean-Pierre Filiu and David B., *Les Meilleurs Ennemis - Une histoire des relations entre les États-Unis et le Moyen-Orient*, (Paris: Futuropolis, 2011); Philippe Squarzoni, *Saison brune*, (Paris: Delcourt, 2012); Craig Thompson, *Blankets: an*

medium itself has also been more widely accepted as appropriate for dealing with such contents. This is not only reflected by considerable academic attention and research,[10] but also by the fact that, for example, the highly esteemed French social economic journal «Le Monde Diplomatique» has decided to publish, in November 2010, a comics format issue of its content,[11] and that since 2006 Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* is part of the cadet's curriculum in the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.[12]

One sub-genre of these socio-historical and political comics is the Arab-Israeli Conflict-Comic (hereafter called AIC-Comics).[13] Although some of these comics have been published before *Maus*,[14] most of them have[15] after Joe Sacco's *Palestine*.[16] There could be several reasons for this: it could be because of this journalistic/documentary pioneering work in this field; or because in

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Illustrated Novel, (Portland: Top Shelf Productions, 2003); Will Eisner, *The Plot: The Secret Story of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, (New York: W. W. Norton Limited, 2006).

[10] See, among others: *Graphic Subjects - Critical Essays on Autobiography and Graphic Novels*, ed. Michael A. Chaney, (Madison, London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2011); *Objectif bulles - Bande dessinée et Histoire*, ed. Michel Porret, (Chêne-Bourg: Éditions Medecine et Hygiène, Georg, 2009); *Comics & ideology*, ed. Matthew P. McAllister, (New York, Washington, DC/Baltimore; Bern; Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2001); Michael Cromer and Penney Clark, "Getting Graphic with the Past: Graphic Novels and the Teaching of History" in *Theory and Research in Social Education* 35/4 (2007): 574-591; Joseph Witek, *Comic Books As History: The Narrative Art of Jack Jackson, Art Spiegelman, and Harvey Pekar*, (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1989).

[11] *Le Monde Diplomatique en Bande Dessinée*, eds. Gillaume Barou, Mona Chollet*, et al.*, (Paris Le Monde Diplomatique, Homecooking Books, 2010).

[12] Rana Foroohar, "Comic Relief," *Newsweek* (2005):
http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2005/08/21/comic-relief.html, accessed 17 March 2013.

[13] I understand Arab-Israeli Conflict-Comics as comics that focus or partly treat the Arab-Israeli conflict, regardless of the type of narrative, country of production, and nationality, religion and/or cultural background of the author(s).

[14] Palestinian political cartoonist Nadji al-Ali started publishing in 1961, and the Israeli Yoske Mayor series was published in the early 1970s. Outside the region, French comics author Reiser published in the late 1960s, early 1970s some short comics in *Charlie Hebdo* magazine and equally French Farid Boudjellal started his *Juif-Arabe* series in 1990. Naji al-Ali, *A Child in Palestine*, (London: Verso, 2009); Jean-Marc Reiser, "Dessin de Presse Redécouverte: Reiser – L'Amérique, Israël et les Arabes" in *Bang! Bande Dessinée-Images-Actualité* 1/1 (2003): 62-71; Dov Zigelman and Giora Rotman, "The Adventures of Yoske Mayor," *Haaretz Shelanu* (1972/1973); Farid Boudjellal, *Juif-Arabe*, (Toulon: Éditions du Soleil, 1990).

[15] My research about Arab-Israeli Conflict Comics is still ongoing, so it is impossible to cite definitive figures. However, out of the about 140 publications assembled about that topic to date, only a few have been published before 1993. Among them, *Tintin au Pays de l'Or Noir,* the first issues of the *Shaloman* series, some pages included in *Willem,* the first decades of the *Dry Bones*-series which started in the 1970, as well as the works cited already above (footnote 14). See Hergé, *Tintin au Pays de l'Or Noir*, Facsimilé, (Paris: Casterman, 2004); Al Wiesner, *Shaloman, the Man of Stone*, (Philadelphia: Mark 1, 1989); Willem, "Jerusalem - israel, arabes, palestine, liban, israel," *Willem,* (Paris: Futuropolis, 1987), n.p. [24-29]; Ya'akov Kirschen, *What a Country! Dry Bones Looks at Israel*, (Philadelphia, Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996).

[16] Joe Sacco, *Palestine*, (London: Random House, Jonathan Cape, 2003).

Israel and Palestine (as well as in the adjacent countries) the comic industry and culture are of lesser importance,[17] if compared to other countries; it could also be simply because of the great significance of this conflict in general. Be as it may, AIC-Comics are not only produced by authors from the countries directly involved, but also by many who are from other parts of the world. Among them one can find American,[18] Maltese-American,[19] French and Belgian,[20] Italian[21] and Korean[22] authors. Some of them have a Jewish religious and/or cultural background, others do not.[23]

Regardless of their country of production, but also regardless of the type of narration (documentary/ journalistic approach, or fiction), most AIC-Comics contain, not very surprisingly, some kind of political message either in favor of the Israelis[24] or – and this is much more frequent – in favor of the Palestinians.[25] In some of these works, also in supposedly more "objective" documentary/journalistic ones (in Sacco's books, too), I could even detect elements of propaganda to make the reader incline towards the Palestinian side.[26]

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[17] The past ten years have seen the publication of a few dozen comics in Hebrew yearly, whereas over 4000 titles have been published in France in 2012. Email interview of the A. with Eli Eshed, 23 February 2012; http://www.actuabd.com/Marche-de-la-BD-2012-les-vraies, accessed 17 March 2013. See also Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas, *Arab comic strips: politics of an emerging mass culture*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 3; Eli Eshed and Bepi Vigna, *Hebrew Comics*, (Olbia: Taphros, 2010), 5; Eli Eshed, *Hebrew Comics – A History*: http://www.internationalhero.co.uk/h/hebrewc.htm, accessed 21 May 2013); Bepi Vigna, *Fumetti del Medio Oriente Arabo*, (Olbia: Taphros, 2010).

[18] E.g. Harvey Pekar and JT Waldman, *Not the Israel my Parents Promised Me,* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012); Sarah Glidden, *How to understand Israel in 60 Days or Less*, (New York: DC Comics, Vertigo, 2010); Miriam Libiki, *Jobnik! An American Girl's Adventures in the Israeli Army*, (Coquitlam: Real Gone Girl Studios, 2008-2011); Wiesner, *Shaloman* series.

[19] Sacco, *Palestine*; Joe Sacco, *Footnotes in Gaza: A Graphic Novel*, (London: Random House, 2009); Joe Sacco, *Journalism*, (New York: Random House, 2012).

[20] See Guy Delisle, *Chroniques de Jérusalem*, (Paris: Editions Delcourt, 2011), Philippe Squarzoni, *Torture Blanche*, (Albi: Les Requins Marteaux, 2004); Roannie and Oko, *L'Intruse - Une Internationale en Palestine*, (Paris: Vertige Graphic, 2010-2012); Maximilien Le Roy, *Faire le Mur*, (Bruxelles: Casterman, 2010); Maximilien Le Roy, *Gaza Décembre 2008 - Janvier 2009 : Un pavé dans la mer*, Boite à Bulles, 2009); Soulman and Maximilien Le Roy, *Les Chemins de Traverse*, (Antony: Boite à Bulles, 2010).

[21] "Palestina Libera!" *Ganesh in movimento* (speciale), (Torino: Pari comics 2003).

[22] Kim Bo-huyn, *Naplouse*, (Paris: Casterman, 2007).

[23] To date I did not find any AIC-Comics authors from these (or other) countries with a Palestinian (or other Arab cultural background). As it does not focus on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Toufic El Rassi's work cannot be considered as an AIC-Comic. Toufic El Rassi, *Arab in America*, (San Francisco: Last Gap of San Francisco, 2007).

[24] See Yann and André Juillard, *Mezek*, (Bruxelles: Le Lombard, 2011).

[25] See Squarzoni, *Torture*; Le Roy, *Mur*.

[26] See Chantal Catherine Michel, "The Art of Persuasion and Propaganda: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in Comic Books and Graphic Novels," in *Visualizing Jewish Narrative: Essays on Jewish Comics and Graphic Novels,* ed. Derek Parker Royal (West Lafayette: Perdue University Press, forthcoming in 2013), Chantal Catherine Michel, "Bericht oder Propaganda? Dokumentarische Comics über den Nahostkonflikt," in *Reportagecomics Dokumentarische Comics*

Why there is such an uneven allocation in favor of the Palestinian side in AIC-Comics is an interesting question. One reason for it could be the political opinion of the authors.[27] But this question, as well as probably entailing a discussion on left-wing anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism,[28] merits a much deeper analysis which cannot be accomplished here, as the focus of this article is on AIC-Comics that contribute to peace-building.

This 'sub-genre' of AIC-Comics is, to date, still very small and to my knowledge, it has just as little been researched as AIC-Comics in general.[29] However, there are a number of articles that have been published in the last couple of years focusing on specific works, authors or aspects of the corpus of AIC-Comics. Two of them, for instance, analyze the usefulness of graphic novels to teach about the relations between Israelis and Palestinians; both take into account Joe Sacco's *Palestine*, one of them also Rutu Modan's *Exit Wounds*.[30] A couple of articles analyze Sacco's, as well as Guy Delisle's books, discussing the question of the journalistic and/or documentary nature of these works.[31] Still others focus on the Israeli comics market by analyzing, again, Rutu Modan's *Exit Wounds,* or comics based on Etgar Keret's novels, Ilana Zeffren's comic *Pink Story* or the interesting work by Uri Fink and Eli Eshed, the entirely fictional historiography of the comics series *The Golem* which has

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Comicbiographien, ed. Dietrich Grünewald (Bochum: Christian Bachmann Verlag, 2013), 191-208.

[27] Philippe Squarzoni, for instance, went the West Bank as part of a 'mission' to protect the Palestinian people and states that he is a member of ATTAC. Squarzoni, *Torture*, 10, panels 2 and 6.

[28] For further reading, see, among others: Jeffrey Herf, *Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism in Historical Perspective: Convergence and Divergence*, (London, New York: Routledge, 2006); Mike Marqusee, *If I Am Not For Myself: Journey of an Anti-Zionist Jew*, (New York: Verso, 2011).

[29] Work in progress: Chantal Catherine Michel, *Panels with Borders, Barriers in Panels - The Arab-Israeli Conflict in Comic Books and Graphic Novels*, publication planned for 2014).

[30] Mary Layoun, "Telling Stories in Palestine: Comix Understanding and Narratives of Palestine-Israel," in *Palestine, Israel, and the Politics of Popular Culture,* eds. Rebecca L. Stein and Ted Swedenburg (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2005), 313-337; Thomas Juneau and Mira Sucharov, "Narratives in Pencil: Using Graphic Novels to Teach Israeli-Palestinian Relationst," *International Studies Perspectives* 11/2 (2010): 172-183.

[31] Jelena Bulic, "The Travelling Cartoonist. Representing the Self and the World in Guy Delisle's Graphic Travel Narratives" *Narodna umjetnost* 49/1 (2012): 61-80; Josep Catala, "A Drawing of the World: Documentary and Comic Book," *Scan* 9/1 (2012): http://scan.net.au/scn/journal/vol9number1/Josep-Catala.html, accessed 22 March 2013; Tristram Walker, "Graphic Wounds: The Comics Journalism of Joe Sacco," *Journeys* 11/1 (2010): 69-88; Dirk Vanderbeke, "In the Art of the Beholder: Comics as Political Journalism," in *Comics as a Nexus of Cultures. Essays on the Interplay of Media, Disciplines and International Perspectives,* eds. Mark Berninger *et al.* (Jefferson, London: McFarland, 2010), 70-81; Benjamin Woo, "Reconsidering Comics Journalism: Information and Experience in Joe Sacco's Palestine," in *The Rise and Reason of Comics and Graphic Literature. Critical Essays on the Form,* eds. Joyce Goggin and Dan A Hassler-Forest (Jefferson, London: McFarland, 2010), 166-177.

never existed either.[32] Furthermore, Squarzoni's and Roannie's comics are briefly discussed in a French PhD thesis as being part of the anti-globalization movement's media repertoire.[33] In addition to this research, there are some other works that discuss the role of Jewish comics authors in the comics industry, especially in regards to the superheroes and/or Jewish topics in comics,[34] and some that focus on the history of Arab comics.[35] Yet other articles and/or books are discussing the issue of propaganda in comics in general[36] and in Arab comics in particular.[37]

The most valuable work for this article which will discuss AIC-Comics' contributions to peace-building, is, however, Ellen Yamshon's and Daniel Yamshon's article on comics being part of conflict resolution programs.[38]

In the following part of this essay, I discuss how comics can contribute to peace-building and, partly basing my analysis on Yamshon's and Yamshon's essay, I define the criteria that make comics such contributions. In the second part, I briefly talk about the existing contributions to peace-building within the AIC-Comic corpus, to finally analyze more in detail the Israeli and Palestinian comics of this body of text.

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[32] Ariel Kahn, "From Darkness into Light - Reframing Notions of Self and Other in Contemporary Israeli Graphic Narratives," in *The Jewish Graphic Novel: Critical Approaches,* eds. Samantha Baskind and Ranen Omer-Sherman (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 198-213; Alon Raab, "Ben Gurion's Golem and Jewish Lesbians - Subverting Hegemonic History in Two Israeli Graphic Novels," in *The Jewish Graphic Novel: Critical Approaches*, 214-233. Ilana Zeffren, *Sipur varod* [Pink Story], (Tel Aviv: Mapa Hotzat Sepharim, 2005), (Hebrew); Eli Eshed and Uri Fink, *Hagolem: Sipuro shel comics Israeli* [The Golem: The Story of an Israeli Comic], (Ben Shemen: Modan, 2003), (Hebrew).

[33] Benjamin Ferron, *Les répertoires médiatique des mobilisations altermondialistes* (Mexique-Chiapas, Israel/Palestine, 1994-2006). *Contribution à une analyse de la société transnationale* (Rennes: Université de Rennes 1, 2012).

[34] Samantha Baskind and Ranen Omer-Sherman, *The Jewish Graphic Novel - Critical Approaches*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010); Arie Kaplan, *From Krakow to Krypton: Jews and Comic Books*, Jewish Publication Society of America, 2008); Paul Buhle, *Jews and American Comics*, New Press, 2008).

[35] Georges Khoury, "La bande dessinée d'expression arabe de 1950 à nos jours," *Takam Tikou* (2011), http://www.takamtikou.fr/dossiers/dossier-2011-la-bande-dessinee/la-bande-dessinee-d-expression-arabe-de-1950-a-nos-jours, accessed 17 May 2013; Douglas and Malti-Douglas, *Arab Comic Strips: Politics of an Emerging Mass Culture*; Vigna, *Fumetti del Medio Oriente Arabo.*

[36] Fredrik Strömberg, *Comic Art Propaganda: A Graphic History*, (Lewes: Ilex, 2010); Duncan and Smith, *The Power of Comics: History, Form, and Culture.*

[37] Lina Ghaibeh, "La propagande dans la bande dessinée arabe: du nationalisme au religieux," *Takam Tikou* (2011), http://www.takamtikou.fr/dossiers/dossier-2011-la-bande-dessinee/la-propagande-dans-la-bande-dessinee-arabe-du-nationalisme-a, accessed 17 May 2013.

[38] Ellen Yamshon and Daniel Yamshon, "Comics Media in Conflict Resolution Programs: Are They Effective in Promoting and Sustaining Peace?," *Harvard Negotiation Law Review* 11/(2006): 421-53.

How can comics contribute to peace-building?

"Conflict is created, escalated and perpetuated when there is a lack of information" state Yamshon and Yamshon rightly.[39] Therefore "sharing facts and a diversity of viewpoints serves to de-escalate hostilities."[40] This can be done through different art forms such as theatre or film, but also through comics, as demonstrates the example of Finish non-governmental organization (NGO) 'World Comics Finland' (WCF).[41]

As emphasized by the members of the movement of *Cartooning for Peace* in regards to cartoons, comics that are meant to serve as educational tools[42] in conflict resolution should contain elements that indicate tolerance towards the antagonist, as tolerance is considered one of the keys for building peace.[43] These elements are: accepting the existence of the Other and the Other's opinion; overcoming prejudices and challenging one's own point of view. In practice, and as with propaganda, indications of a tolerant attitude can be implemented within the comics themselves, at various levels: in the plot, in the image and in the text,[44] deciding to use or not use a stigmatizing vocabulary, stereotyping images or characterizations, and a storyline which considers the narratives of both sides.

However, reading always entails interpretation which in turn depends (among many other things) on the cultural background, religious convictions and political opinions of the reader. Therefore, and again as with propaganda, the judgment of whether a comic is contributing to peace-building or not ultimately heavily depends on the individual's reception and interpretation.[45]

Nevertheless, comics are for instance used by 'Search for Common Ground' (SFCG)[46] in conflict resolution campaigns, as they are considered to be effective in this respect, even though a scientific proof of their effectiveness (as well as that of educational comics in general) remains yet to be made.[47] In Congo, for example, there is a great demand for the freely distributed, professionally drawn comics series *Mopila* which addresses societal problems like sexual violence, corruption and police brutality, or the working conditions in mines.[48]

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[39] Ibid., 25.

[40] Ibid.

[41] http://www.worldcomics.fi/, accessed 17 May 2013.

[42] "Campion, BD éducative," 140f.

[43] http://www.cartooningforpeace.org/qui-sommes-nous/, accessed 17 May 2013.

[44] Michel, "Persuasion," Michel, "Bericht."

[45] Nick Lacey, *Image and Representation - Key Concepts in Media Studies*, (Hampshire, New York: Palgrave, 1998), 175

[46] http://www.sfcg.org, accessed 17 May 2013.

[47] Yamshon and Yamshon, "Comics Media," 450-451; Campion, "BD éducative," 141.

[48] http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/drcongo/drcongo_comics.html, accessed 17 May 2013.

Whereas these SFCG comics have specifically been designed as conflict resolution tools, the AIC-Comics contributing to peace-building are not part of conflict resolution programs in Israel or Palestine. So far, WCF has only initiated one "comics training workshop for Palestinian community center activists" in Lebanon in 2005 and SFCG seems to invest more into film and TV projects than into comics.[49] The comics that exist are therefore personal works of single authors or two-person teams who did not get either any financial support from peace-building NGOs or "input from (…) conflict resolution specialists to assure that the media conveys the message simply, accurately, and in a culturally relevant manner."[50]

As I will demonstrate below, these comics nevertheless have many peace-building qualities and it would be worth using them as such tool.

Corpus of peace-building comics treating the Arab-Israeli conflict

To date, from the about 140 AIC-Comics collected and researched thus far, only the work of three 'external' authors can be, without much hesitation, assigned to this category. One is the four-volume humoristic series *Juif-Arabe* by French comics artist Farid Boudjellal.[51] The second is the poetic-philosophical *Le Ciel au-dessus de Bruxelles –Avant/Après* by Belgian author Yslaire that demonstrates that the conflict could be overcome by means of passion, sex and love.[52] Canadian Guy Deslisle's *Chroniques de Jérusalem* has, except for the use of some vocabulary,[53] also great peace-building qualities.

Whereas the above mentioned artists did not necessarily set out to contribute to peace-building with their works, French Jewish historian Maurice Rajsfus explicitly wanted to. He wrote the script of *Moussa et David*,[54] a comic intended for a juvenile readership that tells the story of two boys, one Israeli, one Palestinian of the same age, who both love football and who get to know each other during a game. The plot is clearly intended to display the similarities between the two boys, despite all of their differences. The drawings by artist Jacques Demiguel however, tell a totally different story as the representations of the Israelis and the Palestinians heavily differ from one another. While, for instance, the Star of David of the Israeli flag is drawn as a wicked monster and the Israeli soldiers as vile, brutal men with devilish monsters clung to their shoulders, representations which clearly denigrate the Israeli side, the

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[49] http://www.worldcomics.fi/index.php/workshop-list/;
http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/lebanon/;
http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/jerusalem/index.html, all accessed 17 May 2013.

[50] Yamshon and Yamshon, "Comics Media," 447.

[51] Farid Boudjellal, *Juif-Arabe*, (Toulon: Éditions du Soleil, 1990).

[52] Bernar Yslaire, *Le Ciel au-dessus de Bruxelles*, (Paris: Futuropolis, 2006-2007).

[53] Michel, "Bericht."

[54] Maurice Rajsfus and Jacques Demiguel, *Moussa et David - Deux enfants d'un même pays*, (Cachan: Tartamudo Editions, 2007).

Palestinians are depicted as a gently smiling, harmless people.[55] Maurice Rajsfus' intention to contribute to mutual understanding[56] with this comic book is thus seriously undermined by the artwork.

Regardless of this problem, the comic cannot actively contribute to peace-building in the Middle-East, as it is most probably neither read by Israeli nor Palestinian children since it has been published by a very small publishing house, only in French.[57] This is also the case for *Le Ciel au-Dessus de Bruxelles*. *Juifs Arabes* is, in regards to translations, a little better off, as has been translated into German. And Delisle's book was also translated into English and other languages.[58] The other works, however, are not available in English so far, not to speak in Hebrew and/or Arabic. Aside from "merely" analyzing the content of the comics, it is therefore equally important to consider their distribution and accessibility.

This is also the case for the Israeli and Palestinian authors, on which this article will focus. To my knowledge, there are, to date, three of the former and three of the latter whose work can be considered to have peace-building qualities: Uri Fink, the Seliktar siblings,[59] Nadji al-Ali, Khalil Abu Arafeh, and Samir Harb. As Nadji al-Ali's and Khalil Abu Arafeh's works consist almost exclusively of one panel cartoons and not of comics, they will not be considered here.[60]

Israeli contributions to peace-building

Uri Fink

Born 1963, Uri Fink is probably the best known Israeli comic book artist, both within and outside Israel, as he is the author of the very popular, still ongoing series *Zbeng!*[61] Having been very much influenced by American comic books, Fink had, already in his teenage years, designed an Israeli Superhero, *Sabraman*,

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[55] Ibid., e.g. 20, 27f, 35f; for the analysis of the comic see Michel, "Persuasion."

[56] Sandrine Issartel, Maurice Rajsfus: "le conflit israélo-palestinien en BD," *Regards* (12 July 2007), http://www.regards.fr/culture/maurice-rajsfus-le-conflit-israelo,2795, accessed 17 May 2013.

[57] No translation into Hebrew, Arabic or even English is planned yet. Interview of the A. with the editor José Jover, Cachan, 4 February 2013. See also http://tartamudobd.wordpress.com/, accessed 17 May 2013.

[58] Guy Delisle, *Cronache di Gerusalemme*, Rizzoli, Milano, 2012.

[59] Ouri Fink, *Histoires d'une Région Enragée. Avec la collaboration de Gabriel Etinzon*, (Israel: Kotz Israeli Comics, 2006); Uri Fink, *Israël-Palestine entre guerre et paix*, (Paris: Berg International éditeurs & Uri Fink, 2008); Galit Seliktar and Gilad Seliktar, *Ferme 54*, (Bussy-Saint-Georges: Çà et là, 2008).

[60] For examples of al-Ali's work, see Naji al-Ali, *A Child in Palestine*, (London: Verso, 2009); http://www.handala.org/cartoons/index.html, accessed 17 May 2013; for examples of Abu Arafeh's work, see http://www.cartooningforpeace.org/dessinateurs/khalil/, accessed 17 May 2013.

[61] Official website: http://www.interzbeng.co.il/, accessed 17 May 2013.

and invented several other, more or less apolitical comics series and heroes, before writing two comics on the Arab-Israeli conflict, *Fink!*[62] in 2002, and *Israël-Palestine entre guerre et paix* in 2008.[63] Whereas the former has also been published in a revised and colored French edition since,[64] only the latter has been printed in Hebrew.[65] Neither one has been published in Arabic.

Fink!/Histoires[66] is a compilation of humoristic short stories drawn in totally different styles that make fun of both Israeli and Palestinian hard liners. Several comics are parodies of the superhero genre, featuring either the "Fundementalists" ("They're fun! They're Mental!"), a funny trio of a Muslim, Jewish and Christian characters,[67] or "Hamas – the world's mightiest moron" versus the "Rabbi ben Death."[68] A couple of other stories ridicule the anti-disengagement movement[69] and radical Jewish settlers.[70] One makes fun of the harmony within the Arab world,[71] and yet another one of the hysterical reactions of opponents to the anti-disengagement movement who fight over the "wrong" color (orange) of a condom, as orange is the color of the anti-disengagement movement.[72]

All these different comics communicate (through humor and laughter) Fink's negative opinion about the extremists of both sides and make it clear that political extremism is, for this author, intertwined with religious extremism.

Although "[n]egative emotions are redirected and lighthearted disengagement results, if only for a moment"[73] by means of laughter, two of the stories are written in a much more serious tone. The first, *Humaus*,[74] compares the modus operandi of the IDF in regards to the searching of Palestinian houses and their demolition to that of the Nazis by quoting, style wise and through the title, Art Spiegelman's *Maus*.[75] As a Jewish family (mice) is peacefully celebrating Shabbat, an IDF-unit (bulls) demolishes the wall of the house, ransacks its interior as a suspected terror lab, threatens the family with further destruction and finally leaves as the officer realizes that the suspects were not Arab, but Jewish. The frightened family is left alone among the debris of its once cozy home. At the end, one child asks the father whether the intruders were Nazis.

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[62] Uri Fink, *Fink! Tales from the Ragin' Region*, (El Sobrante, CA: Hippy Comix, 2002).

[63] Fink, *Israël-Palestine*.

[64] Fink, *Histoires*.

[65] Uri Fink, *Haaretz Shelanu*, (Moshav Ben Shemen: Modan, 2008).

[66] As the English and French editions are different, I will refer also to the French one when needed.

[67] Fink, *Fink!*, 1f, 11f, 28f, 35f; Fink, *Histoires*, 2f, 12f, 26f.

[68] Fink, *Fink!*, 21ff.

[69] Ouri Fink, "Le Corps du Sujet," *Histoires*, 42-45; Ouri Fink, "No title (Les Zombies gauchistes)," *Histoires*, 38-39; Ouri Fink, "The O.C.," *Histoires*, 47.

[70] Uri Fink, "Battya and Sharonica," *Fink!*, 3-7.

[71] Ouri Fink, "I-SLAM," *Histoires,* 19-20.

[72] Ouri Fink, "Préservatif conservative," *Histoires*, 30-33.

[73] Yamshon and Yamshon, "Comics Media," 425.

[74] Uri Fink, "Humaus," *Fink*, 8-10.

[75] Spiegelman, *Maus I & II*.

The father framed in a close up in the last panel of the story answers "That's Bull." [76]
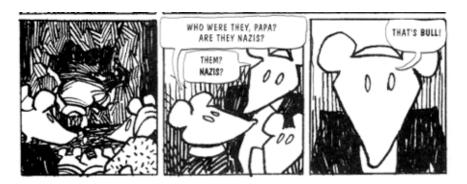

Figure 1: Uri Fink: "Humaus in: *Fink! Tales from the Ragin' Region*, (El Sobrante, CA: Hippy Comix, 2002), 10. Copyright Uri Fink. Used with permission.

The reader thus has to cope with the father's hopeless gaze while this comparison has time to sink in, even if it is a little attenuated by the use of this pun.

The second, "Lonesome Dove," is an autobiographical work, featuring Fink the main character and as cynical allusion to the symbol of peace in the guise of an anthropomorphic and portly dove, who reflects about the conflict while sitting at his desk and inking his drawings.[77] As a diversion, the Fink-dove turns on the radio and is confronted immediately with the breaking news of a terror attack.[78] Fink then depicts his inner conflict concerning the external, Arab-Israeli, conflict: although Fink supports the Palestinian cause, he cannot but condemn Palestinian terrorist attacks.

This depiction of Fink's inner turmoil is also the subject of *Israël-Palestine,* an autobiographic graphic novel, featuring himself (this time as a human) and his family. In it, he recounts several personal memories from different periods of his life. At times, these memories are intercut with funny double-pages, explaining Israel "for dummies."[79] In the memories-chapters Fink is, again, very self-critical. For example, he is narrating a childhood episode in which he naively used the Hebrew derogatory term for Arabs, "Arabouchim." He did not question the term at the time, as it was "said by all kids."[80] In other chapters Fink explains that during his time in the army he tended to see the Arab-Israeli conflict in black and white, the Palestinians being the "good guys" and the Israelis the "villains"[81] but that since being a father, especially during and after the second Intifada, he started to see things as being a bit more

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[76] Fink, "Humaus," 10.
[77] Uri Fink, "Lonesome Dove," *Fink!*, 19-23.
[78] He refers to a suicide bombing which took place at Petah Tikva on 27 May 2002.
[79] Fink, *Israël-Palestine*, n.p. [32f, 40f, 58f].
[80] Ibid., [36] (my translation).
[81] Ibid., [28].

nuanced, condemning terrorism on both sides. The chapters "Panna Cotta" and "Les Fink Combattent le Terrorisme" are particularly powerful as while the latter depicts the Fink-family but also the Palestinians literally as targets,[82] the former takes up Israel's national trauma, the Rabin assassination, and makes tangible the total despair of the leftwing Israelis as to the upcoming end of the peace-making process.[83]

Figure 2: Uri Fink, *Israël-Palestine entre guerre et paix*, (Paris: Berg International éditeurs & Uri Fink, 2008), n.p., Copyright Uri Fink. Used with permission.

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[82] Ibid., [62, 74].
[83] Ibid., [42ff, 74].

Just like in *Fink!/Histoires,* Fink thus draws in *Israël-Palestine* a nuanced, at times self-ironic picture of himself as a leftist comics author who is supporting the Palestinian cause, but who condemns the extremists. Both books contain therefore a peace-building message.

However, even though Fink is the most prominent Israeli comics author and that the two discussed comics are inscribed both into the tradition of Jewish humor and Israeli sarcasm,[84] their messages seem to remain not to have been received by most of the Israelis and Palestinians, as only one of them has been published in Hebrew and neither in Arabic. Moreover, as there does not exist an English translation of *Israël-Palestine* (according to Uri Fink, no editing house is interested in publishing this work),[85] the readership of these two comics is reduced to a very small audience, which really has to be interested in that kind of comics, as they are neither advertised nor easy to find.

Galit and Gilad Seliktar
Fortunately, this is not the case of *Farm 54*, which has been published in Hebrew and English and other languages after its first publication in French in 2008.[86] It is the first comic book which Gilad Seliktar (born 1977) made together with his older sister Galit. As with Fink's work, it is (partly) autobiographical;[87] the artwork however, and especially the elliptical yet atmospherically very dense narration, make it totally different. Also, the references to the Arab-Israeli-conflict are not as homogenous and direct as in Fink's works; they are much subtler and heterogeneous, increasing from chapter to chapter. This is surely due to the fact that the book is a literary adaptation of three short stories by Galit Seliktar,[88] but it is also due to the structure of the book, which recounts, in chronological order, episodes in the life of an Israeli girl/young woman named Noga, who becomes increasingly aware of the conflict as she grows older. The first two episodes, an untitled one and "The Substitute Lifeguard," do not contain any noticeable allusion to Israel, despite the character's names. The second, "Spanish Perfume 1983," contains several small hints of the Arab-Israeli conflict through allusions to the First Lebanon War.[89] One should also mention that in this chapter the Arab-

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[84] See, for example, Esther Fuchs, "Is There Humor in Israeli Literature and If Not, Why Are We Laughing?," in *Jewish Wry - Essays on Jewish Humor,* ed. Sarah Blacher Cohen (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 216-33 as well as the other essays of the same book, Ofra Nevo and Jacob Levine, "Jewish Humor Strikes Again: The Outburst of Humor in Israel during the Gulf War" *Western Folklore* 53/2 (1994): 125-45.

[85] Private email correspondence of the A. with Uri Fink from 6 September 2012.

[86] The analysis is based on the English edition: Galit Seliktar and Gilad Seliktar, *Farm 54,* (Rasquera: Fanfare, Ponent Mon Ltd., 2011). See also Italian: *Fattoria 54,* (Bologna: Comma 22, 2009).

[87] Galit Seliktar and Gilad Seliktar, "Behind Farm 54," *Farm 54,* n.p. [127-135], [127f].

[88] Seliktar and Seliktar, "Behind," [127].

[89] Seliktar and Seliktar, *Farm 54*, n.p. [48, 57].

Israeli-conflict as a whole is still of marginal importance to the teenage Noga and her friends. In the last chapter instead, "Houses 1989," which, according to Galit Seliktar, is the most autobiographical of the three,[90] Noga's understanding of the conflict changes dramatically as she becomes sensitive to the attitudes of Israelis (civilians and military alike) towards the Palestinians.

In the first section of this chapter, the young woman is working in an egg-farm together with employees from Gaza, who are constantly scolded by the female forewoman, Tamara. That supervisor does not appreciate that Noga is talking to As'ad, a good looking Gazan.[91] Later when Noga leaves the farm because of her military service, Tamara bids her farewell with a remark that is heavy with meaning in this context: "You'll take good care of As'ad's mates, ah?"[92] As'ad, on the other hand, shows his affection to the Israeli girl by offering her (for her time in the army) an audio cassette with music by Umm Kulthum, Egypt's most famous singer and national symbol.[93]

Figure 3: Galit and Gilad Seliktar, Farm 54, (Rasquera: Fanfare, Ponent Mon Ltd., 2011), n.p. Copyright Galit and Gilad Seliktar. Used with permission.

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[90] Seliktar and Seliktar, "Behind," [133].
[91] Seliktar and Seliktar, *Farm 54*, [84].
[92] Ibid., [87].
[93] Ibid., [93].

Kulthum's name is written in Arabic on the tape. This information, however, is not revealed to every reader because an explanation on the bottom of the page, which can be found elsewhere in the comic in regards to Jewish holidays for example, is missing.[94] (In addition to that, music tapes are nowadays on the way of becoming a technical relic and have to be identified as such by the reader.)

Noga's mother doesn't seem to be happy about her daughter's contacts with a Palestinian man, either. This is made tangible by means of a series of textless panels, depicting the woman silently chain smoking in the car with Noga at her side after she has witnessed As'ad giving her daughter the tape. The final panel of this wordless, atmospherically very dense sequence depicts the car driving through the rain with cigarette smoke escaping through Noga's window.[95] Her mother's wordless chain smoking (which clearly bothers Noga judging by the look on her face) thus becomes an allegory of her different points of view in regards to the Palestinians and the Arab-Israeli-Conflict.

Figure 4: Galit and Gilad Seliktar, Farm 54, (Rasquera: Fanfare, Ponent Mon Ltd., 2011), n.p. Copyright Galit and Gilad Seliktar. Used with permission.

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[94] Ibid., [e.g. 31].
[95] Ibid., [95].

The second half of the chapter illustrates Noga's military service in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt). On her first night during which she was listening to Umm Kulthum, she has to replace a female soldier to be present at a compulsory evacuation of a Palestinian house. The narration of the operation is very troubling, as it reveals the rather carefree attitude of the soldiers: non-commissioned officer Efrath is only concerned with her own attractiveness and the predominantly male soldiers regard the nightly operation as a game. In the beginning of this sequence, Noga is still visible in the panels. Then, the perspective changes abruptly to her point of view as a soldier asks her if she can see the village. All the following panels depict Noga's point of view, as she is witnessing the evacuation and as she is observing Efrath, who doesn't seem to care about the evacuation at all. The sub-officer sits through it, holding a little rabbit on her lap. At dawn, the evacuation is complete and the combat engineers start mining the house. Meanwhile, Noga observes a "plump pigeon" – a sarcastic symbol of peace in this context - on the roof of the vacant house.[96] The dove flies away together with other birds and the story ends, after a sketchy drawing of the house beneath a bleak sky, followed by a panel left totally blank, thus anticipating the upcoming explosion that will leave a blank spot where the houses once stood.

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[96] Ibid., [121].

Figure 5: Galit and Gilad Seliktar, Farm 54, (Rasquera: Fanfare, Ponent Mon Ltd., 2011), n.p. Copyright Galit and Gilad Seliktar. Used with permission.

The mise-en-scène of changing perspectives is remarkable, since it underlines the heroine's mental detachment from mainstream Israeli thinking: she is obliged to be present at the expulsion and demolition of the houses but doesn't approve of it. Even if Galit Seliktar thinks retrospectively that Noga's (i.e. her own) "decision to obey such orders with little protest is almost as

harmful as keen participation,"[97] the graphic novel nevertheless promotes very effectively the questioning of Israeli politics and an understanding for the Palestinians. The peace-building message is furthermore enhanced by the fact that the Palestinians are depicted in the same way as the Israelis. This omission of stigmatizing and/or stereotyping brilliantly communicates that Israelis and Palestinians are equal. In addition, the music tape, even if the reader could not identify it as an Umm Kulthum cassette, symbolizes Arabic music; an acknowledgement of the Arabic contributions to humanity's culture and the arts.

Palestinian contributions to peace-building

Samir Harb
While on the Israeli side contributions to peace-building within the corpus of AIC-comics are still scarce, they seem to be even scarcer on the Palestinian side. Initially, this scarcity was possibly due to cultural and religious constraints, but today, it is probably due to the restricted possibilities for studying graphic art in the oPt and also due to distribution difficulties which make it virtually impossible, even for talented artists, to make a living from their art. One solution for the Palestinian artists is, therefore, to become a newspaper cartoonist (as was Nadji al-Ali)[98] or to be a comics artist only as an amateur. Samir Harb is (still) the latter and works for a living as an architect.[99] As drawing is his passion and he is convinced that comics is a useful means for political and social criticism, Harb, born in 1981, co-founded the (now stopped)[100] comics magazine *Oba'den* with a couple of friends. They managed to publish two issues at a rate of 50.000 copies each which they distributed for free in the Gaza strip and the West Bank (10.000 and 40.000 copies respectively).[101] Furthermore, he uses the internet as a channel for the distribution of his work by means of his personal weblog CoPYLeft and other websites,[102] which makes it - in theory - accessible not only for Palestinians, but also for an Israeli readership.

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[97] Seliktar and Seliktar, "Behind," [127-135], [133].
[98] Arjan El Fassed, "Naji al-Ali: The timeless conscience of Palestine," *Electronic Intifada*, 22 July 2004, http://electronicintifada.net/content/naji-al-ali-timeless-conscience-palestine/5166, accessed 17 May 2013.
[99] "Visual Intifada: Mostra Dello Storico Disegnatore Palestinese Naji Al Ali," Associazione Culturale Mirada, 16 January 2009, https://associazionemirada.wordpress.com/2009/01/16/visual-intifada-mostra-dello-storico-disegnatore-palestinese-naji-al-ali/, accessed 17 May 2013.
[100] Telephone interview of the A. with Samir Harb, 20 February 2013.
[101] Ibid.
[102] www.c-left.blogspot.de; http://www.decolonizing.ps/site/battir-2/; both accessed 17 May 2013; www.graphicjournalism.org/middleeast/samir-harb-la-palestina-in-nuvole/, this blog entry, last accessed 20 August 2012, is no longer active.

The work itself consists of short stories in Arabic and English that are mostly drawn in black ink with scattered red colorizations. All stories focus on the daily problems and struggles of the normal Palestinian people. However, their main objective seems not to criticize Israel, but to criticize internal Palestinian problems, mainly the political division of the Palestinians into Hamas-ruled Gaza and Fatah-ruled West Bank. The comic *Oba'den* No. 2[103] for instance, starts with two Palestinians talking in a café about the division of the Palestinian government. Behind them one can read on a blackboard a public invitation for national reunion. Against the background of the 2008 ceasefire between 'Hamas' and Israel, the man on the right is smiling confidently, expressing his hope of a political reunion of Palestine and the end of the occupation thereafter. All of a sudden, he is severely wounded at his head by a bullet. He then is transported in an ambulance which has to pass a checkpoint to access the hospital. But at the checkpoint the man dies as Israeli soldiers do not allow the ambulance to pass because the crossing permit is missing.

The following pages display the discussion about the death by representatives of 'Hamas' and 'Fatah' and of ordinary Palestinian citizens. Whereas a representative of the 'Fatah' (distantly resembling Mahmoud Abbas without glasses) expresses his confidence in an upcoming solution for the checkpoint-crossing of ambulances, a representative of 'Hamas' (who resembles Mahmud al-Zahar) does not comment on the crossing problem of the checkpoints itself; instead he reminds the people to avoid cafés, as they are too dangerous.[104] The ordinary Palestinians, on the other hand, gossip and speculate about the reasons for the shooting: some think that the victim might have been a spy, others spread the rumors that he must have had problems with his wife, or debts.[105] At the end, the man who has witnessed the shooting of the victim, hastens home to lock out all this gossiping and weeps bitterly in his woman's lap, wishing only to sleep and dream.[106]

Of course, the problem of checkpoints is the subtext of the story, but Harb does not openly judge or condemn their existence; he rather criticizes the bureaucratic and arbitrary regulations of the crossing. His main focus however, is to display and condemn the attitude of the common people who prefer to rack their brains about possible personal reasons for the shooting instead of possible political ones, who avoid discussing the problematic issue of the checkpoints, and who are, in general, not willing (or able to) act in concert and fight for a political reunion of the two Palestines.

This equally critical view of the Israeli and Palestinian politics is furthermore underlined by the drawings, as Harb, just as Seliktar or Fink, does not stigmatize the Israeli characters by means of stereotyping, but treats them just the same as the Palestinian characters. He does not depict the IDF soldier in

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[103] Samir Harb, *Oba'den* [What Next?], 2 (2008), Leaflet-publication in Gaza and West-Bank, (Arabic).
[104] Harb, *Oba'den,* 3, panels 1 and 2, (Arabic).
[105] Ibid., 3-4.
[106] Ibid., 4.

the third panel of the second page with nice features (but makes him, on the contrary, a little plump and dumb looking). However, neither the victim nor the other characters of the story (e.g. one is spitting in his excitement of being able to chitchat[107] - are drawn as handsome.

Figure 6: Samir Harb, *Oba'den* [What Next?], 2 (2008), 3. Copyright Samir Harb. Used with permission.

In another one of his short works, *From the Diaspora to the Diaspora*,[108] a non paginated webcomic published as a continuous, vertical strip, the focus is not on the 'Hamas'-'Fatah' power play, but on the complicated issue of construction in the West Bank since its division into Areas A, B and C after the Oslo II accords: a Palestinian couple from the U.S. wants to build a house for their children in Battir, their native village. As there is no other terrain left, they have to accept a construction site on the border to Area C (which is under Israeli security and civil control). The architect places the house in Area B but its balcony protrudes onto Area C. He thinks that this will remain unnoticed by the administration, but is mistaken. The story of the house is made public on television by 'Regavim,'[109] a "peculiar [Israeli] human rights association"[110] which proclaims that the house has been entirely built on Area C and demands that it is demolished.[111] While the world collapses for the owner, who is

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[107] Ibid., 3, panel 4.
[108] Samir Harb, *"From the Diaspora to the Diaspora," Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency.* http://www.decolonizing.ps/site/battir-2/, accessed 17 May 2013.
[109] http://www.regavim.org.il, accessed 17 May 2013.
[110] Nicola Perugini, "'The Frontier is where the Jews Live': A Case of Israeli 'Democratic Colonialism'" *Journal of Law and Social Research* 1/1 (2009-2010): 73-90, 84.
[111] Harb, *Diaspora,* panel 12 ff.

informed by phone about the threatened demolition,[112] the construction supervisor meets with members of the Palestinian authorities to discuss the issue. There, he learns of a fundamental problem: everybody uses different maps, and for "the PLO, the issue of Area A-B-C expired after five years from the signature of the Accords," as they considered the Oslo II accords only to be interim.[113] The webcomic – which is based on a true story[114] - ends with a series of panels showing maps of different scale of the concerned area, thus leaving the end of the story open. This end of the narration is quite realistic; indeed, the issue of this house is still unfinished too, still in "a procedural phase at the Supreme Court."[115] Instead of anticipating the Israeli jurisprudence by illustrating the demolition of the house which could provoke strong anti-Israeli feelings in the reader, Harb chose to end the narration by making a philosophical statement, pointing out that while on the maps the thickness of the (border) line always remains unchanged, it certainly does change in reality.

Figure 7: Samir Harb, *"From the Diaspora to the Diaspora," Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency,* n.p. Copyright Samir Harb. Used with permission.

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[112] Harb, *Diaspora,* panel 16-19.

[113] Harb, *Diaspora,* panel 20.

[114] Perugini, "The Frontier," especially 81ff.

[115] Ibid., 87.

In that way, the comic does not openly condemn the Oslo II accords' division of the territory of the West Bank, but also criticizes the organization 'Regavim' that systematically conducts field surveys to document and record any possible Palestinian trespass into the territory under Israeli control, filing petitions for demolishing Palestinian houses on that land.[116] The comic can also be read as a critique of the Palestinian Authorities: they are represented as unable to provide themselves with valid maps and thus help the Palestinian population to deal with their heavy construction struggles.

Silent Night, another example of Harb's works, has a very metaphysical and religious tone and is therefore entirely different from his other comics.[117] It narrates the story of a light coming down to the city, right onto Ramallah's center junction, Al-Manara square. The light connects with the center pillar of the monument which is surrounded by four lions, and in its midst appears a fifth lion. This fifth lion, either referring to the former monument which consisted of five lions, or symbolizing "pride and power" as do the other four,[118] then talks to numerous faceless Palestinians, asking them to release their dreams so that he, the lion, can take them up to "a higher place, a place with hope."[119] On the second page, Harb quotes "no one dreams for another" the first line of a poem by Palestinian national poet Mahmoud Darwish,[120] who was very critical of the Israeli occupation, and of the Palestinian Authority's leadership too. What follows is an enumeration of these dreams: dreams of a place that is "secure," "better" and "warm," of "peace," "freedom," "love," "hope," "harmony," "unity," "safety"; dreams in other words, that are not specifically Palestinian, but universal

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[116] Perugini, "The Frontier," 84ff.

[117] CoPYLefT (Samir Harb), *Silent Night*, weblog http://c-left.blogspot.de; http://www.c-left.blogspot.de/search/label/SILENT%20NIGHT, both accessed 17 May 2013.

[118] Adania Shibli, "Al-Manara Square: Monumental Architecture and Power" *Jerusalem Quarterly* 26 (2006): 52-64, 58.

[119] Harb, *Silent Night*, 1.

[120] The poem is part of a letter Darwish wrote on Jan 27 1987 to Samieh Al-Qassim. English version: http://www.pecdar.ps/etemplate.php?id=192, accessed 17 May 2013.
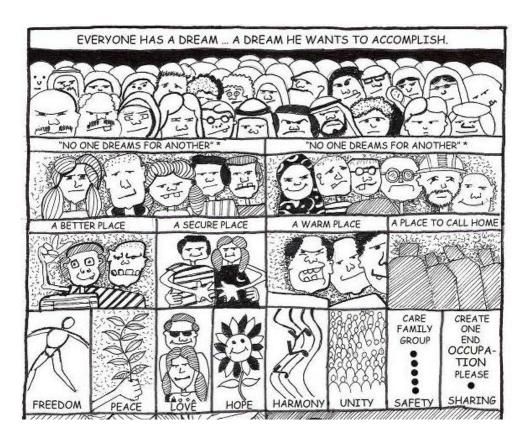
Figure 8: CoPYLefT (Samir Harb), *Silent Night,* 2. Copyright Samir Harb. Used with permission

Only the dreams of the "end [of] occupation" as well as that of "a place to call home" directly refer to the Arab-Israeli conflict. A dream like the destruction of Israel, on the other hand, is not mentioned in the comic. The choice not to include this dream, and of not raising topics such as the lack of security (which can be read as a critique of the Palestinian government), and the quote by Darwish, clearly make this comic a contribution to peace-building.

A last very interesting example of Harb's work is *Digging for Gold*, that criticizes the work of NGOs in Palestine.[121] It is the story of a Palestinian man who wants to kill his numerous children by burying them alive as he doesn't have any work and no money to feed and dress them. When he starts shoveling earth upon them, he is handed a cola bottle down from a military helicopter and is instructed to rub it, at this will help him resolving his problems. The man is very confused but decides to give it a try. To his great surprise, a jinn suddenly emerges from the bottle that strongly resembles Uncle Sam of the

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[121] CoPYLefT (Samir Harb), *Digging for Gold*, weblog http://c-left.blogspot.de; http://www.c-left.blogspot.de/search/label/DIGGING%20FOR%20GOLD, accessed 17 May 2013.

well known army recruitment poster by James Montgomery Flagg, but which makes one think of Moshe Dayan as well, as he is wearing an eye patch across his left eye.[122] However, the jinni is not helping. Instead, he asks the man to look at the situation at a different angle and to grab the opportunities that lie within the NGOs: "imagine… cars… money… N.G.O. … Castle… Leadership… Bank Accounts…"[123]

Figure 9: CoPYLefT (Samir Harb), *Digging for Gold,* 4. Copyright Samir Harb. Used with permission.

But the man resists this temptation, stuffs the jinni back into his bottle and kicks it away, saying that for the Palestinians, "it is time to find their own path" and that he refuses "all form of colonization."[124] Encouraged by his own

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[122] Harb, *Digging*, 3.
[123] Ibid., 4.
[124] Ibid., 6.

strength, he then unburies his children and leads them home, determined to find a way for a better future.

Indeed, the problems of peace-building Palestinian NGOs in particular, but also NGOs in general, described in some literature as "self-righteous at best, elitist at worst"[125] have been already critically analyzed by Benoît Challand and other researchers.[126] However, such a critique of the work and the functioning of Palestinian NGOs is unique in the comics that contribute to peace-building within the corpus of AIC-Comics and among AIC-Comics in general.[127] In this comic, again, Harb thus does not openly criticize Israel but chooses to bring up a painful subject of the power play, corruption and other problems inherent of Palestinian society.

Conclusion

It's not for nothing that the proverb says: 'one picture is worth a thousand words.' Indeed, as the examples that I discussed in this paper show, the works and images of some Israeli and Palestinian comics authors possess an inherent power to transmit peace-building messages. This is because, among other things, drawn images are generally perceived to be less 'realistic,' and can therefore appear to be less direct, offensive and/or hurtful than the cinematic/photographic images. Drawn images also help the (adult) reader to become aware of the creative process of their making. This fact could help to accept and 'digest' the information as more personal, and therefore as more trustworthy.[128] Moreover, comics trigger imagination, as "the action between the panels must be filled by the reader."[129] Learning appears to be more effective when imagination is used.[130]

Comics contain a great potential which has already been acknowledged by different governments and/or institutions and by schools, where comics are used as educational and conflict resolution/peace-building tools.[131]

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[125] Fred Halliday, "The romance of non-state Actors," in *Non-state Actors in World Politics,* eds. Daphné Josselin and William Wallace (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 21-37, 29.

[126] See, among others: Caroline Abu-Sada and Benoît Challand, *Le développement, une affaire d'ONG?: Associations, Etats et bailleurs dans le monde arabe,* (Paris: Editions Karthala, 2012); Benoît Challand, *Palestinian Civil Society: Foreign Donors and the Power to Promote and Exclude,* (Oxon, New York: Routledge, 2009); Helen V. Milner and Andrew Moravcsik, *Power, Interdependence, and Nonstate Actors in World Politics,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Sari Hanafi and Linda Tabar, *The Emergence of a Palestinian Globalized Elite: Donors, International Organizations, and Local NGOs,* (Ramallah: Institute of Jerusalem Studies, 2005). On some of the shortcomings of the so called 'peace-industry' see the essay by Giulia Daniele, pp. 1-21.

[127] It needs to be researched if such a critique is made in comics regarding NGOs operating in other regions.

[128] Yamshon and Yamshon, "Comics Media," 448.

[129] Ibid., 440, 449-50.

[130] Ibid., 449.

[131] Ibid., 451; Campion, "BD éducative2," 139; http://www.cartooningforpeace.org; http://www.worldcomics.fi, accessed 17 May 2013.

However, why has this not been the case in Israel or Palestine? Here are some suggestions, which appear to be intertwined.

First, up to the present day, there is neither a significant comics' culture nor a large comics' market in Israel and Palestine; in order to survive, authors have to create groups such as 'Actus Tragicus' which tries to sell their work outside Israel or draw for newspapers and magazines.[132] The profession of comics' author and the production of comics are henceforth neither an easy task, nor a fruitful business in this region of the world. Second, possibly because the comics' culture is so small both in Palestine and Israel, comics with peace-building features are not financially and/or ideologically supported by external institutions. Third, this lack of financial support for peace-building comics is maybe also due to the lack of academic research that addresses the question of the efficiency and educational potential of comics. It has yet to be scientifically proven that comics can have a significant positive and lasting educational effect on their readers.[133]

Finally, as stated in the introduction, most AIC-comics are either pro-Palestinian or pro-Israeli. As they do not offer a balanced view of the conflict and tend to neglect the other side, they contribute to an entrenchment of the conflict rather than to peace-building. Apparently, neither the great majority of the authors living inside Israel/Palestine, nor the ones living geographically (and culturally) outside of this conflict-area, seem to be willing to produce comics that could contribute to peace-building or are capable of it. As it is, AIC-comics are unfortunately mostly used as a 'cultural weapon' against the other side.[134]

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http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/drcongo/drcongo_comics.html, accessed 17 May 2013; Foroohar, "Comic Relief."

[132] Email interview of the A. with Uri Fink, 6 September 2012; telephone interview of the A. with Samir Harb, 20 February 2013.

[133] Yamshon and Yamshon, "Comics Media," 451; Campion, "BD éducative," 139.

[134] Joseph Massad, "The Weapon of Culture: Cinema in the Palestinian Liberation Struggle," in *Dreams of a Nation,* ed. Hamid Dabashi (London, New York: Verso, 2006), 32-44.

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Palestinians and Israelis Collaborate in Addressing the Historical Narratives of their Conflict

by *Rafi Nets-Zehngut*

Abstract

Since the summer of 2000, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been going through rough times on both the political and military levels. This generally applies as well to societal collaboration between the parties. Despite this multi-level gloomy state of affairs, one type of societal collaboration flourishes: addressing the historical narratives of the conflict. Since the early 2000s, nine such projects have been conducted by Palestinians and Israeli-Jews: PRIME, 'Shared Histories,' 'Circles of Knowledge,' 'Zochrot,' 'History's Double Helix,' 'Shared Narratives,' 'Van Leer,' 'IHJR,' and 'Gabay-Kazak.' This article assembles for the first time these projects and discusses them methodologically using: 1) interviews conducted with the directors of most of the projects, 2) other studies, and 3) primary sources (the projects' publications). It describes the projects, highlights the importance of presenting them to the societies of both parties, and discusses their characteristics as bottom-up projects. It also explains the conservative orientation of official institutions, leading to a lack of similar top-down projects; the differences between contemporary and past aspects of the conflict; and the uniqueness and special contribution of such pre-resolution activity. Moreover, the article explains the prevalence of this activity since the early 2000s, lists the positive effects of the projects on the involved parties, and explains how the fact that they were conducted by the rival parties contributed to their success.

- **Introduction**
- **Literature review – Historical narratives of conflicts**
- **The Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict and its memory**
- **Methodology**
- **Addressing the historical narratives of the conflict**
- **Summary and discussion**

    A. *Top-down and bottom-up activities. Contemporary and past aspects*
    B. *Pre-resolution projects*
    C. *Reasons for pre-2000s lack of projects and their abundance thereafter*
    D. *The projects' positive impacts*
    E. *Local conduct of the projects*

- **Conclusion**

Introduction

Since the summer of 2000, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been going through rough times. The second Palestinian uprising (Intifada) erupted, the peace process collapsed, and intense violence has been practiced by both parties at various times.[1] This dire state of affairs has not been limited to the political and military levels alone, but also largely includes the societal level. Until the summer of 2000, widespread collaboration had been taking place between the parties in the cultural, educational, economic, tourism and peace-promotion spheres. Since that time, however, this activity has sharply declined.[2] Despite this multi-level gloomy state of affairs, one type of societal collaboration between the rivals is currently being practiced, and in fact flourishes: addressing the historical narratives of the conflict. Since the early 2000s, nine such projects have been conducted by Palestinians and Israeli-Jews and have had various positive impacts on both. The current article reviews all of these projects while discussing particular aspects of them.

Literature review – Historical narratives of conflicts

Collective memory is generally defined as representations of the history of a group that are adopted as the true representations of the past. These representations are assembled in coherent and meaningful ways in narratives.[3] Collective memory and historical narratives in general, and those of conflicts in particular, have recently gained salience in academic, public and diplomatic spheres.[4] Narratives of conflicts describe their major events,[5] typically not accurately. They are selective and biased, and provide simplistic black-and-white views of the conflicts, in ways that support the interests of the parties holding the particular narratives. These narratives usually touch on at least four main themes: de-legitimization of the rival, positive image of the in-group,

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[1] Mitchell Bard, *Myths and Facts: A Guide to the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, (Chevy Chase, MD: AICE,

[2] Mordechai Bar-On, *In Pursuit of Peace – A History of the Israeli Peace Movement*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996); Naomi Chazan, "Peace Action and Conflict Resolution: An Israeli-Palestinian Exploration," in *Arab-Jewish Relations: From Conflict to Resolution*, eds. Eli Podeh, Asher Kaufman and Moshe Maoz, (Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2006), 283-317; Tamar Hermann, *The Israeli Peace Movement: A Shattered Dream* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[3] Wolf Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies" *History and Theory* 41 (2002): 179-97.

[4] Jeffrey Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, "Introduction" to *The Collective Memory Reader*, eds. Jeffrey Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3-61; Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwartz, "Introduction: Mapping Memory," in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates,* eds. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwartz, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 1-13.

[5] For a discussion of major events in conflicts and the impact of their characteristics on their memory, see Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "Major Events and the Collective Memory of Conflicts" *International Journal of Conflict Management* (in press, 2013).

presentation of the in-group as the sole or main victim, and justification of the conflict's outbreak (when the in-group initiated the conflict).[6] As such, these narratives play two important roles in the conflict. The first is an internal role. When an in-group adopts such narratives, they then become part of its members' popular memory. The narratives then influence the in-group's psychological reactions (e.g., emotions, perceptions and motivations) and consequently their behavioral reactions - negatively towards the rival and positively towards themselves. Thus, the narratives promote a hostile approach towards the rival and the mobilization of these members to be patriotic and to contribute their share to the struggle.[7] The second role of these narratives is an external one - they present the in-group positively to the international community, promoting its support of the in-group.[8]

Adoption of such typical historical narratives of conflict by the collective memory of countries is often perceived as functional during the conflict's climax, due to the internal and external effects described above. However, such narratives also eventually inhibit peaceful resolution of the conflict and the parties' reconciliation. Internally, the in-group members are discouraged from signing a peace agreement with a rival that is perceived so negatively and as so untrustworthy. Externally, the rival is discouraged from negotiating with an in-group whose narratives are so biased against it. Thus, the more a party's narratives can be transformed into less biased ones – as long as there is factual basis for such a transformation, and usually there is – the more the party's psychological and behavioral reactions can accommodate peace and reconciliation. The rival then can be viewed in a more legitimized, humanized and differentiated manner. From the rival's point of view, observing such positive transformation within the in-group will encourage them to take part in peace and reconciliation processes.[9] Such transformation, however, is difficult to achieve, partly because conflicts typically cause collective traumas to the involved parties.[10]

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[6] Daniel Bar-Tal, "Socio-psychological Foundations of Intractable Conflicts" *American Behavioral Scientist* 50 (2007): 1430-53.

[7] Dario Paez and James Liu, "Collective Memory of Conflicts," in *Intergroup Conflicts and their Resolution – A Social Psychological Perspective,* ed. Daniel Bar-Tal, (New York: Psychology Press, 2011), 105-124; Barbara Tint, "History, Memory and Intractable Conflict" *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 27 (2010): 239-56.

[8] Eric Langenbacher, "Collective Memory as a Factor in Political Culture and International Relations," in *Power and the Past – Collective Memory and International Relations*, eds. Eric Langenbacher and Yossi Shain, (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 13-49; Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "Internal and External Collective Memories – Israel and the 1948 Palestinian Exodus" *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 6/1 (2012): 126-40.

[9] Yeudith Auerbach, "National Narratives in a Conflict of Identity," in *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,* ed. Ya'acov Bar-Siman-Tov, (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2010), 99-133; Bar-Tal, "Socio-psychological Foundations."

[10] With regard to collective traumas and their healing, see, for example: regarding various countries in Europe – Conny Mithander, John Sundholm and Maria Holmgren Troy, *Collective Traumas: Memories of War and Conflict in Twentieth-Century Europe*, (Brussels, Bern, Berlin,

Positive transformation of historical narratives of conflicts can be a unilateral act of a party to a conflict, or a collaborative endeavor, conducted by both parties. The current article focuses on the latter type of activity, as it has been conducted by Israeli-Jews, Israeli-Palestinians and Territories-Palestinians[11] in relation to the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict and its memory

The roots of this conflict lay in the late nineteenth century, when Jewish Zionist pioneers settled in Palestine/*Eretz Israel* (Hebrew for "the Land of Israel.") Beginning in the early twentieth century, acts of violence were carried out by the local Palestinians against the Jews and the relations between the two peoples gradually deteriorated. In late 1947, the Palestinians, backed by several Arab nations, initiated a war against the Jews and later Israel. Israel won the war, resulting in some 650,000 Palestinians becoming refugees (the '1948 Palestinian Exodus.') Over the years, Israel and the Arab countries fought several additional wars: in 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982 and 2006, although in 1979 a peace agreement was signed with Egypt. In 1987, Palestinians from the Territories initiated the first Intifada, leading to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process in the 1990s, which, as noted above, collapsed, leading to the eruption of the second Intifada. The Israelis, however, signed a peace agreement with the Jordanians in 1994. In 2005, Israel withdrew from Gaza Strip and passed it to the Palestinians.[12]

For the Israeli-Jews and the Palestinians, their conflict is the primary issue in relation to their existence, ideology, and identity. Until the late 1970s, both parties largely addressed the history of the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict similarly.[13] They held typical narratives of conflicts as described above, significantly biased and distorted, each party presenting itself positively and its rival negatively. Specifically, the dominant master narrative of the *Israeli-Jews* was the Zionist[14] one, blaming the Arabs/Palestinians for the outbreak of the

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Frankfurt am Main, New York, Oxford and Vienna: Peter Lang, 2007); regarding the Palestinians living in Israel – Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "The Collective Self-Healing Process in Intractable Conflicts – The Israeli-Palestinians' Case" *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 30/2 (2012): 243-267; and in general, with examples about the Holocaust, and conflicts in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe – Ervin Staub, *Overcoming Evil: Genocide, Violent Conflict and Terrorism*, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[11] Those from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank (hereafter oPt, occupied Palestinian territories). The term 'Palestinians' refers to those from Israel *and* the oPt. A minority of the participants were Jews living outside of Israel.

[12] Dov Waxman and Ilan Peleg, *Israel's Palestinians: The Conflict Within*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Ian Bickerton and Carla Klausner, *History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, (Kansas City: University of Missouri Press, 2009); Tessler, *A History*.

[13] Both parties see the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as part of the wider Israeli-Arab conflict.

[14] There are various Zionist narratives. This article refers to the *political* Zionist narrative, which was dominant in the first period after the establishment of Israel.

conflict and its continuation and de-legitimizing them. In contrast, the Jews/Israeli-Jews were portrayed positively as peace-loving and moral, and as the sole victims of the conflict.[15] The dominant master narrative that the *Palestinians* held was largely a mirror image of the Zionist narrative, blaming the Jews for the outbreak of the conflict and its continuation, while attributing no responsibility to themselves.[16] This state of affairs certainly did not promote peace and reconciliation.

The *Palestinians* for the most part have independently continued to hold the abovementioned narrative to this day.[17] Since the late 1970s, however, the *Israeli-Jews* have taken a significantly different path. At that time, members of various Israeli-Jewish *societal* institutions began to present a critical narrative of the conflict, at times entitled "post-Zionist."[18] For example, the scholar Yeoshua Porat argued that the 1936-39 Palestinian uprising was directed mainly against the British and not against the Jews.[19] Many scholarly studies and daily newspaper articles, along with some 1948 Jewish war veterans' memoirs, also began to present a Critical narrative of the 1948 Palestinian exodus. According to this narrative, some Palestinians left willingly while others were expelled by the Jewish/Israeli-Jewish fighting forces.[20] Moreover, Israeli-Jews have argued that the Zionist pioneers acted against the local

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[15] Daniel Bar-Tal, *Li-ḥeyot 'im ha-sikhsukh: nituaḥ psikhologi-ḥevrati shel ha-ḥevrah ha-Yehudit be-Yiśra'el* [Living in a Conflict: A Psychological-Social Analysis of the Jewish Society in Israel], (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2007), (Hebrew); Ruth Firer and Sami Adwan, *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in History and Civics Textbooks of both Nations*, (Hanover: Verlag Hahnsche, 2004); Asima Ghazi-Bouillon, *Understanding the Middle East Peace Process – Israeli Academia and the Struggle for Identity*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2009); Eli Podeh, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict in History Textbooks (1948-2000)*, (Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 2002).

[16] Salch Abdel Jawad, "The Arab and Palestinian Narratives of the 1948 War," in *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict – History's Double Helix*, ed. Robert Rotberg, (Indiana, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 72-114; Neil Caplan, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict – Contested Histories*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); Michael Milstein, "The Memory that Never Dies: The Nakba Memory and the Palestinian National Movement," in *Palestinian Collective Memory and National Identity*, ed. Meir Litvak, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 47-69.

[17] Abdel Jawad, "The Arab and Palestinian Narratives;" Mustafa Cabha, *Hafalestinim – Ham Bepzurato* [The Palestinians – A Nation in the Diaspora], (Ra'anana: The Open University, 2010) (Hebrew); Caplan, *Contested Histories;* Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "Palestinian Autobiographical Memory regarding the 1948 Palestinian Exodus" *Political Psychology* 32 (2011): 271-295.

[18] Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "The Inclusive Israeli Memory of the Palestinian Refugee Problem" *Peace Review* 24 (2012): 187-94.

[19] Yeoshua Porat, *Tsemiḥat ha-tenu'ah ha-le'umit ha-'Arvit-ha-Paleṣṭina'it 1918-1929* [The Evolution of the Arabic/Palestinian National Movement 1918-1929] (Tel Aviv, 1976), (Hebrew).

[20] Regarding: scholars – Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "Origins of the Palestinian Refugee Problem: Changes in the Historical Memory of Israelis/Jews 1949-2004" *Journal of Peace Research* 48 (2011): 235-48; and regarding newspapers and 1948 War Veterans – Nets-Zehngut, "The Inclusive Israeli Memory."

Palestinians, taking their lands and closing their trading markets,[21] and that in an agreement with Abdallah, King of Jordan, the Jews divided the Territories in 1948.[22]

Beginning in the late 1980s, this societal change intensified in Israel with the commencement of a historical revisionist period commonly called the "New Historians" era. New historical studies criticized various previously unchallenged aspects of the master Zionist narrative, or supported criticism raised earlier. The same challenges and criticisms appeared in newspaper articles, war veterans' memoirs and NGOs' publications,[23] and later, although less extensively, within some state institutions too (e.g., the Ministry of Education approved textbooks and a book published by the Israeli National Archive).[24] Scholarly studies, testimonies given, and newspaper articles written by Jewish veterans of the conflict, all formed a solid basis for concluding that the Critical narrative regarding the conflict is more accurate than the Zionist one.

Methodology

This article is based on both primary and secondary sources: publications that were produced as part of the nine projects, studies that were published about some of these projects, other relevant studies,[25] and interviews conducted with participants in certain projects – mostly as their directors or co-directors. The latter participants were not only knowledgeable about these projects, but also generally about the activities of Israelis and Palestinians in the realm of the narratives of their conflict. They included Umar Al-Ghubari, Hilel Cohen, Eyal

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[21] Baruch Kimmerling, *Zionism and Territory: The Socio-territorial Dimensions of Zionist Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

[22] Dan Shiftan, *Optsiyah Yardenit* [Jordanian Option] (Ramat Efal: Yad Yabenkin, Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1986), (Hebrew).

[23] Caplan, *Contested Histories*; Ghazi-Bouillon, *Understanding the Middle East*; Shlomo Zand [Sand], *Hahistorian, Hazman Vehadimyon: Measkolat ha'anal" Vead Harotseach Hapost-Tsiyony* [The Historian, the Time and the Imagination: from the School of Les Annales to the Post-Zionist Murderer] (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2004), (Hebrew). Regarding: newspapers, war veterans memoirs and NGOs – Nets-Zehngut, "The Inclusive Israeli Memory;" and textbooks used in the educational system – Firer and Adwan, *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*; Podeh, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*.

[24] Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "Israeli Approved Textbooks and the 1948 Palestinian Exodus" *Israel Studies* 18/3 (in press, 2013); Yemima Rosental, *Yitzhak Rabin: Rosh Hamemshala shel Israel 1974-1977, 1992-1995: Mivhar Mismachim Metekufot Behayav* [Yitzhak Rabin: Prime Minister of Israel 1974-1977, 1992-1995: A Selection of Documents from Periods of his Life] (Jerusalem: The Israeli National Archive, 2005), (Hebrew).

[25] For example, studies that address the collective memory of conflicts, reconciliation and transitional justice processes, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Israeli-Jewish society, and the situation of the Palestinians in Israel and abroad.

Nave, Paul Scham, and Yohanan Tzoreff.[26] The interviews – some written and others conducted in person[27] – used a semi-structured questionnaire allowing the interviewees to address topics on their own initiative in addition to the prepared questions.[28] Several of the main topics that the interviewees were asked to address were: whether they knew about other relevant projects; the reasons for the dearth of such projects until the early 2000s and their prevalence thereafter; the reasons why formal institutions did not conduct such projects; the characteristics of the projects; the extent and type of involvement of third parties in the projects; the positive impacts of the projects on the parties involved and the projects' roles in promoting peace. The use of these diverse methodological tools – primary and secondary, written and verbal -- was intended to gain as much understanding as possible about these projects. Let us turn to the findings of the research.

Addressing the historical narratives of the conflict

Since the early 2000s, Palestinians and Israeli-Jews have collaboratively addressed the history of the conflict in nine projects.[29] This involved mostly reducing the differences between the narratives of the two parties; agreeing on two parallel but legitimate narratives; discussing the possibility in general of properly addressing their historical narratives; and acknowledging that each party might have several narratives on the same topic rather than just one. The projects described below are not a representative sample of these types of projects; they represent *all* of these types of projects that have been conducted since the early 2000s, to the best of our knowledge.

The *first* project was begun in the early 2000s by PRIME ('Peace Research Institute in the Middle East').[30] Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish scholars and teachers developed three booklets jointly, in workshops conducted over several years, which juxtaposed each party's main narrative concerning their interrelationship from the early 20th century to the early 2000s. Some of the main topics addressed were the 1948 and 1967 Wars and relations between the Palestinians and Jews in the first half of the 20th century. Regarding the 1967

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[26] 'Zochrot' (Head of the Palestinian Villages Tours and the Palestinian Refugees Return Activities); 'Van Leer' (Director of the project); PRIME; 'Shared History and Shared Narratives' (Co-Director of the latter two projects), and 'Circles of Knowledge' (director of the project), respectively. See below more details about these projects.

[27] Interviews in writing were conducted with people the author was unable to meet in person, such as those who lived in other countries.

[28] Grant MaCraken, *The Long Interview*, (London: Sage, 1988).

[29] According to this research, no other relevant projects were conducted: see interview of the A. with Paul Scham, in writing, July 7, 2012; interview of the A. with Hilel Cohen, Jerusalem, 15 May 15, 2012; interview of the A. with Eyal Nave, Kfar Saba, July 4, 2012.

[30] Sami Adwan and Dan Bar-On, "Shared Histories Project: A PRIME Example of Peace-Building Under Fire" *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 17 (2004): 513-21.

War, for example, the Palestinian narrative presented in the booklet claims it was a purely aggressive act by Israel, wishing to conquer more Arab lands. In contrast, the Israeli narrative states that the War was a necessary preventive measure aimed at countering an imminent and certain Arab attack that could have extinguished Israel. The booklets were published gradually over the years – in 2003, 2005, and 2007 – each one covering a different period: and an inclusive textbook comprised of all three previous booklets was published in 2009. These were written in Hebrew and Arabic, and are currently being used in schools among both parties.[31]

The *second* project – 'Shared Histories' – involved three Jerusalem-based institutions: 'The Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace,' 'Panorama' ('The Palestinian Center for the Dissemination of Democracy and Community Development'), and 'Yakar Center for Social Concern'. In 2002, these institutions organized several workshops in Israel and Cyprus made up of Palestinians and Israeli-Jews (historians, geographers, journalists etc.) to present and discuss the historical narratives of both sides regarding various major events of the conflict that occurred between 1882 and 1949. The topics discussed included: the Zionist settlement in Palestine/*Eretz Israel* (1982-1914), the Palestinian national movement (1919-1939), the UN resolution of 1947 to establish Jewish and Palestinian states, the 1948 War, and religious aspects of the conflict. The aims were mainly to increase mutual understanding and respect regarding the narratives and to explore the differences between the two parties' narratives. An example of such differences lies in the topic of nationalism. According to the Palestinian narrative, their ancestors lived in Palestine before the Jews did. Certainly by the 1920s and most likely much earlier, a Palestinian identity and nationality existed that were very different from those of the other residents of the region. According to the Israeli narrative, however, the Arabs of the *Eretz Israel* were never a national group; they were largely undifferentiated from the inhabitants of what is today Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. In 2005, the content of these workshops was published in a book.[32]

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[31] Sami Adwan, Dan Bar-on, Adnan Musalha and Eyal Nave, *Lilmod et Hanerative Hahistory shel Ha'aher – Falistinim Veisraelim* [Studying the Narrative of the Other – Palestinians and Israelis] (Beit Jallah: PRIME, 2003), (Hebrew); Sami Adwan and Dan Bar-on, *Lilmod et Hanerative Hahistory shel Ha'aher – Falistinim Veisraelim, Helek 2* [Studying the Narrative of the Other – Palestinians and Israelis, Part 2] (Beit Jallah: PRIME, 2005), (Hebrew); Sami Adwan and Dan Bar-on, *Lilmod et Hanerative Hahistory shel Ha'aher – Falistinim Veisraelim, Helek 3* [Studying the Narrative of the Other – Palestinians and Israelis, Part 3] (Beit Jallah: PRIME, 2007), (Hebrew); Dan Bar-on and Sami Adwan, *Lilmod et Hanerative Hahistory shel Ha'aher – Falistinim Veisraelim* [Studying the Narrative of the Other – Palestinians and Israelis] (Beit Jallah: PRIME, 2009), (Hebrew).

[32] Paul Scham, Walid Salem and Benjamin Pogrund, *Shared Histories – A Palestinian-Israeli Dialogue*, (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2005).

The *third* project – 'Circles of Knowledge,' directed by Yohanan Tzoreff – was conducted between 2002 and 2009 at Bar-Ilan University. Among Israeli-Jews it targeted teachers and educators at religious high schools (Yeshivot for boys and Ulpanot for girls), as well as lecturers at orthodox teacher training colleges (in total, 123 participants from 37 institutions). Among the Palestinian participants were 32 teachers from high schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Both parties met separately throughout the year, learning various aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its history. Then a five-day summer seminar was conducted, usually overseas, during which the Israeli and Palestinian groups met face-to-face. In these seminars each party was exposed directly to the narratives of the conflict held by the other and tried to legitimize or bridge gaps between them. Follow-up national and bi-national sessions were conducted for participants who wished to create shared educational messages and materials for implementation in their institutions.[33]

The *fourth* project was conducted by the Israeli-Jewish peace NGO Zochrot (Hebrew for "remembering"). Between 2003 and late 2011, Zochrot produced 45 booklets, each describing the history of the Palestinians in specific localities and their experiences during the 1948 War (e.g., the reactions of the Palestinians to the 1948 War, the battles, the Palestinian exodus, the fate of the Palestinian refugees in their new locations, and their attempts to return to their localities). The booklets are based on Israeli-Jewish studies (many by the historian Benny Morris) and the testimonies of Palestinian former residents of these localities, collected by the Palestinian and Jewish staff of 'Zochrot.'[34] Regarding the 1948 Palestinian exodus, for instance, the testimonies from these Palestinians did not present only the official Palestinian narrative which attributes the exodus to full expulsion of the Palestinians by the Jews/Israeli-Jews.[35] Such an example is the testimony of Ibrahim Abu Sanina from A'Jalil: "Why did the people of A'Jalil leave from here [in 1948]? Not far from here six people of the Shubacky family were murdered, but Arab propaganda made it seem as if the entire family was murdered, about 100 people. So everyone ran away from here in fear."[36] 'Zochrot' also prepared an educational kit describing

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[33] Interview of the A. with Yohanan Tzoreff, in writing, December 7, 2012; Report. No date. *Circles of Knowledge: Report*, Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University. It should be mentioned, that a similar project was conducted between 2005 and 2009 by Yohanan Tzoreff under the auspices the Israeli Ben-Gurion University, involving 61 Jewish participants from 13 schools, but without collaboration with Palestinians.

[34] Eitan Bronstein, "The Nakba in Hebrew: Israeli-Jewish Awareness of the Palestinian Catastrophe and Internal Refugees," in *Catastrophe Remembered – Palestine, Israel and the Internal Refugees,* ed. Nur Masalha, (London and New York: Zed, 2005), 215-41; see http://www.zochrot.org/, accessed 9 June 2012. Umar Al-Ghubari, interviewed as part of this research, is in charge on producing these booklets, including conducting the interviewees with the Palestinians.

[35] Abdel Jawad, "The Arab and Palestinian Narratives;" Nets-Zehngut, "Palestinian Autobiographical Memory."

[36] Zochrot A'Jalil, *Zochrot A'Jalill* [Remember A'Jalill] (Tel Aviv: Zochrot, 2004), 4-5, (Hebrew).

the Palestinian history prior, during, and after the 1948 War, which since 2009 has been distributed among Israeli-Jewish history and civic teachers.[37]

The *fifth* project – 'History's Double Helix,' headed by Robert Rotberg – was conducted in 2003 in the form of a conference that took place at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish (accompanied with several American) scholars discussed various aspects of their narratives of the conflict, including the dynamics of the narratives in their societies, their impact, and the possibilities of mutually addressing their narratives. For instance, it was suggested that it is important for Palestinians and Israeli-Jews to acknowledge the narratives of the Other and to respect them; it is not necessary to agree with them. Specific historical subjects that were addressed included: the parties' narratives of victimhood, the right to the disputed territory, the morality of the Zionist movement and pioneers, the Israeli settlements, Palestinian terrorist attacks, and the reasons for the failure of the 2000 Camp David summit between Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak. As for this summit, for example, the Palestinians claim that it failed mainly because Barak did not properly address their needs. In contrast, Israelis largely claim that Barak offered Arafat "almost everything" and that Arafat's refusal to accept Barak's generous offer was a sign that the former did not really want peace. The outcomes of the conference were published in 2003 in a brief report and in 2006 in an inclusive book.[38]

The *sixth* project – 'Shared Narratives' – was conducted in 2006 by Paul Scham, Walid Salem and Benjamin Pogrund. They organized a conference in Istanbul with Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish (and some American) scholars at which each party presented its narratives regarding various aspects of the conflict. Specific topics addressed were: Zionism and Palestinian nationalism, the right to the land, the impact of the Holocaust on the Israeli memory of the conflict, the Palestinians' 1948 *Nakba*, and the religious sites (mainly Jerusalem). The Palestinian master narrative that emerged was generally that of a people unjustly deprived of its land by invaders, while the Israeli master narrative depicted a justified "return" of those dispossessed many generations before. Discussions of the specific and master narratives were accompanied by a debate about the differences between the two parties' narratives and the possibilities of negotiating these differences. The edited transcripts of the

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[37] Orr Kashty, "Mitachat Leapo shel Misrad Hachinuch Irgun Smol Mefits Lamorim Chomer Limud al Hanakba Hafalestinit" ["Under the Nose of the Ministry of Education, a Leftish Organization Disseminates to the Teachers Educational Material about the Palestinian Nakba"], *Haaretz*, June 4, 2009, (Hebrew).

[38] Respectively, Deborah West, *Myth and Narrative in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, (Cambridge, MS: World Peace Foundation, 2003); Robert Rotberg, *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict: History's Double Helix*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006).

conference were published in 2013 as a special issue of the journal *Israel Studies*.[39]

The *seventh* project was conducted in 2006-07 by the Israeli 'Van Leer Institute' and the 'Palestinian Sartawi Center for Peace Studies' at Al-Quds University.[40] A series of encounters were conducted between Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish students in which talks about the history of the conflict were delivered by lecturers from both parties, followed by discussions. Afterwards, a series of booklets (and accompanying teachers' guides) were produced describing in Hebrew and Arabic the Palestinian and the Israeli-Jewish narratives concerning such topics as: Jerusalem, the 1948 War, the Palestinian refugees, the right of return, and the Israeli settlements in the territories. As for the latter, for example, one of the booklets presented the Palestinian view that the settlements are part of a broad plan among the Jews to cleanse the Palestinians from their land. This plan, the booklet indicated, was reinforced after the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by Israel in the 1967 Six day war, which led to a wide establishment of settlements. In contrast, some of the Israeli-Jews (e.g., the religious ones) view Israel's right to the establishment of settlements to be based on, inter alia, God's promise of *Eretz Israel* (In Hebrew the Land of Israel), including the territories, to the Jewish people. The Jews are currently in a process of redemption, an idea that is strengthened by the possibility of their living in the territories.[41] The booklets were intended for mid- and high school pupils of both parties.

In the *eighth* project, Israeli-Jews and Palestinians cooperated under the auspices of the 'Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation' (IHJR), based in The Netherlands. This institute conducted four sub-projects that allowed each party to present and discuss its narratives on four topics: the 1948 War in general, sacred sites, the 1948 Palestinian refugees, and the 1948 events specifically in the city of Haifa.[42] In this framework, scholars from both parties met and discussed these topics. Based on these projects, three books written by scholars from both parties have already been published in 2011. The first pertains to the 1948 war (presenting narratives of both parties separately, published in Arabic, Hebrew and English);[43] the second concerns 1948 Palestinian refugees (containing analysis by scholars from both parties of the memories of students from both parties on this topic, published in

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[39] Interview of the A. with Paul Scham; Paul Scham, Benjamin Pogrund, and As'ad Ghanem, Special Issue: "Shared Narratives - A Palestinian-Israeli Dialogue" *Israel Studies* 18/2 (2013): 1-158.

[40] Interview of the A. with Hilel Cohen.

[41] Elkana Markovitz and Ahmad Muhamad Hasan Al-Sheih, *The Jewish Settlements in the Territories – the Israeli National Narrative, the Palestinian National Narrative* (Jerusalem: Val Leer), (Hebrew).

[42] http://www.historyandreconciliation.org/mideast, accessed 2 June 2012.

[43] Motti Golani and Adel Manna, *Two Sides of the Coin, Independence and Nakba*, (The Hague: IHJR, 2011).

English/Arabic and English/Hebrew editions);[44] And the third addresses sacred places (presenting in English a common narrative of three sacred places for both parties – the Cave of the Patriarchs, the Tomb of Samuel, and Temple Mount). As for Temple Mount in Jerusalem, for example, the book describes its history from the Roman and Byzantine Period to the late 20th century, starting with the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 B.C.E., by the Muslim Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab in 638, by the Crusaders around 1099, by the Ayyubids and Mamluks as of 1187, the Ottomans in 1516, by the British in 1917, the Jordanians in 1948, and by Israel in 1967. The fate of the Jews and the Arab residents of the land throughout these periods is described.[45]

The *ninth* and last project was conducted by the scholars Shaul Gabay (Israeli-Jew) and Amin Kazak (Palestinian). It was based on the belief that knowing and respecting the narratives of the Other is vital for the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In 2012, they published a book in English that presented side-by-side each scholar's perspective on various historical issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The main topics addressed were the ties of both people to Palestine/*Eretz Israel*; exile and nationalism; the British Mandate period; the 1948, 1967 Six day and 1982 first Lebanon Wars; the 1987 first Palestinian Intifada; the Israeli-Palestinian peace process; the 2000 second Intifada; and the 2005 Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip. As for the second Intifada, for example, the Palestinians generally claim it erupted as a popular response to the dire situation in the occupied territories and the unsuccessful peace process. The official Israeli narrative, however, is that the Intifada was organized by Arafat in order to advance the interests of the Palestinians in the peace process.[46]

Summary and discussion

Since the early 2000s, the Palestinians and the Israeli-Jews have collaborated on nine projects in which they addressed the narratives of the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict. The readership of the products of these projects was diverse and included mostly students from the educational system (who were exposed to the published or designed educational materials) and the general public (who were exposed to the published scholarly books). This state of affairs of wide collaboration is especially noteworthy since it occurred during a period in which the political, military and societal situation between the parties was dire. The official and societal institutions of both parties (e.g., the

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[44] Sami Adwan, Efrat Ben-Ze'ev, Menachem Klein, Ihab Saloul, Tamir Sorek and Machmoud Yazbak, *Zoom in: Palestinian Refugees of 1948, Remembrances*, (The Hague: Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation, 2011).

[45] IHJR, *Sacred Sites in the Holy Land: Historical and Religious Perspectives*, (The Hague: Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation, 2011).

[46] Shaul Gabay and Amin Kazak, *One Land Two Stories*, (New York: Livingston, 2012).

governments, the media and cultural channels) presented each other negatively for the most part, and conveyed a pessimistic picture of the current state of the conflict. Therefore, *it is important to bring these historical collaborative projects into both parties' awareness* in order to show the parties that peace-oriented activity did in fact occur in the 2000s. There are forces within each society that do try to promote peace, despite the fact that largely there were no other significant efforts in this direction during most of that period. This will contribute to the amelioration of the image each party has of its rival and to the increase in hope for resolving the conflict.[47] Several more aspects should be addressed.

A. Top-down and bottom-up activities

The findings demonstrate the difference between *top-down and bottom-up* activities. While top-down activities between Palestinians and Israeli-Jews were largely in a stalemate, bottom-up activities flourished. The latter activities have an incremental and latent positive impact on the socio-psychological sphere of the parties, ameliorating mutual psychological reactions (see below). Consequently, in time, this can increase the chances that the official institutions of both parties will promote top-down peace oriented activities. In other words, such bottom-up activity can have an indirect positive influence on future top-down processes.

These bottom-up projects were conducted by members of societal institutions only, mostly scholars – a phenomenon which is understandable since they are experts on the history of the conflict. Some of these projects also involved teachers, peace activists and people with direct experience, that is, who took part in the conflict. As mentioned, *no official/state institutions participated in them.* How can we explain this more conservative approach of Israeli state institutions towards the history of the conflict? Four explanations are suggested, for example, regarding the conservative approach of Israeli state institutions towards the causes of the 1948 Palestinian exodus (i.e., reluctance to present the expulsion cause).[48] First, the state institutions represent the state, and therefore their staff is more cautious about their activities, in order not to damage the state by presenting in public non-Zionist narratives. Second, the formal agenda of some state institutions is to present the state positively in order to mobilize the citizens. Third, Israeli society is more heterogeneous than its state administration; therefore there were maverick individuals and groups in the societal institutions that deviated from the dominant Zionist narratives.

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[47] Daniel Bar-Tal and Gavriel Salomon, "Israeli-Jewish Narratives of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Evolvement, Contents, Functions and Consequences," in *History's Double Helix: The Inter-wined Narratives of Israel and Palestine*, ed. Robert Rothberg, (Bloomington, IN, 2006), 19-46; Paez and Liu, "Collective Memory;" Tint, "History, Memory and Intractable Conflict."

[48] Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "The Israeli National Information Center and Collective Memory of the Israeli-Arab Conflict" *The Middle East Journal* 62 (2008): 653-70; Rafi Nets-Zehngut and Daniel Bar-Tal, "Transformation of the Collective Memory of Conflicts: A Conceptual Framework and the Israeli Case of the 1948 Palestinian Exodus" (under review, 2012); Podeh, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*.

Fourth and last, individuals in the state institutions are more vulnerable to disciplinary measures and sanctions that can be used against them in case they deviate from the Zionist narratives. Eyal Nave added another explanation, a general fifth one: since the early 2000s, the hawkish Likud party has been in power. This party, and its coalition political parties, would not look favorably upon state institutions challenging the dominant Zionist narrative of the conflict by presenting counter narratives that present Israel less positively or its rivals less negatively.[49]

Encouragement for such bottom-up activity had already been expressed in 1998 by the prominent Palestinian scholar Edward Said. He claimed that Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals and scholars should collaborate in addressing the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, because their official institutions are not likely to do so.[50]

B. *Contemporary and past aspects*

The findings of these projects also demonstrate the differences between *contemporary and past aspects* of the conflict. The present is very contentious and therefore the parties cannot agree on many aspects of it. By contrast, as time passes, prior events become less contentious;[51] therefore, the parties can adopt less biased narratives about such events and accept the existence of narratives that differ between the rivals, etc. That is why the past is currently being recruited for the service of the present in order to promote peace. The parties bypass the difficult present and collaborate on the historical level.

C. *Pre-resolution projects*

Such projects as those addressed here are often discussed in the literature as occurring *after* the resolution of conflicts.[52] To the contrary, the given projects have been conducted *before the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.* This highlights the uniqueness of this phenomenon between Palestinians and Israeli-Jews. In addition, the potential *impact* of such *pre*-resolution projects is especially significant because they can promote the resolution of the conflict

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[49] Interview of Author's with Eyal Nave. Nave also supported the first explanation, regarding the fact that the state institutions represent the state.

[50] Edward Said, "New History, Old Ideas," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, May 21–27, 1998.

[51] Stefan Berger, "A Return to the National Paradigm? National History Writing in Germany, Italy, France, and Britain from 1945 to the Present" *The Journal of Modern History* 77 (2005): 629-78; Wolf Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies" *History and Theory* 41 (2002): 179-97; Rafi Nets-Zehngut, "The Passing of Time and the Collective Memory of Conflicts – Israel and the 1948 Palestinian Exodus" *Peace and Change* 37 (2012): 253-285 (the latter article discusses 15 ways in which the passing of time influences the memory of conflicts).

[52] Daniel Bar-Tal and Gemma Bennink, "The Nature of Reconciliation as an Outcome and as a Process," in *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation,* ed. Ya'acov Bar-Siman-Tov, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 11-38; Dean Alexander and Cherif Bassiouni, *Post-Conflict Justice*, (NY: Transnational Publishers, 2002); Lavinia Stan, *Transitional Justice in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union: Reckoning with the Communist Past*, (New York: Routledge, 2010).

(in contrast to post-conflict similar projects). This is the case since they can promote reduction of negative stereotypes and prejudice, increase trust and empathy towards the rival, and enhance critical reflection regarding one's own in-group.[53]

D. Reasons for pre-2000s lack of projects and their abundance thereafter

How can we explain the *lack* of historical collaborative activity before the early 2000s, and its *prevalence* thereafter? The explanation is diverse and is the outcome of the accumulated impact of various factors.[54] Generally, until the late 1980s – with less awareness of the importance of the historical narratives of conflicts and less centrality[55] of the Palestinians in Israel – the parties saw no need to collaborate in the realm of narratives. Beginning in the late 1980s, the extents of this awareness and centrality increased. Still, the parties did not collaborate in this realm until the late 1990s, because only the political realm was considered to be central and promising, via the peace negotiations. Over long periods during this decade, the end of the conflict seemed near, via signing a peace agreement. Thus, the parties neglected the narrative realm, seeing it as unnecessary.

The situation changed drastically in the early 2000s, with the eruption of the second Intifada and the collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. First, the deterioration of the political and military state of affairs, as described above, inhibited the practice of many societal activities that require a calm political and military climate. For example, Israeli-Jewish tourism and economic activities in the area of the Palestinian Authority require that the latter is allowed to enter that area – which is currently generally prohibited by Israel or is very limited. Collaborating with regard to historical narratives is, however, different. Such projects can be conducted despite such military, political and physical obstacles; therefore, initiators of these projects sought to conduct them as they were feasible. Second, the failure of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process led some people to look for deeper causes for its failure than had been previously found. Paul Scham, for example, felt that inability to understand the historical assumptions of the Other was part of the failure of Oslo. Third, various western countries and international organizations felt there was a need to financially support such narrative oriented activities, in order to promote peace in the region. This was done not

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[53] Adwan and Bar-On, "Shared Histories Project;" Bar-Tal, *Li-ḥeyot 'im ha-sikhsukh.*

[54] Bar-On, *In Pursuit*; interview of the A. with Hilel Cohen; Hermann, *The Israeli Peace Movement*; Interview of the A. with Eyal Nave; interview of the A. with Paul Scham; Paul Scham, "The Historical Narratives of Israelis and Palestinians and the Peacemaking Process" *Israel Studies Forum* 21 (2006): 58-84.

[55] By "centrality" it is meant the extent to which a topic is present in the public sphere and is discussed – see Daniel Bar-Tal, Amiram Raviv, and Tamir Freund, "An Anatomy of Political Beliefs: A Study of their Centrality, Confidence, Contents, and Epistemic Authority" *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 24 (1994): 849-72.

only for the sake of the involved parties, but also in order to promote world order. The Middle East conflict was perceived as undermining such order. All of these projects benefited from such financial support. Fourth and last, as described above, worldwide awareness of the importance of historical narratives of conflicts increased as time passed -- due to their internal and external impact on conflicts themselves (i.e., influencing society members, and their rivals, as well as the international community). Exposing conflicting parties to the narratives of their rivals, legitimizing both narratives, and reducing gaps between them, are considered to significantly promote peace. This awareness, prevalent also among Palestinians and Israeli-Jews, has grown stronger over time. All of the publications produced through the above nine projects, in addition to interviews conducted with some of their participants, described the importance of this aim -- to promote peace -- as a motivating force in conducting them the projects.

E. The projects' positive impacts

Evaluating the positive impacts of the projects on the parties is a difficult task. The impacts differed between each party, between the projects' participants and their societies at large, and also between the Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish participants in the projects. The projects themselves also differ from one another – for instance, some seem to be more influential than others (e.g., PRIME's, 'Circle of Knowledge' and 'Zochrot''s more so than 'Van Leer''s).

Nevertheless, in analyzing the findings carefully, several positive impacts emerge.[56] First, the projects helped to popularize to some degree among scholars and the general public the idea that the two parties have different narratives of the conflict, and that some "acknowledgement" (as Paul Scham puts it) of the Other's narrative contributes to peace. Second, the projects succeeded in exposing members of each party (including the students at the educational systems) to less negative and less biased narratives *of the rival*, in contrast to the typical portrayal of the rival as holding extremely negative and biased narratives. Some of the projects (e.g., 'Van Leer''s and 'Shared Narratives') enabled each party to show the Other that they held several narratives – some more negative and others, less – as opposed to just one negative narrative. 'Zochrot' made a special contribution in this regard – the personal stories of the Palestinians, translated into Hebrew, opened a unique window into the Palestinians' narrative. Their perspective on 1948 was transmitted by telling their personal stories in their own words (in contrast to the more 'dry' descriptions of the past in academic publications). Thus, these

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[56] Adwan and Bar-on, *Lilmod Part 2*; Adwan and Bar-on, *Lilmod Part 3*; Adwan and Bar-On, "Shared Histories Project;" interview of the A. with Umar al-Ghubari, in writing, July 8 2012; Interview of the A. with Hilel Cohen; interview of the A. with Yohanan Tsoreff; IHJR, 'Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation,' http://historyandreconciliation.org, accessed 3 June 2013; interview of the A. with Eyal Nave; Report, *Circles of Knowledge;* interview of the A. with Paul Scham; Scham, Salem and Pogrund, *Shared Histories*.

projects are particularly powerful in influencing Israeli-Jews, by arousing their human feelings of empathy and solidarity with the Palestinians. Third, through the collaboration between the parties, the projects succeeded in moderating the conflict's narratives that the projects' participants held prior to the projects. The participants discussed their differing narratives and were able to gain a deeper understanding of them -- which allowed for the transformation of *their own narratives* into less biased ones that used use less negative language. Fourth, the projects increased within each party the awareness of a positive inclination within the other party, shown by their being open to taking part in such projects.

All of the above relates to the positive impacts on the rivals' societies at large and the projects' participants. These diverse impacts – as they relate to the societies at large – were more significant in their impact on the Israelis than on the Palestinians. The less biased booklets and textbooks (PRIME's and 'Zochrot''s more so and 'Van Leer''s, less) were distributed more widely in Israeli schools (Jewish and Palestinian) than in schools in the Palestinian Authority. This was mostly due to a more conservative approach among the latter, and because 'Zochrot' operates only in Israel. Similarly, the activity of 'Circles of Knowledge' was wider in scope among the Israelis than among the Palestinians. This does not mean that the projects encountered no problems at all in Israel. For example, PRIME's booklets were disqualified by the Israeli Ministry of Education for use in the educational system. They are nevertheless still being taught in some schools and provide teacher guides for study of the history of the conflict. The booklets are also being used in various informal societal contexts such as: private seminars for social workers and teachers, academic and public libraries, dovish political parties, NGOs, and various associations. 'Zochrot' also encounters hindrances from the Israeli Ministry of Education in disseminating to the educational system its educational booklets, but still succeeds partially in doing so.[57] Likewise, in its early stages of operation, 'Circles of Knowledge' encountered difficulties in getting the collaboration of Israeli educational institutions because of the left-wing label the project had acquired.

While the above positive impacts relate to both parties, although somewhat more to the Israeli-Jewish society, the following two positive impacts relate exclusively to the *Palestinians*. First, in times of conflicts, members of the weaker party (from the military point of view) often exhibit symptoms of Learned Helplessness. This refers to a feeling of lack of control over their lives, because the stronger party dominates their activities, daily movements, education, economy, and so on - sometimes even determining whether some of them will live or die. This causes psychological problems, including anger

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[57] Kashty, "Mitachat Leapo."

towards the oppressing party.[58] Largely, this was the situation for the Palestinians in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict until recently, especially among older generations.[59] In contrast, by conducting these projects the Palestinian *organizers* took some control over their own destiny and thereby influenced it, an activity that empowered them. It also contributed to their knowledge and awareness about 1948, and strengthened their feeling in the justness of their moral stand about it.[60] Second, specifically with regard to 'Zochrot' – its activities of systematically collecting and documenting the oral history of the Palestinians with regard to many of their localities, contributed to the Palestinian *interviewees* in a number of ways. They felt that their personal stories were valuable since others were interested in hearing it. They are responsible to their families and people for passing their knowledge on to future generations – and they are doing it. All of this was an *empowering* process for them.[61] Moreover, many of them had not told their stories about 1948 until these projects were conducted because of psychological difficulties such as shame, fear, trauma, lack of hope, and feeling that they themselves lacked value. Their stories were thus 'stuck' inside of them, inhibiting their wellbeing. Telling their stories of trauma and defeat provided them with a feeling of relief, some form of partial *healing*. This was especially true in telling their stories to the Israeli-Jews, who had caused their 1948 trauma, a process that was especially difficult and required extra courage.[62]

It should be noted that some of the projects got widespread international attention, mainly PRIME's, and 'Zochrot''s to some extent. For example, PRIME's project received some ten Israeli and mostly international peace awards, its booklet was translated into eight languages, it got extensive international media coverage, and its concept was adopted for use in other conflicts (see below). This international affirmation *indirectly* supported the implementation of PRIME's project among the Israeli-Jews and the Palestinians. It encouraged PRIME's participants to continue in their work,

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[58] Zeynep Cemalcilar, Resit Canbeyli and Diane Sunar, "Learned Helplessness, Therapy and Personality Traits: An Experimental Study" *Journal of Social Psychology* 14 (2003): 65-81.

[59] Dan Rabinovitch and Khaula Abu-Baker, *The Upright Generation*, (Jerusalem: Keter, 2002), (Hebrew); Khalil Rinnawi, *Haevra Ha'aravit Bisrael: Seder Yom Ambivalenty* [The Arabic Society in Israel: An Ambivalent Agenda], (Tel Aviv: The Management College, 2003), (Hebrew).

[60] Interview of the A. with Umar al-Ghubari, and Eyal Nave; as well as Report, *Circles of Knowledge*.

[61] Some of the *organizers* at 'Zochrot' were also empowered by this aspect, feeling that they are institutionalizing and preserving the history of their people and making it more of a 'real' science, and not 'just' popular folkloristic stories.

[62] Interview of the A. with Umar al-Ghubari. For literature on the positive impact on individuals of addressing their memories of past traumas of conflicts, see Myriam, Denov, "Coping with the Trauma of War: Former Child Soldiers in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone" *International social work* 53 (2010): 791-806; Kenneth Miller, and Andrew Rasmussen, "War Exposure, Daily Stressors, and Mental Health in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings: Bridging the Divide between Trauma-Focused and Psychosocial Frameworks" *Social Science & Medicine* 70 (2010): 7-16.

despite obstacles they encountered in Israel and the Palestinian Authority from various formal and informal institutions.[63]

All of the projects above had a profound impact through their promotion of peace, in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By "*promoting* peace" it is not meant that the projects led to the resolution of the conflict; but that they *contributed* to its resolution on the psychological level. However, such partial and indirect influence is also of importance. Specifically, we are talking about a relatively large number of projects (nine), which were conducted over a long period of time (about a decade), by both rivals, involving figures and institutions from various walks of life, whose products were distributed among diverse audiences (e.g., the educational system and the general public) with whom they sometimes significantly resonated. The educational system is especially important in this regard since the teachers who took part in the projects and the projects' published educational products have continued to positively influence students year after year. All in all, consequently – as described in the literature review section and based on extensive literature[64] – positive transformation of the popular memory of the people promotes positive transformation in other relevant ways, psychologically, and as a result: in their behavior regarding the conflict.

The above discussion related to the positive impacts on the *rivals* themselves. In passing, it should be added that some of the projects had positive impacts also *internationally*. For example, the widespread international resonance of the PRIME project inspired and guided similar projects between rivals in other conflicts worldwide, such as in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Qatar, Malaysia, and Germany, as well as between Russia and Georgia and among Japan and Korea and China.[65]

F. Local conduct of the projects

The nine projects were conducted almost exclusively by *Palestinians and Israeli-Jews and not by third parties*.[66] This phenomenon contributed in at least three major ways to the positive impact of these projects on the rivals: (1) Cultural differences between third parties and the people who are the objects of these

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[63] Interview of the A. with Eyal Nave.

[64] For support of the positive impact of negotiation between rivals regarding historical narratives of their conflicts see Bar-Tal and Salomon, "Israeli-Jewish Narratives;" Rothberg, *History's Double Helix*; Paez and Liu, "Collective Memory;" Tint, "History, Memory and Intractable Conflict."

[65] Interview of the A. with with Eyal Nave.

[66] Differentiating between 'conducting' (actually taking part in the projects), and their 'initiation,' some of the projects were *initiated* by people who are not from the Middle East. For example, Elazar Barkan – an Israeli-Jew, but living in the US, co-director of an institution in The Netherlands who initiated the IHJR project), Paul Scham – an American Jew who was one of the organizers of the 'Shared History' and 'Shared Narratives' projects, and members of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

activities, with whom they might collaborate – in this case, Palestinians and Israeli-Jews – might inhibit the positive impact of the projects. The third parties might not understand the specific complex context and motivating forces of the rivals dealing with such sensitive topics.[67] Such a problem does not exist for our purposes here, because the projects were conducted for the most part only by the parties to the conflict themselves.[68] The Palestinians and the Israeli-Jews typically objected to the intervention of third parties with regard to the *substance* of the projects. They agreed to get financial and logistical aid from third parties, but not intervention in the content of the publications. This was an outcome of the feeling that "they, the third parties, do not understand the complexity and emotional particularities of the conflict for us, the involved parties."[69] In other instances – such as in the case of the activities of 'Zochrot' – third parties did not intervene, trusting the NGO's professionalism.[70] (2) Historical narratives that are presented before the in-group by its own members are usually perceived as more credible than those presented by outsiders.[71] This is especially important when *counter* historical narratives are presented, those that present the in-group less positively or its rival less negatively (compared to the in-group's dominant narratives). The fact, then, that these projects were conducted by Palestinians and Israeli-Jews, contributed to their positive impact on the parties.[72] (3) Lastly, the projects had a particular positive impact on the Palestinians, in the context of the Learned Helplessness phenomenon, as described above.

Conclusion

In conclusion, beginning in the early 2000s, the Palestinians and the Israeli-Jews have collaborated on nine projects which addressed the history of their conflict. This article assembles for the first time these projects, describes them, highlights the importance of presenting them to both parties, and discusses their characteristics as bottom-up projects. It also explains the conservative approach of the official institutions which led to a lack of similar top-down projects, the difference between contemporary and past aspects of the conflict, and the uniqueness and special contribution of such pre-resolution activity. Furthermore, the article explains the lack of such activity until the early 2000s and its prevalence thereafter, lists the positive impacts of the projects on the

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[67] Rachel Kerr, "Review of Books on Transitional Justice" *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 5 (2011): 319-30; Patricia Lundy, "Exploring Home-grown Transitional Justice and its Dilemmas: A Case Study of the Historical Enquiries Team, Northern Ireland" *The International Journal of Transitional Justice* 3 (2009): 321-40.

[68] Interview of the A. with Eyal Nave; Interview of the A. with Paul Scham.

[69] Interview of the A. with with Eyal Nave.

[70] Interview of the A. with Umar al-Ghubari.

[71] Anita Shapira, "Hirbet Hiza – Zikaron Veshchecha" ["Hirbet Hiza – Remembrance and Forgetfulness"], *Alpaim* 21 (2002): 9-53, (Hebrew).

[72] Interview of the A. with with Umar al-Ghubari; Interview of the A. with Eyal Nave.

parties involved, and explains how the fact that they were conducted by the rival parties contributed to their success. For their benefits in promoting peace, let us hope that more such projects will be conducted in the future.

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Robert S.C. Gordon, *The Holocaust in Italian Culture 1944-2010,* **(Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012), pp. X-284.**

by *Anna Baldini*

"What would talk of the Holocaust be like in America if a skeptical rationalist like Primo Levi, rather than a religious mystic like Wiesel, had been its principal interpreter?"

The first time I bumped into this question was not in the book where it was originally published – more precisely, in a footnote of Peter Novick's 1999 *The Holocaust in American Life* –, but at the beginning of a paper published in 2006 by a British literary critic, as I am myself, on the journal "Italian Studies". Its author, Robert Gordon, opened it by reformulating Novick's question as a non-hypothetical one, thus asking himself and his reader: "What was talk of the Holocaust like in Italy, where Primo Levi was indeed its principal interpreter over many decades?"[1] The question, and the article containing it, was the first step in a long research, which has now led to the significant results displayed in Gordon's volume *The Holocaust in Italian Culture 1944-2010*.[2] Gordon himself explains its genesis by stating that "the idea for the book grew out of a long period of intense work on one remarkable survivor-writer, Primo Levi. I began to be curious about the world beyond Levi's texts, the cultural field in which he was embedded" (p. ix).

The book has already been translated into Italian by Giuliana Oliviero.[3] The translation bears a different title, which emphasizes once more the centrality of Primo Levi's work in the history of how knowledge of the Holocaust took its peculiar Italian shape, since the first and new part of the title – *Scolpitelo nei cuori. L'Olocausto nella cultura italiana (1944-2010)* – is actually a slightly altered verse from *Shemà*, the poem we read at the opening of Levi's first book *Se questo è un uomo*. Gordon himself defines Primo Levi as "the prime mediator of Holocaust awareness and the embodiment of the dignified figure of the survivor" in Italy (p. 20). However, and despite Gordon's university specialization, *The Holocaust in Italian Culture* is not a book that can appeal exclusively to literary critics or literary historians – in fact, quite the contrary. Throughout the book, Gordon acts as an historian and sometimes a sociologist of culture, rather than a literary analyst.

The perspective from which Gordon produces his research is the same from which during the last two decades similar works in this academic discipline

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[1] R.S.C. Gordon, *Which Holocaust? Primo Levi and the Field of Holocaust Memory in Post-War Italy*, "Italian Studies", 61/1, (Spring 2006): 85-113, 89.
[2] R.S.C. Gordon, *The Holocaust in Italian Culture 1944-2010* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).
[3] R.S.C. Gordon, *Scolpitelo nei cuori. L'Olocausto nella cultura italiana (1944-2010)* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2013).

were born. From the point of view of the actual centrality of the Holocaust in Western cultures, Gordon tries to explain how we got so far, by analyzing a specific national context that is continually blending and interrelating with transnational and global levels. But there is a salient difference between Gordon's and seminal studies of the same sort (I am referring especially to Novick's 1999 book and Annette Wieviorka's 1998 *L'Ère du témoin*[4]): Gordon is not interested in the "memory" of the Holocaust, neither collective nor individual. He rather intends to investigate cultural artefacts that convey knowledge and representations of the Holocaust, by detailing how they shaped up in the context where they were produced, and how they in turn gave form to the knowledge and representation of those past events. To say it with Gordon's own words, his book tells "the history of how […] Italy confronted and gave shape in cultural forms to what we now call the Holocaust or the Shoah" (p. 15). By effectively doing so, Gordon's work will serve as a powerful tool against the risks implicated in every cultural canonization: those of forgetting the historically and culturally specific background in which a given cultural product is created and firstly received.

I shall give just an example of this kind of misinterpretations, taking it from one of the subjects I know better, namely the troubled history of the reception of Primo Levi's work. At the end of the Nineties, the first of Levi's biographies, written by the French journalist Myriam Anissimov, triggered an animated debate amongst the still relatively few experts in the writer's opus.[5] The dispute concerned the judgemental account given by Anissimov of the first rejection of *Se questo è un uomo* in 1947 by the publisher Einaudi and its editors Cesare Pavese and Natalia Ginzburg. According to the biographer, this refusal was just the beginning of a long-lasting failed recognition by the Italian cultural establishment of one of its best contemporary writers. Levi's relatively marginal position in the field of Italian literature, at least during his life, is a fact, which needs however to be explained through subtler cultural and sociological analytical tools than those employed by Anissimov, whose biography, unlike those by Ian Thomson and Carole Angier,[6] repeatedly reveals an embarrassing lack of detailed knowledge about Italian cultural, social and political history. It is not, however, just a matter of details. I also believe it historically misleading and ethically unfair to judge the behaviour of writers,

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[4] P. Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1999); A. Wieviorka, *L'Ère du témoin* (Paris: Plon 1998). See also A. Wieviorka, *Déportation et génocide. Entre la mémoire et l'oubli* (Paris: Hachette 2003).

[5] M. Anissimov, *Primo Levi, ou la tragédie d'un optimiste* (Paris: Lattès 1996); an Italian translation was published in 1999. For the debate, see E. Ferrero, *Primo Levi, l'ora dei veleni*, "La Stampa", December 7, 1996; F. Camon, *Primo Levi, l'incubo del rifiuto*, "La Stampa", December 23, 1996; C. Cases, *Ma gli italiani sanno biografare?*, "La Stampa" January 17, 1997; D. Scarpa, *Un Levi improbabile*, "La rivista dei libri", VII/4, (1997): 41-43; T. Judt, *The Courage of the Elementary*, "The New York Review of Books", May 20, 1999, 31-38; M. Belpoliti, *Levi: il falso scandalo*, "La rivista dei libri", X/1 (2000): 25-27.

[6] I. Thomson, *Primo Levi* (London: Hutchinson 2002); C. Angier, *The Double Bond. Primo Levi. A Biography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2002).

editors or literary critics, who came into contact with a text for the first time, on the basis of present-day cultural or literary evaluation criteria. Not only in 1947 the reasons why we now consider *Se questo è un uomo* an essential feature of the Holocaust literary canon, as well as a masterwork of Italian contemporary literature, did not exist; in 1947, the very idea of what we now call "Holocaust" or "Shoah" did not exist.

This stage in our cultural history is thoroughly detailed in Chapter 4 of Gordon's book ("New Knowledge"), which is dedicated to the period between the end of WWII and 1963. In particular, Gordon's accurate bibliographical survey clearly shows that during the first decade after the war, in Italy as everywhere else, the first accounts written by people who survived extermination or concentration camps used to encounter editorial rejections and public indifference. The editorial trajectory of Levi's book should thus be no matter of scandal, and rather contributes to illustrate a larger bundle of similar stories. Gordon's overview of the period helps us understand the meaning a book such as *Se questo è un uomo* could acquire in the eyes of its contemporaries, and also why it was so difficult for Pavese or Ginzburg to recognize its value in 1947.

The risks I have pointed up to through the example of Anissimov's biography are nowadays far more widespread than singular instances of inaccurate research. Since the annual, worldwide celebrations of Holocaust Remembrance Days are based more often than not on ahistorical, even metaphysical perception and awareness of the past, studies such as *The Holocaust in Italian culture* are something we cannot consider relevant exclusively in the academic field, but acquire a broader social meaning.

The value of Gordon's work also lies in the author's ability to move its discourse between a plurality of levels: national, transnational and global; cultural and political. This is a result of the organization of the material in the book, whose structure continuously shifts the focus brought on the scrutinized objects. Sections such as Chapter 4, containing a broader outline and discussing the cultural products of a period in a more or less well-ordered chronology, alternate with others focusing instead on the story of singular artefacts or events, whose trajectory through the decades is followed and explained from their first appearance to the various meanings they acquire in different times and stages of the social and political scene. The design of the volume is something we should therefore focus on more in detail.

To begin with, the book is divided in two parts, the first of which provides a theoretical framework and an effective synthesis of the more relevant issues addressed by the research. Chapter 1 ("The Shape of Italy's Holocaust") begins with describing five templates of cultural elaboration concerning the Holocaust that occurred with common features in every Western culture from 1945 on. The succession of these phases shows a progression from the mid-Forties, when what we now call "Holocaust" was not an event perceived as such, to

present-day common-sense reading of it as "The Absolute Evil". Obviously, "the Holocaust" is not strictly speaking an event, but rather a way to gather under a same labelling and understanding a bundle of singular, different, but also interrelated historical facts. The five templates of cultural elaboration have produced over time a series of meanings of the word that differ precisely in including or excluding certain historical phenomena, and which also began to be "remembered" in different historical periods. Gordon's first chapter proceeds thus on detailing the principal among these meanings and on correlating them with specifically Italian issues. Hence, thinking of the "Holocaust" as a "Nazi genocide" has been a way to avoid measuring the extent of Italians' complicity in it; using "Lager" – namely, the network of Nazi labour, concentration and extermination camps – as a metaphor for "Holocaust" have corresponded to early exclusively antifascist or Resistance interpretations of the figure of the deportee; the late definition of "Holocaust" as comprehending non-industrialised massacres, such as those carried out by the *Einsatzkommandos*, along with industrialised mass extermination, coincided with a renewed attention paid to the massacres ("eccidi") committed by German troops in Italy; finally, the tendency to identify the "Holocaust" as something exposing the dark side of modernity has contributed to a consideration of Fascism as a typically modern totalitarianism.

Chapter 3 ("The Field") accounts for the complex network of phenomena scrutinized in the book. Gordon distinguishes four "spheres of cultural production" involved in the apprehension and representation of the Holocaust. The first concerns the undertakings of associations and institutions, from those more directly involved (ANED, CDEC, Jewish communities) to the apparatuses of the State, of political parties and of the Church. We may loosely designate this first sphere as a "political" one, while the second relates instead to the knowledge developed inside the university, particularly by historians. The third and fourth spheres cover what should more correctly be apprehended as a common ground, since it is difficult to draw a line between what Gordon designates as "cultural sphere" and that of "cultural industries and media". Such a distinction is vaguely reminiscent of a sociologically outdated polarity between "high" and "low" culture, according to which the cultural products disseminated through media are necessarily to be regarded as pertaining to a lower-rank culture. It is true, however, that Gordon does not make a divide between these two spheres in order to attribute different values to the cultural products he examines, but rather in order to distinguish between two types of audiences, of which the one targeted on by newspapers, magazines, television, radio and the internet corresponds to a "broad, non-expert and semi-participatory public" (p. 35). As I see it, although, the distinction remains arguable, since it implies, for instance, to include publishers in the fourth sphere, while on the contrary agents from the publishing world are thoroughly involved in the cultural production, as their activity is the channel through which literary or scientific works are disseminated between expert and non-expert publics likewise.

Be that as it may, the sphere of production Gordon calls "cultural" is the main area he investigates. Consequently, he identifies various subcategories inside this major one: "works, sites, artefacts and events" (p. 33). We may detail the contents of this area through a different set of categories: namely, fictional and non-fictional narratives (including early and late testimonial writings, poems, novels, short stories, theatrical pieces, fictional and documentary movies, television serials, songs, both produced in Italy or imported from abroad); monumental architecture; "events", that is, public displays of art or official commemorations (and their political resonance). Gordon declares not to be interested in a formal or textual analysis of these different artefacts; what really matters to him "is rather how they are positioned within their field of production and transmission, how they are projected into the public sphere and translated into forms of knowledge and awareness" (p. 34). Gordon's objective thus appears to be that of elaborating a sociological history of these cultural products; as a matter of fact, in a note at the beginning of chapter 3 he introduces a reference to the theory of fields by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu: "The field of Holocaust culture loosely resembles this model, insofar as it contains agent groups and individuals "competing" to give shape to definitions and understanding of, and values and meanings drawn from, the Nazi genocide, in the context of both the larger field of Italian culture and the international field of Holocaust culture" (p. 213n). I shall discuss later the author's appropriation of Bourdieu's "elusive" – according to Gordon – theory.

The combination of the three chapters in Part I is an example of how the book continually shifts its focus between a synthetic and an analytical approach. Embedded between the theoretical and panoramic Chapters 1 and 3, Chapter 2 ("Villa Torlonia") offers the first of numerous and exemplary close-readings of a singular cultural object, which is in this case the Italian national museum of the Shoah, still under construction in Rome. By discussing the significance of the decision to put the Museum in the site of Villa Torlonia, Gordon reveals it as a place where four major nodes of the Italian public discourse concerning the Holocaust symbolically interweave: firstly, having been Mussolini's private residence, Villa Torlonia recalls the relationship between Fascism and the Holocaust; secondly, since under the grounds of Villa Torlonia were discovered several Jew catacombs a couple of centuries older than the Christian era, the site recalls the very ancient and peculiar history of Italian Judaism; thirdly, the choice to put the museum in the capital city abandoning an earlier project to create it in Ferrara show how impossible it is not to take into account regional and local issues as opposed or simply interlaced with national ones; finally, the name the museum will bear, "Museo della Shoah", exemplifies a linguistic choice that distinguishes the Italian from the global context, where "Holocaust" is the more wide-spread naming option. The chapter highlights other connections between Italy and the world: the architectural concept of the project shows many similarities with homologous national museums built since the Nineties in Washington, Paris and Berlin, and

the decision to establish the museum in Rome was influenced by the support of Spielberg's Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation. Gordon also explains how the museum educational plan reflects peculiar features of the Italian cultural elaboration of the Holocaust: for instance, an entire hall is to be dedicated to Primo Levi, and a "Percorso dei giusti" will echo not only the "Righteous among the Nations" celebrated in Yad Vashem, but also the myth of the "good Italian" as exemplified by Giorgio Perlasca's paradigmatic story.

By exploring the meaning of every feature of the future museum, Chapter 2 acts as a synopsis of the second part of the book, since many themes firstly presented in relation to the museum's plan are thoroughly discussed in the following chapters. Moreover, though Part II opens and closes with two chapters that detail in almost chronological sequence the events occurred during the years 1944-63 and 1986-2010, its more fascinating sections are those constructed in the same way as Chapter 2, where Gordon's historical narrative focuses on cultural products or facts on which several layers of memory and knowledge have sedimented.

Chapter 4 is followed by two monographic chapters that highlight the role played by a singular agent in making the Italian apprehension of the Holocaust different from elsewhere. In the first case, the agent is an individual, in the second, a place. Chapter 5 is thus dedicated to Primo Levi, since "local inflections of larger cultural and memorial discourse can also be determined by the agency and accidental influence of single voices in a given cultural field" (p. 64). The protagonist of this chapter is not the powerful, subtle and morally complex writer, who in the last two decades have been finally recognized as such, but rather the public intellectual: "a low-level, public Levi", who exercised his influence "in schools and other public arenas" by means of "occasional and pedagogical writings" (p. 68). Gordon begins by analyzing the picture of the Holocaust implied by "Levi's Holocaust library", namely the books the writer suggests as further readings at the end of the first school edition of *Se questo è un uomo* (1973); he then expands the perimeter of this "library" by surveying the network of historical works, testimonial and literary writings, in which Primo Levi was involved as translator, reviewer or promoter. Finally, the last paragraph examines Levi's choices about how to name the Holocaust, and how they have differed over the years. According to the persuasive Chapter 6, "Rome", the millennial history and heritage of the capital have been as influential in shaping the Italian Holocaust as the singular voice of the extraordinary intellectual and writer Primo Levi was. A brief chronicle of the events occurred in Rome between July 1943 and June 1944 is followed by an impressive account of books (fictions as well as testimonial writings or essays), movies, monuments, public debates, even judicial trials and urban mythologies, which in the following decades have been generated from or in regard to those events.

Chapters 7 ("Shared Knowledge"), 8 ("Grey Zones and Good Italians") and 9 ("Transnational Lines"), by cross cutting through the Sixties, Seventies and

Eighties, deal with cultural objects of the most disparate nature. I shall mention just a few of the issues arisen by them, those I have found most thought-provoking: why in Italy the prevailing naming choice for the racial deportation and extermination has been "Shoah", instead of "Holocaust"; how, when and thanks to whom several Italian Holocaust memorials have been built, from the first in Milan (1946) to those built in Auschwitz in 1967 and 1980; how the Italian and other national Holocaust cultures have interrelated, especially the Israeli and American ones. Regarding the latter, I have found particularly remarkable Gordon's choice to analyze this cultural exchange from an original point of view, namely, by following the direction leading from Italy to the Usa (the other way round being usually the more spoken of). The cultural products exported from Italy that met with an American success – a success then rebounding all over the world – are chiefly movies, especially those consecrated by an Oscar prize or nomination (Lina Wertmüller's *Pasqualino Settebellezze* and Roberto Benigni's *La vita è bella*), but a similar trajectory has also characterized Primo Levi's international renown, having the writer's fame become global since the "American discovery" of his work in 1984.

Talking of Primo Levi, in Chapter 8 a book of his becomes once again the point of departure of a significant track through the Italian cultural and political scene. "Grey Zones and Good Italians" relates the story of how, during the late Eighties and Nineties, the formula "la zona grigia" strayed from the use and meaning Primo Levi forged it for in *I sommersi e i salvati* (1986). This story of misreading and misuses is a telling one, since it mingles with an important renewal in historiography, which at the beginning of the Nineties led to question the prevalent interpretations of Fascism, Resistance and Italian's behaviour during WWII. In particular, historians began to demolish the defensive myth of "good Italians", according to which the Italian people was one of the most reluctant and less cooperative in the racial extermination process. "One of the stories this book needs to tell", Gordon states since the beginning of the book, "is about Fascism's and Italians' apparent distance from the Holocaust, and about how this notion seems to have been so completely turned on its head by the end of the century" (p. 16).

Finally, I would like at least to enumerate several noteworthy analyses of a singular cultural product we find disseminated in Part II: a detailed description of Giacomo Debenedetti's, Curzio Malaparte's and Umberto Saba's seminal writings about the Holocaust in Chapter 4;[7] a comparison between Carlo Lizzani's movie *L'oro di Roma* (1961) and Ferzan Ozpetek's one *La finestra di fronte* (2003) in Chapter 6; an examination of the background and significance of Francesco Guccini's song *Auschwitz* (1965) in Chapter 7; an account of the international production of Gillo Pontecorvo's movie *Kapò* (1959) put into

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[7] See G. Debenedetti, *16 ottobre 1943*, "Mercurio", December 1944; G. Debenedetti, *Otto ebrei* (Rome: Atlantica 1944); C. Malaparte, *Kaputt* (Naples: Casella 1944); U. Saba *Scorciatoie e raccontini* (Milan: Mondadori 1946).

relationship with the director's subsequent career between Italy and France in Chapter 9.

The last chapter of the book ("After Such Knowledge") covers almost three decades: a period that witnessed a global explosion of Holocaust-related cultural production, in the context of a public acknowledgment of the event as something placed at the core of Western identities: "in 21st-century Europe, there is an imperative, embodied in international conferences and treaties, and in UN resolutions, to provide an official channel of memory of the Holocaust, as if to be a legitimate European democracy now is also to acknowledge and commemorate this "Event"" (p. 17). In Italy this universal trend was officially ratified in 2000, when the 27th of January was established by law as the Holocaust "Day of Memory". Gordon's overview of those years is no less meticulous than that we find in Chapter 4, but the outcome is less satisfying, undoubtedly due to the huge amount of facts and objects to be accounted for, which inevitably results in none of them receiving a specific consideration. Furthermore, the author's attention is less focused on cultural productions than on political issues, most of which were already hint at in previous chapters; their coming back well arranged and explained in chronological order produces a more opaque narrative than the prior close-up accounts of singular objects. The sensation is perhaps more intense for an Italian reader, for whom most of the information here provided is common knowledge; a non-Italian reader probably gains as much intelligence from this chapter as from the others.

The material gathered in Chapter 10, if examined as in detail as in previous parts of the volume, could fill up an entire new book. In fact, one of the research directions I see ensuing from *The Holocaust in Italian culture* leads towards a further investigation specifically devoted to the last three decades of Italian culture. Another one could have its point of departure in taking seriously Bourdieu's description of the inner working of the fields differentiating a national cultural production. "For Bourdieu", explains Gordon, "a given cultural field is structured by a set of possible positions and strategic orientations across which agents in the field – agents of cultural consumption and production – organise themselves, accruing authority or cultural capital and common sense ideas of value (*doxa*) that are at stake in the field" (pp. 212-213). Gordon defines Bourdieu's concept as "elusive", but I rather find vague his appropriation of it. I do not think that that "of production of Holocaust discourse" (p. 213) can be considered a proper "field" in Bourdieusian terms, at least not since the mid-Forties. Present-day academic discipline of "Holocaust Studies" probably now works as such, but the people creating Holocaust-related novels, movies or songs were (and are) engaged primarily in their specific field of cultural production, namely the literary, cinematographic or musical ones; it is there they tried to position themselves and their works by acting according to a specific logic and in the middle of conflicting values. Following such a pathway, I see the possibility of

studying how the peculiar logic and inner history of the various fields of cultural production have influenced the ways in which literature, cinema, historiography and so on have shaped the Italian knowledge and representation of the destruction of the European Jews. Just to give a few examples, taken from my field of expertise: which conflicts regarding literary values and which dominant/dominated positions inside the literary field do explain for instance why Giorgio Bassani was "the first story-teller of Italian-Jewish life and the Shoah to penetrate widely across the national culture" (p. 22)? Why in the mid-Fifties the conflict to acquire a symbolic capital did engage leading publishers like Einaudi, Feltrinelli and il Saggiatore in a race to publish or translate a series of Holocaust-related books?[8] Which state of the publishing field around 1980 did create the conditions of possibility for the birth of a publisher exclusively dedicated to Jewish culture like la Giuntina? Which specific literary logic did cause the massive import of Israeli literature in Italy starting from the Eighties?[9]

My criticism regards however just a marginal aspect of Gordon's volume, and it would be impossible even to begin to answer the questions suggested above in the absence of it. The impressive amount of information, the extraordinary clarity in the use of language and of conceptual distinctions that characterize the book make it bound to become a milestone of the Holocaust Studies in and regarding Italy.

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[8] See for instance R. Antelme, *La specie umana* (Turin: Einaudi 1954); A. Frank, *Diario* (Turin: Einaudi 1954); L. Poliakov, *Il nazismo e lo sterminio degli ebrei* (Turin: Einaudi 1955); E. Russell, *Il flagello della svastica* (Milan: Feltrinelli 1955); B. Piazza, *Perché gli altri dimenticano* (Milan: Feltrinelli 1956); P. Levi, *Se questo è un uomo* (Turin: Einaudi 1958); A. Nirenstajn, *Ricordati cosa ti ha fatto Amalek* (Turin: Einaudi 1958); R. De Felice, *Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo* (Turin: Einaudi 1961); A. Scharz-Bart, *L'ultimo dei giusti* (Feltrinelli: Milan 1961); G. Reitlinger, *La soluzione finale. Il tentativo di sterminio degli ebrei d'Europa* (Milan: il Saggiatore 1962); G. Debenedetti, *16 ottobre 1943* (Milan: il Saggiatore 1963); P. Levi, *La tregua* (Turin: Einaudi 1963); H. Arendt, *La banalità del male. Eichmann a Gerusalemme* (Milan: Feltrinelli 1964).

[9] See for an example of a similar research G. Sapiro, *L'Importation de la littérature hébraïque en France entre communautarisme et universalisme*, "Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales", 144, (2002): 80-98.

Todd Endelman, *Broadening Jewish History. Towards a Social History of Ordinary Jews* **(Oxford; Portland, Or.: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2011), pp. 368.**

by *Barbara Armani*

The title of the latest book by Todd Endelman - *Broadening Jewish History. Towards a Social History of Ordinary Jews* - is as ambitious as it is misleading. The volume is in fact a collection of essays previously published in other venues, and – as we shall see – the author does not concentrate on "ordinary Jews" as much as the title would suggest. The author states that he will attempt a comparative survey of the Jewish condition in the post-emancipation period, yet the focus of the comparison is centered, with the exception of the chapter on the Jews of Warsaw, on the English and German cases. This results in a rather schematic representation of the nuanced dynamics of integration for the Jewish communities in the wider European context.

The first part of the book is devoted to a reassessment of the historiography; the author identifies and critically discusses the cultural and political influences that have left a mark on the contents and methods of research dedicated to pot-emancipation Jewish studies (Chapters 1-5). The following chapters (5-14), offer the results of research conducted mostly on the biographies of exceptional Jews (in no way "ordinary Jews" as the title of the book would suggest), such as Benjamin Disraeli or the banker Jacob Rey – also known as the "Jew King", and to the description of the non-linear paths in and out of Judaism of great dynasties of the Jewish bourgeoisies such as the families of Edwin Montague or Adolphe Frankau.

The biographical key is used as a magnifying glass that allows the scholar to analyze the integration process, examining the many challenges brought about by emancipation between XVIIIth and the XIXth centuries. It is methodological option that the author justifies in consideration of the lack of data on community life: «In the case of liberal states like England and France" - Endelman writes – "where no church or government agency gathered data on conversions and intermarriage, historians must reconstruct the course of radical assimilation on the basis of so-called anecdotal evidence [...] this method, of course, can not disclose the extent of radical assimilation in a community, but can provided for a wealth of detail about the road to conversion, the concrete circumstances in which it occurred, and the success of former Jews and their descendants" (p. 248). Endelman's emphasis on the lack of sources useful to reconstruct the social practices of the minority (in its communal dimension) does not seem, however, entirely justified. To prove this are the numerous studies of the last two decades - contemporary to the article collected in the volume in question - on the life of Jewish communities in

nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[1] The lack of sources thus appears intertwined, in the works of Endelman, to a precise methodological choice whose implications deserve attention.

The adoption of a largely biographical approach to the study of Jewish history, even though it is certainly a fundamental element, tends to isolate two opposing models of Jewishness 1) a ductile and secularized identity that shifts and changes its contours according to the varied pathways chosen by single individuals, and in which it is quite hard to recognize the sense of an attachment to the Jewish collective 2) or, juxtaposed to the first model, a rigid identity, expressing behavioral models centered uniquely on religious beliefs and group solidarity.

In Endelman's book it seems that these two models are simultaneously present. Although the author will side in favor of a history of what ordinary Jews 'do' and not just what the cultural elites 'think', in his account the daily lives of ordinary Jews, poor or not, remains in the background. Endelman is concerned, in fact, with the way in which Jewish identity is transformed to become sometimes evanescent. He interrogates his sources to understand the reasons why several Jews tended to loosen their ties with religious tradition and with the community of origin until they were finally absorbed, through the practice of conversion, the culture of the majority. At the core of his analysis are the processes of radical assimilation, that is the choices of a minority of Jews who decided to abandon the religion of their fathers and embrace another faith (as well as another view of the world). Thus he leaves to the margins the paths of those who chose to remain Jews accepting a constant confrontation with Christian and secular cultures. Everyday practices, social networks, marital strategies, educational and professional qualifications of the peculiar figures studied by Endelman may be emblematic of complex social processes, yet they do not allow to fully grasp the relevance nor the forms of the collective life of a social community.

Nonetheless the entire volume revolves around an implicit and yet pivotal question: was there, in modern Europe, a collective dimension of Judaism? A 'difference' consciously sought and perceived as a sign of belonging to a common and specific tradition? Endelman's enquiry, focusing on the theme of apostasy, tends to highlight the elements of fragility in the social and cultural identities of emancipated Jews.

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[1] Such as, for example, *Assimilation and Community. The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe,* eds. J.Frankel and S. Zipperstein, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); M. Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* (New York; Oxford University Press, 1991); P. Hyman, *The Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace: Acculturation and Tradition in Nineteenth Century,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991); N.L. Green, *The Pletzl of Paris. Jewish immigrant workers in the "belle époque"* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1986).

The existence of a community whose boundaries are well defined is even more visible – according to Endelman - in Central Europe, where the Jews who were without confession or who had been baptized maintained strong personal and social relations with the community of origin. In such contexts the choice of abandoning Judaism stems, according to the author, from the discomfort produced by more or less open forms of rejection and discrimination. This thesis is justified by making use of a rigid opposition between the German model and the British one. The lowes conversion rate is made to be directly proportional to the degree of tolerance exhibited by the majority towards the minority. Unlike the German one, - notes Endelman - English anti-Semitism «was, more often than not social rather than political or occupational [...] it did not breed political parties and pressure groups, or become a permanent feature of political thinking»(p. 108). Such a view tends to emphasize the push towards conversion generated by German anti-Semitism, while disregarding to a large extent, the successes of the German-Jewish encounter. [2]

The value of the wide and rich portraits of Jewish family histories offered in many essays that make up this book in undeniable. Yet the principal interest of the book lies in the discussion of some theoretical and methodological paradigms which have influenced the way Jewish history has been conceived and written. Two, among many others, are the elements which I think deserve to be mentioned in particular:

1) the insistence on the inadequacy of definitions and classifications developed by liberal cultures to cope with the peculiarities of the Jewish condition. Endelman highlights the problematic nature of the well known paradigm centered on the public/private dichotomy, the disavowal of the social and ethno-cultural dimension of Jewishness (which is assigned a purely religious connotation), as well as the excessive trust in the transformative potency of laws and education. 2) The open and determined critique of a historiography celebrating the virtues of diaspora. Endelman stigmatizes as "diaspora legitimization" the tendency to over-emphasize the resilience and creativity of Jewish communities in post-emancipation societies. Such a view of the past would, according to him, the result of a convergence, it is unclear how self-conscious, of an anti-Zionist attitude and the emergence, in American academic circles, of a new and captivating social historiography. His attack is a harsh and direct one: "The classic zionist interpretation, with its pessimistic perspective on the health of diaspora communities was more or less dead in academic circles in the 1980s [...] the desire to celebrate diaspora, to celebrate the tenacity of diaspora communities, led historians to underestimate the demographic losses they sustained in the modern period. Many quantitative studies masked their extent by examining disaffiliation in the aggregate" (p. 62)

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[2] See for example D. Sorkin *The Transformation of the German Jewry, 1780-1840,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

Endelman's conclusions are even more radical, exhibiting a drastic rejection of the suggestions offered by cultural studies. He denies that historians attentive to the linguistic turn or other culturalist approaches may bring any new and relevant input to the history of modern Judaism. A history that, according to him, must be studied as the story of individuals in flesh and blood. [3]

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[3] Such a critique concerns studies of the 80's such as M. L Rozenblit, *The Jews of Vienna, 1867 – 1914* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983); D. Hertz, *The seductive conversion in Berlin, 1770-1809,* in *Jewish Apostasy in The Modern World,* ed. T. M. Endelman (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1987).

Simone Luzzatto, *Scritti politici e filosofici di un ebreo scettico nella Venezia del Seicento*, **a cura di Giuseppe Veltri (con la collaborazione di Anna Lissa e Paola Ferruta), Bompiani, Milano 2013, pp. VII-547.**

by *Cristiana Facchini*

During the year 1608, the well educated English traveler Thomas Coryat reached Venice. His long journey through Europe had been immortalized in one of the most renowned works in English travel literature, *Coryat Crudities,* where a vivid description of the city, of its socio-political structure, and of its culture were given.

During the voyage that took him from England to Italy, Coryat met some prominent scholars, among whom the great philosopher Casaubon. While in Venice, he made certain to visit the Jewish Ghetto that, given the Venetian topographic diligence in positioning the social-religious components of its political body, was located adjacent to the dwelling of Sir Wotton, the English ambassador. Besides the description of certain aspects of the synagogue's service, Coryat also narrated a long theological discussion entertained with a Jew from the ghetto concerning the personality of Jesus. Coryat's interlocutor, whether real or not, becomes an emblematic symbol of a new confrontation between Christianity and Judaism. Many have advanced the hypothesis that the interlocutor could have been Leone Modena, one of the Venetian rabbis who animated the cultural life of the ghetto throughout the first half of the 17th century. The Jewish Venice, in addition to the presence of the notorious Leone Modena, known for his work of extraordinary success, *Historia de' riti hebraici,* destined to reach an extremely widespread circulation in Europe, included personalities of great intellectual substance especially from the years of the Interdict through the first half of the 17th century. Along with the fascinating and ephemeral personality of Sara Copia Sullam, the 'Ghetto's poetess' who had to defend herself from the accusation of disbelief in the immortality of the soul, Simone (Simcha) Luzzatto, another eminent scholar and rabbi, also belonged to the Jewish Venice. His Italian works now appear in the well annotated and edited edition by Giuseppe Veltri and his team, from the University of Halle-Wittenberg (Simone Luzzatto, *Scritti politici e filosofici di un ebreo scettico nella Venezia del Seicento*, a cura di Giuseppe Vetri (con la collaborazione di Anna Lissa e Paola Ferruta), Bompiani, Milano 2013, pp. 547).

Simone Luzzato was born in Venice's ghetto in 1583 from a particularly wealthy family dedicated to commercial activities and to the political administration of the Venetian Jewish community. Precisely in his lifetime the Venetian ghetto was exposed to profound demographic tensions, caused by the migratory flow originating from the Ottoman dominions and from the

Iberian Peninsula. Sephardic Jews, *nuevos cristianos* and crypto-Jews settled within the narrow perimeters of the ghetto, certainly modifying its ethnic dimension, as well as its social structure and culture. Differently from many of his rabbinical colleagues of the time, Simone Luzzatto left behind few writings, both in Hebrew and in Italian. Although there were rumors among the Jews of that time confirmed by epistles, on his extraordinary competence with natural philosophy and mathematics, very little remains of his scientific heritage. Parts of Luzzatto's profound knowledge emerge with clarity in two Italian works that are now once again available to the contemporary reader.

In 1638 Luzzatto printed a text entitled *Discorso circa il stato de gl'hebrei*, which underwent a troubled gestation. We owe to Veltri both the meticulous reconstruction of the different stages of this text as well as of the discovery of a manuscript that reproduces, with a series of differences, its first part comprised of the in the first eleven considerations. Undoubtedly of apologetic nature, the *Discorso* distinguishes itself for its indisputable originality amidst the Jewish treatises, and it is not dissimilar from the previously mentioned Jewish-Italian masterpiece concerning Jewish rites written by Leone Modena. Subdivided in eighteen meaningful *considerazioni* touching upon a wide variety of themes and issues, the *Discorso* has been predominantly read as a modern appeal to religious tolerance based mainly on the principle of the Jews' economic usefulness. Admittedly, the theme of the instrumentality of the Jewish minority to the affluence of the state seems most recurrent in the subsequent essays. It also represents one of the hinges of the discourse on religious tolerance animating the European milieu between the 17th and 18th centuries. The treatise originated as a response to the crisis which broke out in 1636 when the Venetian Jewish community was seriously under the threat of expulsion.

The *Discorso* represented far more than a request for tolerance, better yet, it contains a series of diverse concepts regarding religious and political tolerance, while also attempting at a description of Judaism and its cultural and religious dignity. These themes, which may appear trivial to today's reader, characterize themselves for their conspicuous dose of courage in addition to reflecting the considerable freedom of expression granted in the territories of *La Serenissima*.

Among the many issues comprised in the eighteen considerations, the one regarding the concept of "collective guilt" can be considered truly remarkable especially given the great importance that it has played in Jewish history. The concept of "collective guilt" is analyzed by Luzzatto with competence and irony, and it will later appear in the rare defenses against the blood libel, written often by Jews under a pseudonym.

The *Discorso* had limited and polemic acceptance in the Italian milieu, while in Northern Europe its importance and significance were highly praised. Veltri traces its trajectory in the wake of the previous historiographical tradition. The *Discorso*, had been accepted, with sections translated into Latin, in the great bibliographical work published by the Christian hebraist Christian Johann Wolf (1727), who was often assisted by erudite Italian rabbis. Not surprisingly, this

text appears in the Dutch Jewish milieu where its arguments can be traced in Menasseh ben Israel and Spinoza. Successively, it assumed an eminent role in the works that the deist Toland dedicated to the "naturalization" of the Jews. In the German-speaking context, in addition to the use that Moses Mendelssohn will make of it, the *Discorso* appears in Herder's works and, according to Veltri, also in Sombart's.

Completely different is the case of the other text published for the first time after its appearance in 1651. This work, stemming from later contributions of Luzzatto, did not receive the required attention. We refer to the text entitled *Il Socrate overo dell'humano sapere. Esercizio seriogiocoso di Simone Luzzatto hebreo venetiano*. Few are the scholarly works that dedicated the necessary attention to this text, which has been analyzed chiefly by Jewish historiography. David Ruderman, certainly one of the most important contributions on the Jewish scientific culture in the modern age, placed this text within the 17th century line of thought. The American scholar insisted on the presence of themes connected to neostoicism and on the reception of Socrates in the Baroque and Renaissance culture. This fascinating text can be included in the scientific and philosophic debate of the early 17th century in which all the ancient and modern theories on natural philosophy are manifested in line with skeptic and Jesuit probabilism. If drawing exact conclusions about this second treatise may be considered premature, the publication of these two 17th century Jewish texts for the Italian audience highlights the extraordinary cultural integration of the Jews in the Baroque society and invite scholars to pursue this fascinating paths of historical research.

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Gianfranco Ragona, *Gustav Landauer: anarchico ebreo tedesco 1870-1919*, (Rome: Editori Riuniti University Press, 2010), pp. 448.

by *Steven Schouten*

Gianfranco Ragona, Assistant Professor of History of Political Ideas at the University of Turin (Italy), has written a well-composed study of the intellectual formation process of Gustav Landauer (1870-1919). A man of an 'insatiable intellectual curiosity' (p.9), Landauer synthesized very diverse ideas into an original social and political philosophy. Forgotten today, it influenced many intellectuals and groups in late 19th and early 20th century Europe, such as the Expressionist playwright Ernst Toller and the socialist Zionist youth movement Hashomer Hatzair.

Gustav Landauer: anarchico ebreo tedesco [In English: 'Gustav Landauer: German-Jewish Anarchist' or 'Gustav Landauer: Anarchist, Jew, German'] describes the intellectual formation process of the third son of an assimilated German-Jewish shoemaker family from Karlsruhe who became one of Germany's leading anarchist intellectuals. Landauer lived for most of his life in Berlin, where he was exposed to the dehumanizing consequences of the modern industrial society, such as poverty and prostitution, and which laid the foundations of his interest in socialist politics. In the early 1890s he was a member of the so called Independents, a group of revolutionary socialists that had been thrown out of the German Socialist Party (SPD) as a result of their critique to parliamentarianism, and that founded their own society with its own magazine, entitled *Der Sozialist* (The Socialist). Landauer edited this magazine for most of its existence. The Independents were a mix of both intellectuals and proletarians and they were torn by tensions between those who tended towards Marxism and Social Democracy and those who tended towards anarchism. Ragona shows very well how Landauer moved between these rival positions in the 1890s, and how he set himself towards developing a synthesis between these two strands for the rest of his life. According to Landauer anarchism particularly expressed (individual) opposition to the (authoritarian) ideas and institutions of both the state and the church, whereas socialism was an expression of, and a longing towards, community. Anarchism and socialism were complementary, for opposition was necessary to construct. Hence Landauer spoke of 'anarcho-socialism', a philosophy that he developed in various articles and books until his death in 1919. It culminated in his *Aufruf zum Sozialismus* (Call to Socialism, 1911).

Central to Landauer's ideas was the notion that socialism was both a spiritual creed and an expression of the human will. Socialism was possible at all times, as long as people believed in it, and *wanted* it; all it required, therefore, was *Geist* (spirit) and will. Landauer developed these ideas explicitly in opposition to

orthodox Marxism and its emphasis on class struggle and historical materialism. To Landauer, socialism was not the fruit of class struggle, but rather of the cooperation of all classes. Also, he believed that the seeds of change were already present in the actual, industrial-capitalist world. They were present in 'men' of genius, such as poets and artists, who translated the spirit of a pre-industrial, harmonious past into the present, contributing to a revolution of the minds of the population as a whole. These seeds were also present in small community-inspired and autonomous social initiatives, especially cooperatives, in which people peacefully exchanged foods and other goods. In so arguing, Landauer blended the ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche, Pëtr Kropotkin, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Fritz Mauthner, Meister Eckhart, and many others.

Ragona does an excellent job in tracing Landauer´s ideas back to their intellectual and political contexts. He also shows how various historical milieus were influenced by the ideas of Landauer. In this respect he pays particular attention to Landauer's influence on Martin Buber (pp. 214-229), a close friend of Landauer and a leading cultural Zionist in 20th century Germany and abroad. The author analyses Landauer's *Werdegang* chronologically. We learn little about Landauer as a person, but all the more about his intellectual formation process and its interrelation with its broader intellectual and political context

Ragona's book is not the first intellectual biography on Landauer, but it certainly is the most accurate and nuanced one at this time. It is here that we find a first strength of the book. Rather than offering an entirely new perspective on Landauer's intellectual contribution to history, the author syntheses earlier work on the thought of Landauer, such as that by Wolf Kalz, Charles Maurer, Eugene Lunn, Siegbert Wolf, Hanna Delf, Michael Löwy and Feruccio Andolfi. It is here, e.g. in synthesizing existing knowledge, that we find a second strength of the book.

Yet the author's synthesizing is implicit rather than explicit – a clear, over-arching synthesis is absent. Moreover, a hesitant yet promising hypothesis in the foreword of his book (p.11), which may have provided the basis for such an over-arching synthesis, is ill-defined. Pointing to Landauer's antiparliamentary and anti-statist philosophy, Ragona argues that the framing of that philosophy as a form of 'anti-politics', as common in scholarship, does not do justice to its *constructive* and essentially political dimension. He also argues that similar constructive anarchist views were found among other, international revolutionary socialists and non-conventional thinkers; according to the author, Landauer's philosophy should be seen within that wider, vaguely defined, context. To be sure, the author touches upon a relevant characteristic of Landauer's political philosophy, and indeed one finds a similar characteristic in the work of other, anarchically inspired theorists, but he does not systematically explore all this throughout his book. Also, questions remain. For

example, Ragona mostly defines his protagonist as an anarchist, yet Landauer, as mentioned, ascribed the *constructive* character of his theory to its *socialist* rather than to its anarchist dimension; so why not defining Landauer as a socialist or (perhaps better) as an 'anarcho-socialist' rather than as an anarchist in the subtitle of the book?

The subtitle of the book indicates that the author deals with Landauer (and his thought) from the perspective of three dimensions: e.g. that of anarchism, that of Judaism, and that of German nationalism. In reality the book primarily deals with the first dimension. The author's preoccupation with the above mentioned hypothesis, too, suggests a primal concern with Landauer as a political theorist, placing Landauer as a German and a Jew on a second plane. Ragona also fails to systematically analyze the interrelation of all three dimensions. His book has a 'foreword', but it would have benefitted from a more thorough introduction as well as from including a conclusion that could have defined the significance of each of these three dimensions, that of their interrelation, and that of their relation to the author's hypothesis.

Undoubtedly, the author is at his best when dealing with Landauer's *Werdegang* in its context of the socialist and anarchist movement. Ragona traces Landauer's thought especially back to Proudhon and to a lesser extent to Kropotkin, but he also points to Robert Owen, the socialists of the Fabian Society, Francisco Ferrer, and various others. Interestingly, he writes that Landauer did not fully grasp the richness and complexity of Marxist thought (pp. 337-41), yet he explicitly developed his anarcho-socialism as a critique to Marxism. Also, Ragona emphasis the importance of Landauer's experiences with practical experiments, especially that of the Berlin cooperative *Befreiung* (Liberation). By so doing, he aims at emphasizing that Landauer's ideas were not only spiritual but also *economical* in nature (p. 98). Here his book significantly differs from other intellectual biographies on Landauer, such as that by Lunn.

Less informed is Ragona on the history of (neo)romantic and *Völkisch* thought. Although he recognizes its influence on Landauer's thought, he also criticizes the work of the above mentioned Lunn and Maurer for relying too strongly on it in their analyses of Landauer's thought, and for calling that thought, consequentially, "romantic" or "mystical" (p.204). In my view, Ragona here misses the point by not understanding that the folkish and neoromantic sprang from the same intellectual roots, as Lunn also shows, that already influenced Landauer since an early age. Ideas around the *Volk* (e.g. folk, people) had an impact on Landauer just because he was deeply influenced by the Romantic tradition. The problem is that Ragona strongly relies on an outdated theory of

George L. Mosse, developed in his *The Crisis of German Ideology* (1964)[1], which sees the *Völkisch* and neoromantic philosophy from an *ex-post* perspective of the ideology of Nazi Germany, in which a racist and reactionary conception of folkish ideas played a central role. Mosse later corrected his teleological views,[2] but Ragona does not seem to have taken notice of this (pp. 201-205), though Lunn refers to this in his study on Landauer.[3] To be sure, Lunn aimed at further developing Mosse's thought by arguing that the *Völkisch* tradition in Landauer´s work was a fruit of a strong and long Romantic tradition. In so doing, he took distance from the teleological views of his teacher Mosse and reframed the folkish tradition in a much wider, not-necessarily rightwing, protofascist or racist context. Indeed, in my view, Lunn's work brilliantly shows that the Romantic tradition, in which the idea of the *Volk* played a central role, also inspired *leftwing* and other progressive thinkers, of which Landauer was his primary example. Due to his strong reliance on Mosse's outdated notion of folkish ideology, however, Ragona, unnecessarily downplays the relevance of the Romantic tradition in Landauer's thought, notwithstanding his references to the influence of Romantics, such as Hölderlin and Novalis.

With regard to the Jewish dimension, the author mainly reproduces and re-affirms the ground-breaking theory of Michael Löwy on an 'elective affinity' between Jewish messianism and (Landauer's) libertarianism.[4] Ragona dedicates an entire (and interesting) chapter on the Jewish dimension in Landauer's work, but it does not offer any substantial new perspectives, nor does it explain the interrelation of Landauer's work and Jewish identity.[5]

These critical notes notwithstanding, Ragona is clearly a skilled intellectual biographer who succeeds in keeping distanced yet committed to the work of Landauer at one and the same time. In so doing, he successfully revives both the richness and the limitations of Landauer´s intellectual thought. Moreover, the author is less interpretative than various other intellectual biographers, for example Lunn. He also has good pen; consequentially, he presents a very readable and attractive account of Landauer's ideas and intellectual formation.

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[1] George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: The Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964).

[2] See for example his "The influence of the Volkish Idea on German Jewry", in George L. Mosse, *Germans and Jews: The Right, the Left and the Search for a "Third Force" in Pre-Nazi Germany* (New York: H. Fertig, 1970).

[3] Eugene Lunn, *Prophet of Community. The Romantic Socialism of Gustav Landauer* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1973) 7, (footnote 4); 351; see also p. 261.

[4] Michael Löwy, *Rédemption et utopie: Le judaïsme libertaire en Europe centrale* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1988).

[5] In his foreword, Ragona writes that Landauer addressed one of the central themes in his work, e.g. the tension between individualism and community, in a 'nonconventional way guided by his identity as an anarchist and a Jew' (p. 9), suggesting some form of interrelation between Landauer's ideas and his Jewish identity.

Although he benefited much from earlier research, he critically studied his sources and literature, and also integrated a few new insights, such as on the significance of the cooperative *Befreiung.*

On balance, *Gustav Landauer* combines a wealth of sources and literature, few of which is new but all of which is well structured and synthesized, yet without an over-arching synthesis or context. It is currently the most sophisticated, up to date, accurate and complete account of Landauer's intellectual formation process. Hopefully an English translation will follow to disseminate it among a broader, international public, although for an English edition I would recommend further development of the ill-defined hypothesis laid out in the foreword of the book and the inclusion of both an introduction and a conclusion rather than a foreword only.

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E. Perra, *Conflicts of Memory. The Reception of Holocaust Films and TV Programmes in Italy, 1945 to the Present*, **(Peter Lang: Oxford; Bern; Berlin; Bruxelles; Frankfurt, M.; New York; Wien: 2010)**, **pp. VIII, 291.**

by *Guri Schwarz*

With this book published as volume 8 of the *Italian Modernities* series, edited by Pierpaolo Antonello and Robert Gordon, the reader is presented with a systematic survey of how Italian cinema and television coped with issue of the Holocaust, since the early post-war years up until today. This study by Emiliano Perra, Lecturer at the University of Winchester (UK), enriches our knowledge especially for what concerns the role played by the TV, which – unlike the film industry - had not previously been investigated.

The book does not consist solely in the presentation and analysis of films and TV programs concerning the Holocaust; the author also attempts to offer an analysis of the reception of such cultural products by analyzing commentaries, debates and reviews on various newspapers and journals. Thus the book proceeds on two distinct and yet intertwined planes. 1) The presentation of 69 films and 46 television programs related to the Holocaust and its representation. Each one is a source that is place into its cultural context and is object of analysis, the depth of which varies greatly according to the level of importance attributed to the single product. 2) The reconstruction, of the wider rhetorical context concerning the various films and TV broadcasts selected, thus offering important elements to understand how those products were received, and how the influenced collective memory.

The author makes a clear statement concerning the major theme that influenced Italian memory politics, determining the construction of cultural frameworks that affected both the production and reception of audiovisual artifacts concerned with the representation of racial persecutions, Fascism, Nazism and the Holocaust. The key paradigm, that changed shape over time transforming and adapting itself to the changing contexts, was that of the «myth of the good Italian». Italians represented themselves as guiltless, and free of any real responsibility concerning the origins, development and implementation of Mussolini's anti-Semitic campaign, which after 1943 lead to the deportation of about 9000 Italian Jews. The stories Italians narrated, the way they represented themselves through the screens of the cinema or the TV were stories of innocence and victimhood. This is not at all surprising, and is fully consistent with the findings of other studies conducted on Italian memory politics, nonetheless is interesting and important to finally have a documented and convincing overall reconstruction of how such cultural practices were adapted both to the big and to the small screens.

While highlighting and presenting in a convincing manner this element of continuity through the decades, the author does not renounce to offer – at the same time – a reconstruction of the different phases of Holocaust representation in Italy. The book is in fact subdivided into eight chapters; aside from the first one, serving as an introduction, and the seventh - dedicated to the specific theme of the debates concerning the role of the Vatican – the analysis moves from a chapter to the next following a clear chronological order.

Following the evolution of the productions and the debates from the immediate post-war up to the present this research shows how a turning point is represented by the 1980s. Only in that decade did a specific discourse on the Holocaust developed in film industry and in national television; before that moment the Holocaust or Holocaust-related stories were usually an occasion to present other, more pressing or more enticing themes, such as the anti-fascist struggle, or the role of the Church in caring for the oppressed populace. In the 1980s, with the shifting of the international climate and the emergence of an autonomous Jewish discourse on the Holocaust, Italian film industry and TV productions started considering the tragedy of the Jews by itself, awarding it growing attention.

That was when the memory boom started, reaching its peak in the Italian context at the end of the 1990s, with the production of Roberto Benigni's «La vita è bella» and the airing on national public television of Spielberg's «Schindler's List». In those two final decades of the century the Holocaust acquired a central role in Italian collective memory, just as the earlier anti-fascist narrative was visibly declining. Reflecting on this issue, which connects memory and the dramatic transformation of the Italian political scenario (with the emergence of Berlusconi allied with the neo-fascists who underwent a meaningful but non linear revision of their relationship to the fascist experience) the author concludes his book: he dedicates in fact a final chapter to the depiction of what he tentatively qualifies as a «post-antifascist memory».

This is a thorough, convincing and intelligently written work. Although the findings are not, for the most part, particularly original it represents a positive contribution both to the field of Italian memory studies and to the wider field of Holocaust studies.

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