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Note on contributors

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Dr. A. Clare Brandabur received her BA from Seattle University, and MA in Philosophy from Xavier University, with a thesis on Scotus and Aquinas. She received a Doctorate in Comparative Literature from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, with a dissertation on The Faust Theme as Descent Into Hell Myth. After having taught in the English Department at the University of Illinois for twelve years, Dr. Brandabur taught extensively in the Middle East starting in 1981 with three years at Birzeit University in Occupied Palestine, three years at Al-Ba'ath University in Syria as a Fulbright Professor, Bilkent University and Middle East Technical University in Turkey, the University of Bahrain (also as a Fulbright Professor), and at Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan, for four years before coming to Doğuş University in Turkey. Dr. Brandabur has published articles on James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, D. H. Lawrence, Thomas Hardy, William Butler Yeats, Naguib Mahfouz, Yaşar Kemal, Nazım Hikmet, George Orwell, Michael Ondaatje, George Eliot, Benjamin Disraeli and John Fowles, many of which have grown out of Conference presentations, and most of which show a comparative approach as well as, increasingly in recent years, an interest in post-colonialism.

Haidar Eid

Associate Professor Haidar Eid received his MA in postcolonial literature from Eastern Mediterranean University in Northern Cyprus. After teaching in Northern Cyprus, he went on to earn his PhD in English Literature and Philosophy from the Rands Afrikaans University in Johannesburg. With Ph.D. in hand, he took a series of positions, as Senior

lecturer at Vista University -- Soweto; assistant professor at Al-Quds Open university in Gaza/ Palestine; visiting professor in the department of foreign languages of The North China University of Science and Technology; co-ordinator of the Language Institute at Abu Dhabi University, Abu Dhabi, UAE and assistant professor at Mazoon College in Oman. Haidar Eid is an Associate Professor of English at al-Aqsa University in Gaza.

Khaled Ghazel

Khaled Ghazel holds a BA in English literature from the University of Tunis, Tunisia and an MA in postcolonial English literature from London Metropolitan University, UK . He taught English language and literature at secondary schools in Tunisia and at Abu Dhabi University, UAE. His main research interests include postcolonial theory, Edward Said, postcolonial Anglo – Arab diasporic literature, postcolonial literature and politics of Lebanon and world cinema. He is currently working on a research which examines political discourse as it pertains to postcolonial Anglophone Lebanese fiction. He now lives and teaches in Birmingham, UK.

John Halaka

John Halaka is a visual artist and professor of Painting and Drawing at the University of San Diego. He is currently producing a documentary series of films with the working title: *Desire and Resistance in Contemporary Palestinian Art*. The first film in that series, entitled *The Presence of Absence in the Ruins of Kafr Bir'im* was released

in November 2007. Halaka's artwork can be seen on his web site at johnhalaka.com. He can be contacted via e-mail at jhalaka@sandiego.edu.

Savera Kalideen

Savera Kalideen is an adult education materials writer and trainer, educated in her native South Africa, the United States and the United Kingdom. She has a Masters in Adult Education and has worked extensively in the health and development sector in South Africa. She has written educational and training materials on a range of health promotion topics including HIV and AIDS, violence against women, mental health, orphans and vulnerable children and parenting. She began volunteer teaching as a student activist in apartheid South Africa and continues to work as a teacher educator and trainer today. She is a Palestine Solidarity activist in Johannesburg, South Africa, where she currently lives. She has lived in several countries in the Middle East, visited Palestine twice and lived in Gaza for six months in 2006.

Ilan Pappé

Professor Ilan Pappé is chair in the Department of History in the University of Exeter, UK and the co-director of the Exeter Centre for Ethno Political Studies. His published works include *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (London and New York 1992), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London and New York 1999), *A History of Modern Palestine* (Cambridge 2004), *The Modern Middle East* (London and New York 2005) and *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (London and New York 2006).

Tanya Reinhart

Prior to her untimely death and after her courageous decision to leave what she called 'Apartheid Israel', Tanya Reinhart contributed this article on Edward Said. Tanya was a professor of linguistics and cultural studies at Tel Aviv University and the University of Utrecht. In January 2007 she became a Global Distinguished Professor at New York University. She was best known for her contribution to theoretical linguistics. She contributed a regular critical column to Yediot Aharonot, Israel's biggest daily newspaper. She viewed the Oslo agreements as a painful deception of the Palestinian people and the implementation of 'a sophisticated Israeli apartheid.' Her books include *The Road Map to Nowhere: Israel/Palestine Since 2003* (New York: Verso, 2006) and *Israel/Palestine: How to End the War of 1948* (New York: Seven Stories Press).

Kathy Zarur

Kathy Zarur is a PhD candidate in the Department of the History of Art at the University of Michigan. She is also completing a certificate in the interdisciplinary Museum Studies Program. Her dissertation will focus on the work of Tarek Al Ghousein (Palestine/ Kuwait/UAE), Hassan Musa (Sudan/France) and Walid Raad (Lebanon/ US).

Ali Abunimah

Ali Abunimah is the son of Palestinians who fled in 1948. He is the cofounder of a website on Palestine called ‘The Electronic Intifada,’ www.electronicintifada.org and the author of *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse* (Metropolitan Books, 2006)

Foreword

At this journal we have always sought scholarship in aid of the ancient human endeavour of a more equitable world. In this first themed issue of *Nebula* we bring you the articulations of scholars and intellectuals who have come together with the aim of exploring a one state solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. We cannot forget that before there was a Palestinian question, Europe and Zionists pondered the Jewish question, and at the time of its inception the Jewish question reflected persecutions of all kinds, happening throughout the world and its numerous histories and civilisations to numerous oppressed beings. At the moment that the Jewish question lost its international identity to the zeal of arch-nationalism, the question itself became a question of how to protect a military state that can only sustain itself through the promulgation of fear and flogging the dead horse of European and Western guilt over the brutal horrors of World War II and the Nazi advance. What is desperately needed, and what is explored in the excellent scholarship in this issue, is a reminder to arch-nationalists of any nation that the love of one's nation comes at the great cost of the ideological and sometimes literal exclusion of the rest of the world and, more importantly, the exclusion of those who dwell within the borders of an imperial nation which ghettoises its minorities, reminding us of those Jewish ghettos that began to form throughout Europe in the 1940s. It is my greatest wish that one day the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will be history, but not at the expense of the Palestinian people who live the daily reality of subtler and hence more acceptable forms of genocide.

Recently, Palestinians mourned the loss of the people's poet -- Mahmoud Darwish, while one of our most influential intellectuals, Edward Said, was

given up to eternity in 2003. Recently too was the passing of the great Egyptian filmmaker Youssef Chahine, all of whom helped articulate to the world the chronic history of colonisation which the Arab world and its peoples have endured for centuries. It is to these fine intellectuals, and to Tanya Reinhart, a contributor to this issue whose lecture is now being published posthumously that I hope to dedicate this issue of *Nebula*. I also thank Professor Haidar Eid for putting together this thoughtful collection, for his insight and scholarship and for choosing *Nebula* to house this collection of essays.

Samar Habib

Editor

Nebula

Introduction: Countering the Nakba.

By Haidar Eid

“Refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and ... compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property....made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.” *UN Resolution 194 passed in December, 1948 MidEast Web Historical Documents. www.mideastweb.org/194.htm*

“Although the two regimes are different, Israel’s laws and practices in the OPT certainly resemble aspects of apartheid, [. . .] and probably fall within the scope of the 1973 International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.” *John Dugard, UN’s Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, compares Israel to South Africa. Report Electronic Intifada. 27 February 2007.*

In 1974 the veteran Australian journalist John Pilger made a film entitled “Palestine is still the issue.”¹ The title of this film is the driving idea behind this collection of essays: Palestine is still the issue. What do Palestinian, American and anti-Zionist Israeli intellectuals, artists and academicians think of the various “peace processes” and failed solutions to 60 years of dispossession and Diaspora? Are there alternative solutions and is there an effective and legitimate resistance? This collection of analytical writing on the conflict is composed almost entirely of essays by intellectuals and activists critical of the dominant US/Israeli political ideology in the Middle East. By featuring voices of American, Israeli, and Palestinian intellectuals and activists from a broad cross-section of academic institutions and civil society organizations, this collection aims to provide an in-depth look at how alternative political programs and struggles can offer prospects for a just peace in Palestine.

Almost all contributors to this volume believe that the only just solution to the conflict is the establishment of a unitary state in which all inhabitants are treated equally regardless of their religion and ethnicity. What is envisioned is a solution based on resolutions of international legitimacy which accord the Palestinian people at least some of their basic rights -- i.e., self determination, establishment of an independent state, return of dispossessed refugees, a significant part of Arab Jerusalem as their capital, and the removal of all Jewish settlements. That such a solution seems to be further away than ever is, ironically, the direct consequence of the Oslo Accords signed in 1993. Because there was nothing in these accords to prevent Israel

from continuing land confiscation for Jewish settlement construction, nothing to prevent the continuing ethnic cleansing of indigenous Palestinians, and nothing to prevent the construction of the cyclopean Apartheid Wall which divides the West Bank into a series of disconnected Bantustans--- the point may already have been reached when a two-state solution is no longer possible. The establishment of a viable sovereign independent Palestinian state living side by side in peace with Israel – i.e. the “two state solution”-- would have required adequate areas of contiguous Palestinian land connected to each other, to Gaza, and access to Palestinian residential areas and the Holy Sites of East Jerusalem, all of which conditions are disappearing at an incredible pace. Hence the contributors to this volume are unanimous in their advocacy of the one-state solution—i.e. the establishment of a secular democratic state in Palestine in which ALL citizens are treated equally regardless of their religion, sex, and colour.²

A comprehensive peace, within this context, means that Israel would have to acknowledge the right of the Palestinians to exist as a people and their right to self determination as well as their right to human life. Such an acknowledgement seems a far- off dream in light of the actual history. A comprehensive and detailed documentation of the statistics of this history is provided by Nur Masalha in “The Historical Roots of the Palestine Refugee Question” (in *Palestinian Refugees: The Right of Return*, ed. Naseer Aruri, London: Pluto Press, 2001, pp36-67). Among the catastrophic figures cited by Masalha are the following: At its birth in 1948, Israel dispossessed 800,000 Palestinians and massacred hundreds of others. In 1967 Israel occupied the West Bank, Gaza, Golan, and Sinai, annexed Jerusalem and Golan, driving thousands more refugees from their homes with napalm. In order to remove the PLO leadership from Beirut, Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, and continues to expropriate Palestinian land, build settlements, and now constructs a gigantic Apartheid Wall. Israeli troops and settlers killed more than 2000 Palestinians during the first Intifada (1987-1993) and have killed more than 4000 during the current one, and continue to uproot trees, assassinate and/or imprison Palestinian leaders, ban and destroy books, demolish houses, and close universities. The totality of these practices, as Clare Brandabur points out in her article “Roadmap to Genocide”, manifests a deliberate attempt to annihilate and dispossess the Palestinian people and therefore falls under the rubric of genocide according to the definition of Raphael Lemkin as formulated in *Axis Rule and incorporated into the UN Convention on Genocide. (Axis Rule in Occupied Europe. Chapter IX “Genocide.” Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944).*

In an article entitled “Israelis adopt what South Africa dropped,” UN human rights repertoire John Dugard observed that the human rights situation in the occupied territories continues to deteriorate and called the conditions “intolerable, appalling, and tragic for ordinary Palestinians.” Significantly, Dugard made shocking parallels between the situation in the Palestine and his country South Africa under apartheid: “Many aspects of Israel’s occupation surpass those of the apartheid regime. Israel’s large-scale destruction of Palestinian homes, leveling of agricultural lands, military incursions and targeted assassinations of Palestinians far exceed any similar practices in apartheid South Africa.”([http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article6137.shtml/%22.](http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article6137.shtml/%22)) What the late Edward Said in *The End of the Peace Process (2000)*, finds “astounding”, is how far “after 52 years, supporters of Israel will go to suppress the fact that these years have gone by without Israel restitution, recognition, or even acknowledgment of Palestinian human rights and without connecting that suspension of rights to Israeli official policies” (*The End of the Peace Process:*

Oslo and After (2000). New York: Pantheon Books. 25-26).

Nor is there a light at the end of the tunnel for the Palestinians; a solution that guarantees equality for all inhabitants of historic Palestine. Neither “Oslo Agreements,” nor “The Road Map” guarantees their minimum rights: a sovereign integral independent Palestinian state, the Right of Return, Jerusalem as their capital, removal of settlements within the borders of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. And this is not to mention the cultural rights of 1.3 million “Arab Israeli” citizens of Israel, as John Halaka’s “Outsiders on the Inside” argues. Laws analogous to the Nazi Germany Nuremberg Laws (governing Jews under that state’s Racial Policy asserting Aryan race superiority) and similar also to Apartheid South African segregation and Pass Laws, are used today to govern the Arab native inhabitants, whether citizens (Palestinians residing in Israel) or otherwise (West Bank and Gaza residents). In a cruel irony of history, the perpetrator this time is the government of Israel, a state founded as a homeland for the Jews who were victims of Nazism. Thanks to unconditional American support, whatever Israel says goes; it has ignored over five dozen UN Resolutions condemning or censuring it for its actions against the Palestinians, demanding that it end them. But Israel flaunts the rule of law, and gets away with it; out of 80 American Vetoes used in the UN Security Council, 41 were in defence of Israel.

Critics of the Palestinians blame them for turning down every “opportunity” offered them by the occupier. A particularly deceptive example of such blaming is that the Palestinians “blew it” when they turned down Ehud Barak’s “generous offer” in Camp David in 2000. In fact, this argument is a lie that has been taken seriously even by those who should know that it is no more than propaganda. In many debate son TV and radio, and articles in main-stream papers, Zionist supporters of Israel insist that this was the case without mentioning that they have never read Barak’s offer simply because it was never documented! But the point is that the common assumption has been that the victims are to blame, not the Israelis, even though according to International Law the latter are the occupiers. While Barak’s “generous offer” was never published officially, Americans habitually give Israeli spokesmen the benefit of the doubt. As the distinguished American intellectual Noam Chomsky explains:

The Clinton-Barak stand (left vague and ambiguous) was hailed here as ‘remarkable’ and ‘magnanimous,’ but a look at the facts made it clear that it was -- as commonly described in Israel -- a Bantustan proposal; that is presumably the reason why maps were carefully avoided in the US mainstream. It is true that Clinton-Barak advanced a few steps towards a Bantustan-style settlement of the kind that South Africa instituted in the darkest days of Apartheid. Just prior to Camp David, West Bank Palestinians were confined to over 200 scattered areas, and Clinton-Barak did propose an improvement: consolidation to three cantons, under Israeli control, virtually separated from one another and from the fourth canton, a small area of East Jerusalem, the center of Palestinian life and of communications in the region. And of course separated from Gaza, where the outcome was left unclear. (“On Israel/Palestine.” Chomsky interviewed by Z/Net April 2, 2002.

www.comsky-into/interviews/20020402.htm.19k)

The essay in this volume by the late Tanya Reinhart was among the very last things she wrote before her untimely death. In her *Edward Said memorial Lecture of Adelaide University*, (2006) Professor Reinhart argues that Barak's package would have given Palestinians a non-sovereign, truncated "state" in return for a final termination of all rights and claims in historical Palestine, including the right of return. Either Palestinians give up sovereignty over the Muslim and Christian holy places in Jerusalem and relinquish the Palestinian Right of Return in exchange with a non-sovereign demilitarized Palestinian State in parts of the West Bank (amounting to less than 65%) and Gaza Strip (minus Jerusalem,) or reject the whole offer out right, which they did.

Where does that leave the national rights of the Palestinian people who have already accepted a political settlement based on international resolutions? The Palestinian people, who owned 90% of historic Palestine in 1948, are now "allowed" to take back 22%, according to UN resolutions 242 and 338. (UN Resolution 194 calls for the right of refugees to return.) In fact, the "missed opportunity" would not even consider the basic right of Palestinian refugees to return. And Israel has no political, legal, or moral responsibility for the plight of the Palestinians. The refugee issue is dealt with on "humanitarian" grounds, within the framework of individual cases of family reunification. This clearly illustrates Israel's attempt to relinquish all responsibility for the forceful emigration of Palestinian refugees and the destruction of Palestinian villages.³

Barak's demand that 80% of the present settlements be annexed to Israel constitutes a drastic division of the West Bank into four isolated cantons. The settlements are connected by bypass roads that are not only under complete Israeli control but also swallow up thousands of acres of Palestinian lands. Many of these settlements are built on Palestinian water aquifers, thus depriving Palestinians from access to water resources.⁴

In view of the facts on the ground in terms of the massive and growing Jewish settlements and the huge areas taken up by Jews-only roads and the Apartheid Wall, one may ask in all seriousness whether the Oslo accords and the Camp David proposals really constituted a serious Israeli attempt to find lasting solutions? Although to the colonized native Palestinians, whose rights are being determined by the US/Israel cabal, this might sound like a rhetorical question, it sheds some light on the discourse of domination that is prevalent in the Middle East at the turn of the Millennium. But there are more fundamental questions that need to be problematized. What needs to be emphasized, first and foremost, is the 'bantustanizing' and 'apartheidizing' nature of colonial Zionism. As Haidar Eid in his article "Alternative Story" holds, the severe damage done by the Oslo accords to the Palestinian situation, and their contribution to diverting international attention from the suffering of the Palestinian refugees, makes an objective appraisal more difficult. However, that is not to say that the international community does not hold responsibility in eliminating the roots of that suffering. The fact that some black South Africans accepted the Bantustan system did not convince the international community of the legitimacy and 'humanity' of apartheid.

Sixty years have passed since the establishment of the state of Israel and the dispossession and displacement of the Palestinian people; sixty years without a serious attempt to resolve a conflict that has caused

pain and horror to millions of innocent people in the Middle East. With the end of the “two state solution,” what we are left with is the South African and North Ireland model: a Secular Democratic State for all of its citizens.

Notes

¹ See John Pilger “Palestine is Still the Issue.” *Johnpilger.com: The Films and Journalism of John Pilger*. www.johnpilger.com/page.asp?partid=16 February 2008

² For more on the one-state solution see Ali Abunimah’s *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006); Virginia Tilley’s *The One-State Solution: A Breakthrough for Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Deadlock* (Manchester: University of Michigan Press, 2005) and Ghada Karmi’s *Married to Another Man: Israel, the Palestinians and the One-State Solution* (London: Pluto Press, 2007).

³ See the works of Israeli new historians:

Books by Benny Morris

(2008). *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War*. New York: Yale University Press

(1988). *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem 1947-1949*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press .

(2004). *The Birth of the Palestine Refugee Problem Revisited* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

(2001). *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict 1881-2001*. London: Vintage

(1994). *1948 and After: Israel and the Palestinians*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Books by Illan Pappé,

(2006). *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, London and New York: Oneworld

(2005). *The Modern Middle East*, London and New York: Routledge

(2003). *The Modern History Palestine, One Land, Two Peoples*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

(2003). *The Aristocracy: The Husaynis; A Political Biography*, Jerusalem: Mossad Byalik, (Hebrew),

(1992,1994). *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947-1951*, London and New York: I.B. Tauris

(1988). *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1951*, London: St. Antony's College Series, Macmillan Press; New York: St. Martin's Press,.

Books by Avi Shlaim

(1988). *Collusion across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement and the Partition of Palestine*. Oxford: Clarendon

(1990 and 1998). *The Politics of Partition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

(1995). *War and Peace in the Middle East: A Concise History*. London: Penguin

(2000). *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*. London: Penguin Books

(2007). *Lion of Jordan: The Life of King Hussein in War and Peace*. London: Penguin

⁴ Refer to Jimmy Carter's (2006) *Palestine: Peace, Not Apartheid*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

In Memory of Edward Said.

A lecture by Tanya Reinhart¹

I have never met Edward Said face to face. Our exchange was through the written words, often only through public written words. Still, he has had a formative role in my life. When I think about Said, I don't just think about the intellectual, the sharp political analyst, the voice of reason and justice, but I think about him in the context of life in exile – his life as part of the Palestinian Diaspora. I think about losing the landscapes of your childhood and your collective roots, which are such a formative part of your identity. In this case, Said's exile is indirectly also my responsibility as a member of the oppressing people – the people who brought this about. I would like to read from the opening paragraphs of my *Israel Palestine*.

The state of Israel was founded in 1948 following a war which the Israelis call the War of Independence, and the Palestinians call the *nakba* – the catastrophe. A haunted, persecuted people sought to find a shelter and a state for itself, and did so at a horrible price to another people. During the war of 1948, more than half of the Palestinian population at the time – 1,380,000 people – were driven off their homeland by the Israeli army. Though Israel officially claimed that a majority of the refugees fled and were not expelled, it still refused to allow them to return, as a UN resolution demanded shortly after the 1948 war. Thus, the Israeli land was obtained through ethnic cleansing of the indigenous Palestinian inhabitants.

This is not a process unfamiliar in history. Israel's actions remain incomparable to the massive ethnic cleansing of Native Americans by the settlers and government of the United States. Had Israel stopped there, in 1948, I could probably live with it. As an Israeli, I grew up believing that this primal sin our state was founded on might be forgiven one day, because the founders' generation was driven by the faith that this was the only way to save the Jewish people from the danger of another holocaust. But it didn't stop there.²

But it did not stop there. In 1967 Israel conquered and occupied the Palestinian West Bank and the Gaza strip, and a new wave of refugees had to go into exile. Since then Israel has been occupying these territories with more and more aggressive means of oppression. Today, 3.5 million Palestinians live under Israeli occupation.

The question that Said faced as a member of the oppressed society and I – as a member of the oppressors' society was what means are open for resisting such blatant violations of basic human rights and international law. During the years of the occupation two schools of thought have developed on this question. One is the way of arms, of liberation by force. Among the Palestinians at the time were those who were speaking of “throwing the Jews to the sea” – the idea being that the elimination of Israel is the only way

to eventually achieve Palestinian liberation. The other model of struggle, which Said had kept reminding us of, is the way paved by Mandela in South Africa. The blacks in South Africa vastly outnumbered the whites, and probably it would have been possible for them to believe they could eventually throw away all the white residents that have been their oppressors for years. But that is not what they chose. They chose instead to offer a solution based on equality and human dignity for all the residents of South Africa, including the whites.

In March 2001, Said wrote from South Africa, where he attended a conference on values in education. He quotes from Mandela's speech at the conference, noting two phrases that have deeply touched him: "The first phrase – the campaign against Apartheid "was one of the great moral struggles" that "captured the world's imagination." The second phrase was in his description of the anti-apartheid campaign not simply as a movement to end racial discrimination, but as a means "for all of us to assert our common humanity." Implied in the words "all of us" is that all of the races of South Africa, including the pro- Apartheid whites, were envisaged as participating in a struggle whose goal finally was coexistence, tolerance and "the realization of humane values."³ Said explains that the struggle of the Blacks in South Africa could attract the imagination and dreams of the entire world, because it offered the whole society—even the Whites who apparently benefited from the Apartheid—the only way that enables the preservation of basic human values.

The Palestinian struggle, says Said, must be based on the understanding that the Jewish people are here to stay. The struggle must strive towards a settlement that will enable coexistence based on human dignity, a settlement that "will capture the world's imagination":

We would have to provide a solution to the conflict that, in Mandela's second phrase, would assert our common humanity as Jews and Arabs. Most of us still cannot accept the idea that Israeli Jews are here to stay, that they will not go away, any more than Palestinians will go away. This is understandably very hard for Palestinians to accept, since they are still in the process of losing their land and being persecuted on a daily basis. But, with our irresponsible and unreflective suggestion in what we have said that they will be forced to leave (like the Crusades), we did not focus enough on ending the military occupation as a moral imperative or on providing a form for their security and self-determinism that did not abrogate ours...

Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs are locked in Sartre's vision of hell, that of "other people"... Therefore, it is up to us to provide the answer that power and paranoia cannot. It isn't enough to speak generally of peace. One must provide the concrete grounds for it, and those can only come from moral vision, and neither from "pragmatism" nor "practicality." If we are all to live -- this is our imperative -- we must capture the imagination not just of our people, but that of our oppressors. And, we have to abide by humane democratic values.⁴

Since at least 1988, a majority of Palestinian society subscribed to this second model. In November 1988, at the peak of the first Palestinian Intifada, the nineteenth session of the Palestine National Council

(PNC)—the top forum of Palestinian organizations—was held in Algiers under the title “Intifada Meeting.” In an overwhelming majority vote of 253 to 46, it passed resolutions accepting the partition of the historical Palestine along the lines of the pre-1967 borders, which for the Palestinians means accepting only 22% of their historical land as their future state. The PNC’s resolutions called for a peaceful settlement of the conflict, and denounced terrorism in all its forms. An enthusiastic Edward Said, who was present at the historic meeting said, “Most of us there had grown up with the reality (lived and remembered) of Palestine as an Arab country, refusing to concede anything more than the exigency of a Jewish state, won at our expense in the loss of our land, our society, and literally uncountable thousands of lives... For the first time, also, the declarations were implicitly recognizing a state that offered us nothing whatever.”⁵

But we gather here today in times of real difficult test to this vision of Mandela and Said and the spirit of the solution that could capture the world’s imagination. Right now Israel is bringing about the third Palestinian Nakba. There was one in 1948, another in 1967, and the third one is happening today. With very little coverage and reporting, Palestinians are being pushed out of their land, being locked in smaller and smaller enclaves with restrictions on their movement. Palestinians die every day, not just from shooting and bombardment by the Israeli army. They can die at the roadblocks - if someone has a heart attack, he may not be able to get to the hospital on time - or because they were injured by the Israeli army. In every Israeli attack, along with the dead, there are many more injured. The injured are not counted in the statistics of evil, but what are their chances to survive with the collapse of the medical system in the territories?

To understand the present Israeli project, let us go back in history. Ever since the 1967 occupation, Israeli military and political elites deliberated over the question of how to keep maximum of the occupied land with minimum Palestinian population. Two models for a “solution” have developed in Israeli political thinking. One, which was dominant in military circles and whose primary spokesman was Ariel Sharon—assumed that, given Israel’s military superiority, Palestinian resistance could eventually be broken. It is necessary, therefore, to break any form of Palestinian organization or power base, as Sharon did in Lebanon in 1982. On its longer term perspective, this approach maintained that it should be possible to find more sophisticated ways to achieve a 1948-style “solution.” It would only be necessary to find another state for the Palestinians. “Jordan is Palestine”—was the phrase that Sharon coined in the 1980s.

The other model developed since the eighties in the “dovish” circles of the Labor party. Its Alon Plan proposed annexation of 35-40 percent of the territories to Israel, and either Jordanian-rule, or some form of self-rule of the rest of the land on which the Palestinians actually live. In the eyes of its proponents, this plan represented a necessary compromise. They believed it is impossible to repeat the 1948 “solution” of mass expulsion, either for moral considerations, or because world public opinion would never allow it to happen again.

The Oslo accords in 1993, and the agreements that followed, were in effect the realization of the Labor’s Alon plan. This is not how it was perceived at the time. The Palestinians, as well as the Israeli left, have always rejected the Alon plan, which robs them of 40 percents of what is left of their historical land, and keeps even the rest under Israeli control with a restricted autonomy. The Palestinians, the Israelis and the

world were led to believe that Israel, under Rabin, has finally changed direction and is willing to end the occupation and implement UN resolution 242, after an interim period of five years. Nevertheless, as I detail in my *Israel/Palestine*, right from the start, what Israel implemented during the Oslo years (1993-2000) was the Alon plan. Rabin himself declared this willingness to accept this plan already in 1983, and its realization came in 1993. In return for Arafat's commitment to control Palestinian frustration and guarantee the security of Israel, Rabin appeared willing to allow the Palestinian Authority to run the enclaves in which Palestinians still reside. Gradually it became apparent to the proponents of the Alon plan that they could even extend the "Arab-free" areas beyond the 35 percent to which Rabin agreed already in 1983. In practice, during the Oslo years, the Palestinians have been dispossessed of about 50 percent of their lands, which are now state lands, security zones and "land reserves for the settlements." However, it appeared that they will be satisfied with this 50 percent, and would allow the Palestinians some sort of self-rule existence in the other 50 percent. Thus, the model developed during the Oslo years was of classical apartheid.

However, the other model, of massive ethnic cleansing, never died out in the army, or in the circle of "political generals," whose career moved from the military to the government. In their eyes, even this apartheid system was giving too much to the Palestinians, because from a longer-range perspective, even a partial autonomy may enable political frameworks for future Palestinian resistance to the occupation. Right from the outset of the Oslo agreements, two dominant voices against them were that of Ehud Barak, then chief of staff, and Ariel Sharon, then a leader of the opposition Likud party.

In 1999, the army got back to power through the "political generals"—first Barak, and then Sharon. The road opened to correct what they viewed as the grave mistake of Oslo. In *Israel/Palestine*, I argue that the current escalation of hostilities that started at the end of September 2000 was not a spontaneous outburst of violence, but rather a calculated and well-prepared move by the Israeli military designed to undo the Oslo arrangements. In order to achieve this, it was first necessary to convince the Israeli society and the Western world that the Palestinians were not willing to live in peace and were in fact threatening Israel's very existence. Barak succeed in doing this with his "generous offer" fraud in the July 2000 Camp David summit. By 2002, under Sharon, the process of restoring direct military control of the occupied territories was completed. Israel started its massive project of ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians along the wall that it began constructing in 2003.

To get a grasp of what drives the wall project, let us look at the map I distributed.⁶ This is the only formal map that Israel has ever presented as its proposal for the final agreement. It was presented by then Prime Minister Ehud Barak in the Taba-Eilat negotiations in May 2000 (two months prior to the Camp David summit), and was originally published in Hebrew, in *Yediot Aharonot*, on May 19 of that year. According to this map, the darker areas are to be under "Palestinian sovereignty," and together they comprise 60 percent of the West Bank. The rest of the West Bank will remain Israeli—the white areas will be immediately annexed, and the striped areas will be held "temporarily." The Palestinian's "sovereign" land is divided to four isolated enclaves, with no territorial continuity.

To understand what type of life the Palestinians can expect inside their 60 percent, we may examine the

situation inside the darker areas of the map. This is the situation that existed in the West Bank already by 2000. (The planned Palestinian enclaves correspond to areas A -full Palestinian control, and B- partial Palestinian control, as determined by the various post Oslo agreements.) In these areas, there are still about 40 isolated Israeli settlements (white triangles), connected by security roads and military zones. So the lighter gray areas inside the dark areas are Israeli-controlled lands, roads, and military posts. These further divide the enclaves internally to smaller units surrounded by Israeli military roads and posts. The May plan, made no mention of ever dismantling these settlements, or changing the internal situation of the enclaves. Two months later, in the Camp David summit of July 2000, it was miraculously declared that Israel's plan is to give back to the Palestinians 90% of their land. But no maps or territorial details of this supposed new plan were given. Though time does not permit discussing this here, in the plan Barak proposed at Camp David as well, the situation inside the enclaves was to remain the same⁷.

So, this map remains the only formal plan Israel has ever proposed for the final agreements and since the end of 2000, Israel has been working intensely on implementing this map. While before it was just a proposal awaiting international acceptance, the wall project that Sharon started aims at determining it as a fact on the ground. At the present stage the wall is being built essentially on the line separating the dark (Palestinian) areas from the white area that is to be annexed to Israel, on the west side of the West Bank. Work on the eastern wall that will separate the West Bank from the Jordan River has not started yet, but Israel has been taking systematic steps to isolate these areas from the rest of the West Bank, and to push Palestinians in the Jordan valley out of their land.⁸

The most horrifying aspect of the present wall project is what happens inside the white areas in the map, the ones designated to be eventually formally annexed to Israel. These areas on the map are dotted with gray spots that represent Palestinian villages and towns. The white areas around them are their lands. The wall project is to separate the villages from their lands – the lands will be on the Israeli side of the wall, but the villages will remain in the Palestinian enclaves. Therefore, the present line of the wall is not straight, as in this map, but cutting around villages, creating in many areas a loop that surrounds a town or a village, leaving only one exit connecting them to the West Bank. The wall, thus, severs the towns and villages from the agricultural lands from which they live. The wall also separates the villages from each other permanently, and turns them into isolated enclaves. In some cases, the villages will not have any connecting passage to other Palestinian West Bank land, but will remain fully on the Israeli side of the wall, surrounded by an Israeli system of barriers that separate them from their fields and from the rest of the West Bank, turning them into actual open air prisons.

According to UN figures, summarized also in the ruling of the International Court of Justice, as a result of the construction of the wall, 237,000 Palestinians will be stranded outside the wall and disconnected from the West Bank. Around 160,000 other Palestinians will be included on the West Bank side of the wall, but will reside in almost completely encircled communities, cut off from their farmland, their jobs, universities and schools. Similar figures are also openly reported in the Israeli media.⁹ The route of the current wall, thus, cuts off 400,000 Palestinians from their sources of livelihood and imprisons them in isolated enclaves. What will happen with these people, whose land is now being grabbed by Israel? With no means

of subsistence, they will be forced to leave those enclaves over the next few years to seek employment at the peripheries of West Bank cities and towns. In this way, sections of the West Bank that border Israel will be “cleansed” of Palestinians. This is already happening in Qalqilya and Tul Karm, where the wall was completed in 2003. Qalqilya used to be a flourishing town, a local center of commerce and agriculture. The wall separated it from its lands and encircled the town on all sides, leaving a bottleneck controlled by the army as the only exit connecting it to the West Bank. Now Qalqilya is already a dead city. Many of its inhabitants have fled to seek subsistence at the edges of other West Bank towns; those who remain have succumbed to the despair and decline that characterizes prisoners.

The word “transfer” evokes the horrific collective memory of trucks arriving in the middle of the night to transport Palestinian villagers across the border, which happened in a number of places in 1948. But transfer along that model is not possible in today’s world. Today transfer must be accomplished more slowly and surreptitiously. Right now, 400,000 Palestinians are being destined for such slow and invisible transfer away from their land. They are being pushed into the four big enclaves in the West Bank that Israel has allocated for Palestinian existence. At the same time, Israel has been escalating its long-standing policy of hidden forced migration of Palestinians out of Palestine. Recently, it forces out Palestinians with international passports who have been living in the territories for years.

But still, there are 3.5 million Palestinians living in the enclaves, even if many of them are forced out, many more are still there. What does Israel plan for these remaining Palestinians? To hold 3.5 million people under occupation, with no human rights, the question that has always bothered the occupiers is how to control these people in a way that will not disturb the life of the occupiers. The solution that Israel has developed under Sharon is a complex system of open-air prisons. The Palestinians are being pushed, into sealed and fenced enclaves. The Israeli army controls the Palestinians from outside the sealed enclaves, but also enters them at will. As far as I know, this model of occupation - imprisoning a whole nation, not just a group of people, as means to control its people and gain quiet for the occupiers new in history - is an unprecedented model of occupation, and it is being executed with frightening speed and efficiency.

The prison model was first developed in the Gaza strip, and was already established during the Oslo years. Under Rabin, an electronic fence was constructed that closed the Strip on all sides bordering with Israel. Thus, during the Oslo years over one million people had already become prisoners on their own land, with movement in or out permitted only through Israeli-controlled security gates, and in most cases, not permitted at all. Since Oslo, Israel has controlled every aspect of the economy of Gaza, including when and how much goods can go in and go out. Israel has used economic strangulation as a major means of control already before the present escalation. Since the evacuation of the Gaza settlements, the Israeli control from the outside has only tightened. What we witness now is complete strangulation of the Gaza strip, which has turned into a big open-air prison, fully controlled by the prison wardens. The goal of the present Israeli leadership is to establish the same situation also in the West Bank. Just a few years ago, it seemed that this would be impossible. The West Bank is a much bigger area than Gaza, with some sort of functioning economy. But in reality, the wall project, the road-blocks, the economic strangulations, and the political persecution of the Palestinian elected political institutions are designed to achieve the same goal.

A question which has been preoccupying the international community is how to deal with states that systematically violate international law, criminal or rogue states. By all criteria, Israel is such a rogue state. In a just and well-ordered world, the international institutions would impose sanctions on Israel, as was done with other rogue states in the past. But in the present world, not only this is not happening, but the West has decided to impose boycott and sanctions on the Palestinians instead. Since the Palestinian elections in January 2006, All international aid to the Palestinians, including funds for NGOs has been frozen. The West collaborates as Israel withholds the tax money that it owes the Palestinians. The Palestinian economy is completely paralyzed, with no salaries, no social services, no medical care or functioning hospitals.

Just two years ago, the Western world celebrated the dawn of democracy in the Middle East, with Arafat departing, and the Palestinian people preparing for their first democratic elections. According to Jimmy Carter's report in the "Herald Tribune", the elections were "honest, fair, strongly contested, without violence and with the results accepted by winners and losers. Among the 62 elections that have been monitored by... the Carter Center, these are among the best in portraying the will of the people."¹⁰ In a just and well-ordered world, it would be unthinkable for a government that was elected in this way to be disqualified because Israel does not like the choice of the electorate in question. But in a world in which the U.S. rules, might is right, and might can define democracy as it chooses. Thus it was announced that the outcome of the Palestinian elections would not be recognized until three "mantras" were fulfilled. Meanwhile the Palestinian people would be punished and starved through an economic boycott, in the hope that this will lead to the collapse of the elected government.

The first mantra is that Hamas should "renounce violence". What exactly is the substance of this demand? In January 2005, Hamas announced its resolution to replace armed struggle with political struggle and agreed to a unilateral ceasefire ("calm"). In the two years since then, Hamas has not perpetrated a single terrorist attack. According to Israeli security sources, since the election, Hamas did not even participated in the launching of Qassam rockets from Gaza,¹¹ until Israel's attack on the Gaza strip in the summer of 2006.

The second mantra is that Hamas must honor previous accords. In an interview with Washington Post, Hamas PM Haniyeh explained that according to the Oslo Accords of 1993, after an interim period of five years, a Palestinian state was to have come into existence. But Israel violated every clause of the Accords and continued to colonize and to dispossess Palestinians of their lands. From now on, he says, his government will only honor accords that are good for the Palestinian people.

The third mantra is that the Hamas government should recognize the existence of Israel. But the fact of the matter is that Israel is the side that does not recognize the right of the Palestinians to exist as a state. As we saw, at the Algiers meeting of the Palestine National Council in 1988, the Palestinian people undertook to recognize the partition of the country and to be satisfied with a state within the 1967 borders. Israel has not done a thing since then to prove that it is prepared to accept such a compromise. In a just world, the international demand should be for mutual recognition.

For Israel, the results of the Palestinian election are just the pretext to declare war on the Palestinian

people. For Israel, there has never been a Palestinian partner for peace. First, Arafat was declared untrustworthy, then Abbas was declared too weak, and now it is Hanyeh's turn. Since ending the occupation is the one thing Israel is not willing to consider, the option it promotes is breaking the Palestinians by devastating brutal force. They should be starved, bombarded, terrorized for months, until they understand that rebelling is futile, and accepting prison life is their only hope for staying alive. Their elected political system, institutions and police should be destroyed. In Israel's vision, the occupied territories should be ruled by local gangs collaborating with the prison wardens. Since the Palestinian elections, Israel has been exploiting the wave of Islamophobia in the U.S. and Europe, to engage them as active partners in this war on the Palestinians, doing their part in suffocating, starving, and weakening the Palestinian people, as Israel carries out its mission of destruction.

These are very dark days, and we are back to the question of the options of struggle - Edward Said's question that we started with. The pole that is calling for forceful solutions - solutions by elimination of the aggressor - is strengthening today more than it ever had in the past. Iran's president Ahmadinejad is giving a voice to this pole, when he declares that the Arab world should no longer pay the price for the Jewish Holocaust - Israel should be dismantled and the Jews should return to Europe. Many have lost hope in the option of forcing Israel politically to change its policies, and this line of thinking is gaining support in many people's hearts. But the other model, paved by Mandela and advocated by Said, is still just as much there.

The other lesson of Mandela and the South African struggle, that I have not mentioned before, was that the struggle should be international. The South African white domination collapsed and crumbled because of international pressure. It started with small students groups calling for boycott and divestment. It grew into pressure on companies doing business with South Africa and eventually it forced governments to act and impose sanctions on South Africa. But this is a model of non violent political struggle. If, as a professor, you decide you are not participating in a conference in South Africa, or in Israel, you are not doing any violent act. But you choose to show that you will not collaborate with a society that allows such crimes to happen.

This road of international struggle is still open. In fact, the last few years were not just years of victory to the Israeli expansion policies. Despite the apparent success of pro Israel lobbies in silencing any criticism of Israel, during this period opposition to Israel's policies has substantially grown in people's minds all over the world. For instance, there was a poll in Europe two years ago, regarding which states people view as most dangerous to world peace. And the majority of Europeans thought it was Israel (even more than the U.S., which, of course, is not true). It seems that the success of propaganda is only partial. Israel's violence is silenced and ignored in the media, and in the acts or statements of governments. Still, people's awareness of the situation is only growing.

In my last book, *The road Map to Nowhere*, I argue that for a short while during this period, the U.S, which was getting more and more entangled in the Iraq occupation, had to yield to European public opinion, as conveyed by Blair, and exerted real pressure on Israel. Sharon's evacuation of the Gaza settlements was

not an act of free will, but a decision enforced on him at the peak of international pressure that followed Israel's sabotaging of the road map and its construction of the West Bank wall. Though it was kept fully behind the scenes, U.S. pressure was quite massive, including military sanctions. The official pretext for the sanctions was Israel's arm sale to China, but in previous occasions, the crisis was over as soon as Israel agreed to cancel the deal. This time, the sanctions were unprecedented, and lasted until the signing of the crossing agreement in November 2005.

This turn of events shows the limits of propaganda. Basic concepts like justice, international law, solidarity with the oppressed, have disappeared from mainstream political discourse, but they are present in people's minds. It also shows that persistent struggle can have an effect, and can lead governments to act. I quote from my *Road Map to Nowhere*:

Such struggle begins with the Palestinian people, who have withstood years of brutal oppression, and who, through their spirit of *zumud* – sticking to their land - and daily endurance, organizing and resistance, have managed to keep the Palestinian cause alive, something that not all oppressed nations have managed to do. It continues with international struggle – solidarity movements that send their people to the occupied territories and stand in vigils at home, professors signing boycott petitions, subjecting themselves to daily harassment, a few courageous journalists that insist on covering the truth, against the pressure of acquiescent media and pro-Israel lobbies. Often this struggle for justice seems futile. Nevertheless, it has had an effect on public opinion, which in turn can force governments to act¹²

This struggle, which is our hope, is not only the salvation of the Palestinian people. This prison system that Israel is building is also a prison for the Israelis. A small state, of 7 million residents, 5.5. of them Jewish, is making itself the enemy of the whole Arab world, and now, the whole Muslim world. Such a state does not have any guarantee of surviving in the long run. Therefore, saving the Palestinians is also saving Israel.

I would like to conclude with a few personal words. The last few months, I made a decision that I cannot continue living in Israel under the present circumstances. I have always had a question of where is the line crossing which would make it immoral and impossible to stay without being a partner to the crime. For me, this line has been crossed this summer.

This is a painful decision for me, because I love the country - I was born there. I love its landscapes - the landscapes of my childhood - the evening breeze, the sea, the sunsets. I love the people (unlike their leaders) and Hebrew is the only language I know real well. I never believed that I would have to leave it. I thought I would end my life in struggle in this country. But now, I am going into exile, like Said. This is an exile of choice - so it is very different from the Palestinian exile. Since this is an act of choice, a part of me also pains for betraying my comrades in struggle. Along with Israel of the occupation, along with all the horrors I described here, there is also another Israel/Palestine forming there the last few years.

There are quite a few Israelis who are struggling daily against these horrors, carrying out what often

seems to be a stubborn insistent banging against the prison walls. Specifically, there is one form of struggle that developed, which is really marvelous. Along the lines of the wall, the Palestinian residents are determined not to wait for the third Nakba to happen, but rather stand there, on their land, in front of the Israeli Bulldozers and army, in non violent opposition. Armed only with the courage of people who have stuck to their land one generation after the other, they stand in front of one of the most brutal military machines of the world. And right from the start, Israelis have been joining them in this struggle. In the last three years, we are witnessing, perhaps for the first time in the history of the occupation, a truly joint Israeli/Palestinian grass root struggle. I have been there. I was in Mas'ha right from the first days of the popular resistance; I was in Bil'in. But it has become impossible for me to endure this. The army brutality is beyond my physical ability - they beat you, bombard you with tear-gas, aim stun-grenades at your body, or aim rubber bullets at your eyes. I don't know how the young activists in their twenties can endure this week after week, but I am not young enough to be able to do the same.

When I leave, I also leave this struggle. But I pledge to my comrades in Israel/Palestine that I will continue the struggle abroad. Because the road that Mandela and Said have participated in paving – the road of international, non-violent, political struggle – is still there, and can lead us to victory.

**West Bank Final Status Map
Presented by Israel - May 2000**

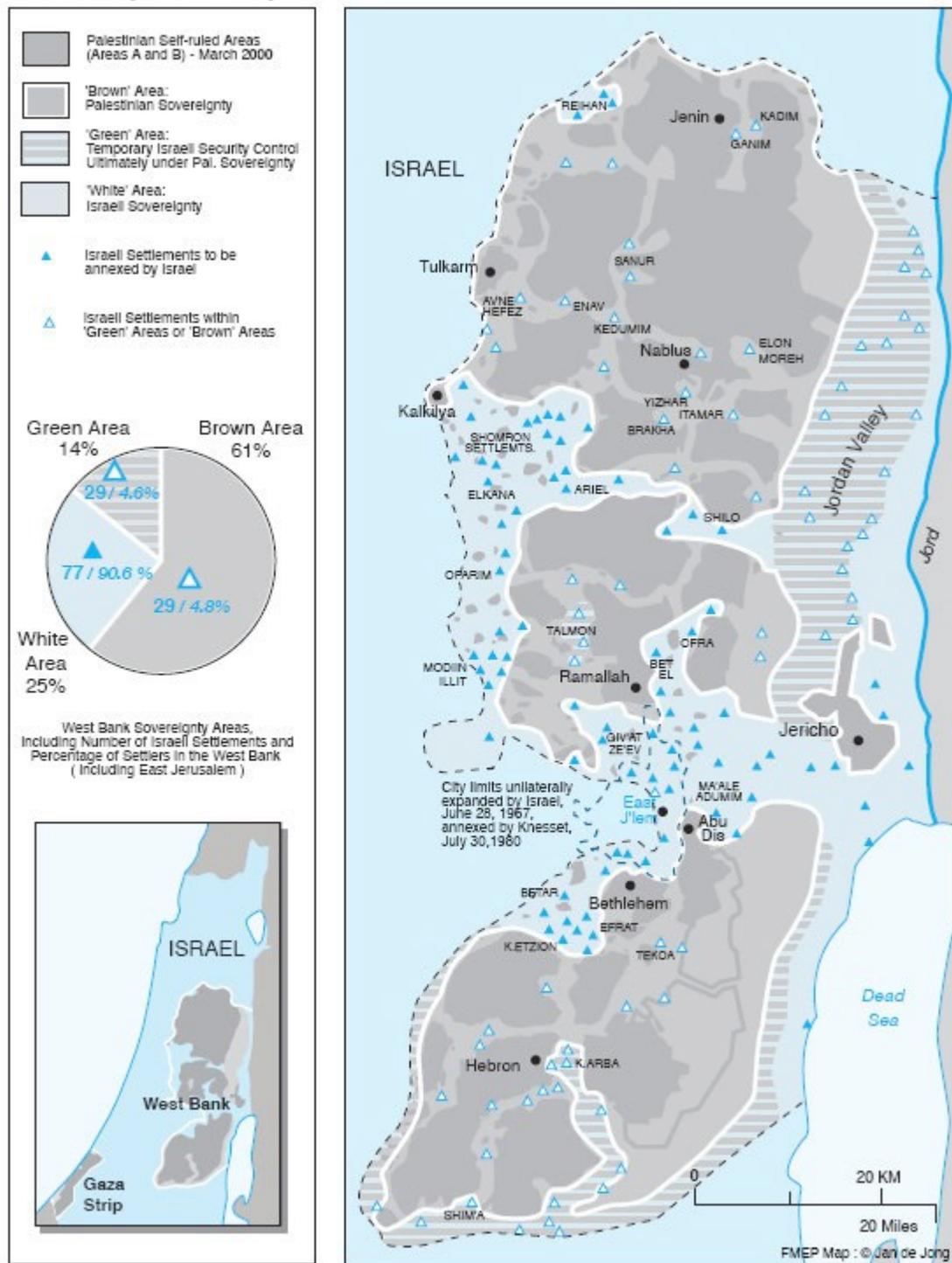


Figure 1.

Notes

¹ The 2006 Edward Said memorial Lecture of Adelaide University, Australia, delivered in October 7, 2006.

² Tanya Reinhart, *Israel/Palestine: How to End the War of 1948*, "Introduction" (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002), 7-8.

³ Edward Said, "The Only Alternative," *Al-Ahram Weekly On-line*, 1 - 7 March 2001, Issue No.523, reprinted in Edward Said, *From Oslo to Iraq and the Road Map*, New York: Pantheon Books, 2004, Vintage Books, 2005 (pp. 48-51 of the Vintage Books edition).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Edward Said, "Palestine Agenda," reprinted as Chapter 15 in his *The Politics of Dispossession* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 148. The article provides an extensive summary of the session's resolutions.

⁶ See Figure 1 on page 24 of this article.

⁷ See *Israel/Palestine*, chapter 2.

⁸ See, e.g. Amira Hass, "Israel Cuts Off Jordan Valley from Rest of West Bank," *Ha'aretz*, February 13 2006.

⁹ Meron Rappaport, *Yediot Aharonot*, May 23, 2003; Akiva Eldar, *Ha'aretz*, Feb 16, 2004.

¹⁰ Jimmy Carter, 'Punishing the innocent is a crime', International Herald Tribune May 7, 2006.

¹¹ Amos Harel, 'IDF and Qassams / Zero tolerance', *Ha'aretz*, April 7, 2006; Amos Harel and Arnon Regular, 'IDF: Hamas about to rein in Qassams', *Ha'aretz* April 10, 2006.

¹² Tanya Reinhart *The Road Map to Nowhere - Israel/Palestine since 2003*, Verso, London, New York, 2006, p. 131.

Roadmap to Genocide.

By A. Clare Brandabur

Having lived for three years under Israeli military occupation in Palestine (1981-1984), I have been convinced that the daily violence and especially the contempt with which Israelis treat Palestinians meant that Israel intended ultimately to drive out and/or exterminate the indigenous people. This conviction has grown stronger over the years until now, as I watch the terrible fate of thousands of refugees in Gaza and the West Bank—people who have been driven in successive waves of massacre and land confiscation into ever smaller areas of the original land of Palestine—I am convinced that the state of Israel was designed from the beginning to exclude the original Arab inhabitants. Furthermore, it seems to me that discussions of the problem are useless if they begin with the assumption that we are dealing with two groups who are just having trouble accommodating themselves to sharing the same small piece of land, instead of seeing the conflict as a phase of massacre and ethnic cleansing in an ongoing process of genocide. If we look carefully at the genocide of the Native Americans, we see a parallel history: whole tribes driven farther and farther away from their original habitat, deprived of their use of the land, corralled into ever smaller and more remote “Reservations,” starved, hunted down, and finally exterminated. On the ticking clock of the cycle of total annihilation, the Palestinian people are approaching their Wounded Knee.

Unless we realize that Israel is engaged in genocide, all talk of a “peace process” merely screens the reality, and enables the genocide to continue. To give a contemporary example, either Condoleezza Rice is being disingenuous, or she is ignorant of the real Israeli agenda when she questions Israeli denial of entry to Palestinian-Americans (Merriman 2006). If Rice really understood the Israeli agenda, she would not need to ask. Worried that the Palestinian Arabs will soon outnumber Israeli Jews, Israel is using all methods to decrease the number of Arabs in the country, even refusing entry to Palestinians who returned to the country after the Oslo agreement to help build a Palestinian state side-by-side with Israel.

One of the Palestinians now excluded from the right to live in his native Palestine is Sam Bahour. His article “We Can’t Go Home Again” was posted on the *Electronic Intifada* and published in the NY Times, October 7, 2006. Bahour went back to live in his grandfather’s house in El-Bireh and to build up a telecommunications business worth US\$100 million which now employs more than 2,000 Palestinians. For thirteen years he has managed to reside in the West Bank by going out to renew his visa every three months while getting an M.B.A. degree from Tel Aviv University, developing a 10 million dollar shopping mall, and starting a family. “Last month an Israeli soldier stamped my American passport with a one-month visa and wrote “last permit” on it in Arabic, Hebrew and English.” Bahour reports that in the last six years, more than 70,000 people have applied for permission to immigrate to the West Bank and Gaza to join family. “Their applications,” he says, “have either been denied or, like mine, languish” (Bahour 2000).

According to Israel Shahak, however, there will never be a Palestinian state. In *Jewish History, Jewish Religion* (2002) Shahak says Palestinians need not worry about being offered a “Bantustan” as long as Israel remains a “Jewish state” since Israel can never grant real sovereignty or autonomy to non-Jews within the land of Israel as long as it remains an exclusively Jewish state (Shahak 2002, 101).

Keeping such successful and highly desirable citizens as Sam Bahour out of Israel cannot be justified on grounds of “security,” and can only be understood as part of the ethnic cleansing in which Israel has been engaged since 1948. This ethnic cleansing no longer needs to be kept secret because Israel enjoys unquestioning support from the US, the world’s only superpower. This relatively non-violent practice of excluding returning Palestinians has an extremely violent counterpart: constant attacks against Palestinians especially in refugee camps, settler destruction of orchards and field crops, assassinations, house demolitions, massive check-points and now the Apartheid Wall.

A report issued by the Palestinian National Information Center (July 23, 2006) records numbing statistics: Since September 2000, the beginning of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, 4464 Palestinians have been killed including 826 children, and 47,440 injured. This second Intifada takes its name from the highly provocative visit to the Haram al-Sharif by Ariel Sharon accompanied by some 5000 riot-helmeted Israeli police, a violation of Palestinian sacred space, a direct challenge to the cultural and religious rights of the Palestinian people. The report of the Second Intifada documents assaults on ambulance crews, hospitals, schools and universities, many closed by military order, and thousands of houses destroyed or damaged. While, the report concludes, “Israeli forces shelled residential neighborhoods thirty-six thousand and eight times” between October 1, 2001 and June 30, 2006. (Gaza-Ma’an 23/07/2006. See also *Factsheet*, September 12, 2006. <http://www.al-awda.org/facts.html>).

Seen in its true light, the Israeli “demographic” agenda is perfectly compatible with such barbarous practices as stopping at checkpoints Palestinian mothers about to give birth, detaining them for hours so that they give birth in unsanitary and very public conditions. In these circumstances it is no wonder that such babies and mothers often die. Successive Israeli governments have been maniacally devoted to the idea of an exclusively Jewish state, admitting that this goal takes precedence over all ethical considerations. According to Nur Masalha, influential Israeli writer Ora Shem-Ur advocates “dispossession and outright mass expulsion” of Arabs in order to keep Israel as a purely Jewish state (Masalha 187). Shem-Ur advocated exploiting war as an opportunity to “transfer” the Palestinians to “one of the fertile Crescent states” (Masalha 194). Only discourse which recognizes the genocidal nature of the Israeli policy has any possible chance of making sense of the trajectory of the history since even before 1948.

Today the genocidal intent of Israel toward the Palestinians seems to me so obvious that I am astonished every time I am reminded that this lethal intent is still invisible to or being denied by the world at large. One stunning example of such denial is evident in the responses of leading Democrats in the US to reports that former President Jimmy Carter’s forthcoming book entitled *Peace, Not Apartheid*, characterizes Israel (accurately) as an apartheid state. In a joint statement, Howard Dean, Nancy Pelosi and others Democratic leaders rushed to dissociate themselves from Carter’s views in an almost delusional assertion: “It is wrong

to suggest that the Jewish people would support a government in Israel or anywhere else that institutionalizes ethnically based oppression, and Democrats reject that allegation vigorously” (Siegel 2006).

Few recent scholarly books on genocide make any mention of Palestine except as a footnote to the destination of the Jews fleeing the Nazis. One shining exception is Ward Churchill’s *A Little Matter of Genocide* (1997) in which this native American scholar speaks of Palestinian genocide in the most direct and unequivocal terms. Churchill sees Holocaust exclusivism as constructing “a conceptual screen behind which to hide the realities of Israel’s ongoing genocide against the Palestinian population whose rights and property were usurped in its very creation” (74). Churchill bases his discussion of genocide on the work of Raphael Lemkin, the pioneer of genocide studies.

Raphael Lemkin (1906-1959) was a brilliant Jewish Polish jurist who, as he tells us in an unfinished autobiography “Totally Unofficial Man,” grew up in a rural area of Lithuania shared by “the Poles, Russians (or rather White Russians), and the Jews” (Totten and Jacobs 368). He grew up convinced that there must be a law against the killing of people for their race or their religion (371).

That he was already striving for the condemnation of the crime of genocide as early as 1933 speaks volumes for the originality and prescience of Lemkin’s vision: “Hitler had already promulgated, at that time, his blueprint for destruction. Many people thought he was bragging, but I believed that he would carry out his program if permitted. Now was the time to establish a system of collective security for the life of the peoples” (372). Several features in his work should be emphasized here: the first is that Lemkin saw clearly the genocidal potential of Hitler’s program *before the killing had actually started*. The second is that Lemkin’s concern was always inclusive: he encompassed all people, not only his own group, in his passion to protect human life. In addition Lemkin was always concerned for the spiritual and cultural as well as the physical existence of the human being (372).

On September 6, 1939, Lemkin was forced to flee Warsaw. Nazi armies had attacked Poland and an order was issued for all able-bodied men to leave Warsaw immediately. The autobiography recounts the terrifying journey, his last visit to his family (whom he would never see again), and the vicissitudes that took him to a safe haven at Duke University in the US. One of the stopovers on this flight was Riga where he visited the famous historian Professor Simon Dubnov who concurred in Lemkin’s conviction that “Obviously if killing one man is a crime, killing of entire races and peoples must be an even greater one. (377). Lemkin records that only a year and one-half after this visit, this brilliant Jewish historian was led to his execution by the Nazis (378). Raphael Lemkin: (1900-1959)

Lemkin’s crowning achievement—the United Nations Convention on the Punishment and Prevention of the Crime of Genocide— was successfully ratified in the UN in 1948, but would only later, under U.S. President Ronald Reagan, be affirmed by his adopted country almost four decades after his death (Editor’s Note 309).

Churchill applies Lemkin’s definition of genocide to the case of Palestine seeing Israeli occupation and

dispossession as an assault on Palestinian cultural and physical existence. Realizing that Lemkin regarded the total annihilation of a group as exceptional rather than as the essential mark of genocide, Churchill rejects the exclusivist reading of Lemkin's definition of genocide as applicable only to case of the Jews. Churchill points out that Holocaust exclusivist Stephen Katz has completely misrepresented Lemkin's ideas (51n). In claiming that only the Jewish case can be called genocide, Churchill says, Katz denies all other cases of genocide (33n); denies the Bosnian genocide (53n); denies the genocide of the American Indians (138, 157-9) and with it the Pequod genocide (73n).

Lemkin says in *Axis Rule*:

Genocide has two phases: one, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor. This imposition, in turn, may be made upon the oppressed population which is allowed to remain, or upon the territory alone after removal of the population and colonization of the area by the oppressor's own nationals. (*Axis Rule* 82, quoted by Churchill 68)

In the case of Palestine, the Nakbah of 1948 and the devastating "ethnic cleansing" of 1967 belong to the first phase, "destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group," while the wholesale importation of Jews from all around the world represents the second phase, though both phases have occurred and continue to occur simultaneously and incrementally. As Churchill insists, for Lemkin, the actual physical annihilation of every single member of a group is not the only or necessary characteristic of genocide, in support of which he quotes another passage in *Axis Rule* where Lemkin says:

Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify *a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves*. ... The objectives of such a plan would be a disintegration of political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. (*Axis Rule*, 79, quoted by Churchill, 70) (Emphasis added)

Both elements of this definition fit the Palestinian situation as Ward Churchill shows in the context in which he explains the motive for the "exclusivist position". Stephen Katz, Churchill argues, interprets Lemkin's theory as vindication for his own view that no other people have been subjected to the fate of the Jews, and therefore finds it impossible to use the term "Holocaust" for any except Jewish suffering. Churchill says:

The factors motivating exclusivists [...] concern the agenda of establishing a 'truth' which serves to compel permanent maintenance of the privileged political status of Israel,

the Jewish state established on Arab land in 1947 as an act of international atonement for the Holocaust; to forge a secular reinforcement, based on the myth of unique suffering, of Judaism's theological belief in itself as comprising a 'special' or 'chosen' people, entitled to all the prerogatives of such; *and to construct a conceptual screen behind which to hide the realities of Israel's ongoing genocide against the Palestinian population whose rights and property were usurped in its very creation.*(Churchill 73-74; emphasis added)

Lemkin's inclusive definition sees genocide as "a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups" (*Axis Rule* 79). Applying this definition of genocide, it become obvious that the Palestinian people are undergoing a gradual but radical removal from historic Palestine and being replaced by the Jewish people. As Nur Masalha says, "In Israel proper, after four and a half decades of seizure and appropriation of land, Zionist state institutions are now in absolute control of nearly 93 percent of the land, while nearly half the land in the West Bank and a third of the land of the Gaza Strip have already been taken over by the state and allocated to Jewish settlement" (191).

Another earlier and equally forthright statement of the Palestinian genocide is Edward Said's *The Question of Palestine* (1971). Though he does not use the term "genocide," Said documents from the perspective of their victims, the intentions of Zionists from the beginning, starting with Theodor Herzl's statement in his 1895 *Diaries* that

We shall have to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries whilst denying it any employment in our own country. Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discreetly and circumspectly. (Said 1979, 1992, 13)

Jonathan Cook quotes another statement of policy variously attributed to Ben Gurion and/or Joseph Weitz, Director of the Jewish National Fund's Land Department:

It must be clear that there is no room in the country for both peoples. ... There is no way but to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighboring countries, to transfer all of them, save perhaps for Bethlehem, Nazareth, and the old Jerusalem. Not one village must be left, not one tribe. The transfer must be directed at Iraq, Syria, and even Transjordan. For this goal funds will be found. (1940, qtd in Cook 2006, 97)

Among the few Zionists to have faced the reality that Palestine was already populated and its fields cultivated, as Jonathan Cook points out, was Asher Ginsberg, known as Ahad Ha'am (1852-1927) "who observed in 1891 after a trip to Palestine, "We abroad used to believe that the Land of Israel is now almost totally desolate, a desert that is not sowed.... But in truth this is not the case. Throughout the country it is difficult to find fields that are not sowed" (qtd by Cook, 2000, 111). In *Beyond Innocence and Redemption* (1990), Marc Ellis says that Ahad Ha'am favored the peaceful gathering of Jews in a Palestinian homeland, but forbade the humiliation or dispossession of the Arabs. Ahad Ha'am died, according to Marc Ellis,

“brokenhearted” in Tel Aviv in 1927, “My God, is this the end? ... that we come to Zion and stain its soil with innocent blood?” (Ellis 46).

Ellis speaks of another important Jewish leader, Judah Magnes (1877-1948) who advocated a Jewish educational, moral, and religious center in Palestine, but not the development of an imperial state in which Jews would be the majority and deprive the Arabs of their rights and their land by force. According to Ellis, Magnes said, “Palestine does not belong to the Jews and it does not belong to the Arabs, nor to Judaism or Christianity or Islam. It belongs to all of them together; it is the Holy Land” (Ellis 49). Like Magnes who favored a “bi-national state,” Hannah Arendt argued against a Jewish state, insisting that Jewish immigration should be limited, and envisioning a country in which “Local self-government and mixed Jewish-Arab municipal and rural councils, on a small scale and as numerous as possible,” would provide a viable model for co-existence (Ellis 53-55). But it was not these humane and ethical Jewish leaders whose voices would prevail in Israel’s formation. It was the xenophobic imperialists who would ultimately seal the fate of Israel, men for whom the supreme good became not Jewish ethics and culture but Jewish survival. For Ben- Gurion, Jabotinsky, Menachem Begin, Barak, Netanyahu, Ariel Sharon, and Ehud Olmert who were willing to use force to drive out the indigenous population, the new Jewish god was the survival of the Jews, and they would parley Jewish suffering under Hitler into a *cause celebre* to justify every barbarism required for ethnic cleansing to achieve that goal. As Hannah Arendt foresaw, under these aggressive militarists, the Jewish Homeland would be sacrificed for a Jewish State. Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht says, speaking of the support given by secularized Jewish Americans to this new muscular Israeli state, “Zionism would become the new religion of the American Jews, and Israel would be their new God. Which is why opposition to Zionism or criticism of Israel is now heresy and cause for excommunication” (130).

In an essay entitled “How to Answer Palestine’s Challenge” (1988), Edward W. Said summed up the history of Palestine succinctly:

Since 1948, Israel’s policy has been to eliminate all traces of Palestinian national life, to treat the Palestinians not as a people but as a bunch of inconsequential nomads who could be driven out, killed, or ignored, regarding them as subhuman coolies whose life, property, and national rights could be trampled underfoot. By 1950, vast amounts of Arab land in Palestine, now Israel, were expropriated arbitrarily or consigned to a Jewish authority which safeguarded the land in perpetuity for ‘the Jewish people.’ (Said 1988. 14)

According to Raphael Lemkin’s definition, this passage from Said perfectly describes the process of genocide against the Palestinian people.

Since 1988 things have gotten even worse, largely because of the disastrous Oslo Accords which did nothing to protect Palestinian’s rights to their land and nothing to restrict Jewish settlement. A huge Separation/Apartheid Wall is snaking across Palestine, built mostly on the Palestinian side of the Green Line on land occupied by Israel in 1967, taking in strategic hill tops, fertile land, and water resources. This monstrous

towering wall that divides Palestinians from their fields, from their families, schools, and medical care, threatens to become the permanent border between Israel and isolated Bantustans on a fraction of the land of Palestine. Furthermore, Israel is employing a scorched earth policy to denude the whole area of its vegetation as a tactic in war. By as early as 1989, so many olive trees in the Nablus area had been cut down or bulldozed by the Israeli military and settlers that the only way to maintain the 200-year-old al-Sha'aka olive soap factory in Nablus was to import olives from Italy.

Looking at Palestine today, an observer unfamiliar with its history might think it had always been a barren desert. In fact the region was for centuries carefully cultivated in harmony with its semi-arid climate. In his *Life At the Crossroads: A History of Gaza*, journalist Gerald Butt quotes the medieval writer Masude (who wrote in 943) as saying that orange trees from India had been brought to the Syrian, Palestinian, and Egyptian coasts in 912 (Butt 82). Butt continues: "The Arab geographer Dimashqi (writing in 1300) said of Gaza, 'It is a city so rich in trees ... as to be like a cloth of brocade spread out on the sand' (98), and he quotes Muqadisi (born in Jerusalem in 946) as saying of commerce in the area of Syria that included Palestine:

The trade of Syria is considerable. From Palestine come olives, dried figs, raisins, the carob-fruit, stuffs of mixed silk and cotton, soap and kerchiefs. Unequaled is this land of Syria for its dried figs, its common olive oil, its white bread [...] for the quinces, the pine nuts called "kurai bite [snober]," the Ainuni and Duri raisins, the Theriack antidote [...] the herb of mint and the rasaires of Jerusalem. And further know that within the province of Palestine may be found [...] six and twenty products that are not found thus united in any other land. Of these the first seven are found in Palestine alone [...] pine-nuts [...] the quince, the fig called al-Saba' and the fig of Damascus. The next seven are the water lily, the sycamore, the carob or St. John's bread (locust tree), the lotus fruit, the artichoke, the sugar cane, and the Syrian apple. (82)

Evidently, then, Palestine has not always been a neglected desert, as some contemporary Zionists claim. The present devastation of the ecosystem in Palestine is deliberate, a tactic of war — a systematic scorched earth policy designed to starve and drive out the indigenous population. Israel has destroyed hundreds of wells and cisterns in Gaza and the West Bank, bulldozed or burned orchards, greenhouses, and fields on the pretext that their own national security requires that the "cover" for insurgents ("terrorists") be destroyed. Actually, by depriving Palestinians of the means to feed themselves, Israel makes them a captive market forced to pay extortionate prices to purchase Israeli produce.

Evidence that the Israeli destruction of the eco-system is part of the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians is offered by a French observer, Christian Salmon, founder of *The International Writers' Parliament*, who after visiting Palestine in 2002, wrote "The Bulldozer War". In this moving article Salmon expresses his shock at the sheer destruction of some of the most universally known and revered landscapes in the world, noting that the corresponding process in Bosnia was known as "memoricide." In Palestine this "slashing and plundering" is being done, he says, by an Israel "striving to erase the past":

Over the decades the Israelis have abandoned the utopia of the kibbutzes for the atopia, the nowhere, of the settlements. People were fond of saying in the 1960s that they tried to make the desert bloom and the kibbutz exerted a powerful appeal. Since then the biblical garden has become a desert, a wasteland, a battlefield.

The bulldozers on the roadsides are the troubling acknowledgement of this. The key question is not the one posed by Kafka – “What must we do to live?” – since the goal here is not living, but dislodging and destruction. This is the first war to be waged with bulldozers. This is an attempt at deterritorialisation without historical precedent. This is total warfare that targets the civilian population and the land. This is war [...] seeking not the division of territory but its abolition. (10)

Salmon looked at Palestine without a pro-Zionist ideological bias and, though he does not use the term here, what he describes is the genocidal assault on the essentials for life of a community and thus directed towards the annihilation of a people and its culture. In this respect, Salmon differs from the generality of analysts and commentators on the Palestine/Israel conflict. Most Western observers have been deluged with decades of pro-Israeli propaganda from pulpits, newspapers, and film, especially since 1967, as Norman Finkelstein has shown in *The Holocaust Industry* (2000). If the observer thus favorably pre-disposed approaches the problem giving Israel the benefit of the doubt, he will see the conflict as merely a case of two neighbors who have trouble getting along and advising them that they must both make compromises, the basic injustice of the situation is elided. He will further be inclined to have assimilated together with the pro-Israel propaganda, the racist assumption that the Palestinians are less important than the Jews, even as barbaric and (since 9/11) even as terrorists.

Such a prejudiced observer, then, will be unlikely to see what is essential: i.e. that Israel is a colonial-settler state and thus by definition geared to the extermination of the indigenous people. In his important book, *Israel: Colonial Settler State?* (1993), Maxime Rodinson answers his own question in the affirmative, though his evaluative conclusions are disappointingly sanguine since he fails to suggest that anything needs to be done about the fact that Israel is a genocidal state. In spite of his Marxist credentials Rodinson seems to accept the inevitability that the “fittest” will prevail, a racist premise intrinsic to Social Darwinism. Nevertheless, Rodinson’s book goes a long way to establishing that Israel is a colonial settler state, the variety of colonialism characterized by the importation of a foreign population into an area with the subjection and then annihilation and/or dispersal of the indigenous population, it is not a huge leap to say such a settler colony is intrinsically genocidal. Such a conclusion is implied by Peter Buch who, in his *Introduction* to Rodinson’s book, remarks: “It is [...]. incredible that the colonial-settler character of Israel has not been widely recognized by world public opinion, even among those who normally sympathize with the colonially oppressed.” (18).

Even such an acute and sympathetic observer as Sara Roy, an Israeli economist who has studied Gaza closely cannot quite bring herself to call Israel’s policy toward the Palestinians by its right name. In “Living With the Holocaust” (2002), she comes tantalizingly close to the truth—but stops just short, perhaps

because she adopts the “Holocaust Exclusivist” position of scholars like Stephen Katz so well described by Ward Churchill. Even though Roy lists the atrocities of dispersion, dispossession, torture, land confiscation, illegal settlement, etc., she nonetheless concludes: “Israel’s occupation of the Palestinians is not the moral equivalent of the Nazi genocide of the Jews. But it does not have to be. No this is not genocide, but it is repression, and it is brutal” (09.12.2002). Such a disclaimer is regrettable in light of Roy’s recent article entitled “The Gaza Economy” (in *Palestine Information Center Brief* #143, 2 Oct. 2006), in which she uses the term “pauperization” to describe Gaza’s economy of which she says “the pauperization of Gaza’s economy is not accidental but deliberate,” and agrees with the Israeli Human Rights group B’tselem that the Israeli destruction of Gaza’s only power plant is a war crime, she still cannot bring herself to use the term “genocide” though the policy she describes clearly qualifies for inclusion in the definition of genocide articulated by Raphael Lemkin.

Unlike Sara Roy, Israeli academic Ilan Pappé has no hesitation in using the term “genocide” when speaking of Israeli policy toward the Palestinians. In a recent article entitled “Genocide in Gaza,” Pappé declares “A genocide is taking place in Gaza,” citing the murders of three children in Gaza and a whole family wounded in Beit Hanoun, commenting that “This is the morning reap [sic], before the end of the day many more will be massacred” (*The Electronic Intifada* 2 Sept. 2006).

Another commentator who does not hesitate to call Israeli policy toward the Palestinians by its right name is Argentinian Adrian Salbuchi. In an article entitled “Historical Lies as an Instrument of Domination,” (2006), Salbuchi takes issue with the official interpretation of the Holocaust, approving of the critical approach to the subject by Norman Finkelstein in *The Holocaust Industry* (2000). Salbuchi says:

The interesting point is that Finkelstein is part of a growing breed of historians, journalists, intellectuals and large sectors of international public opinion which does not meekly accept the Holocaust Dogma propagated by the private power centres of the New World Order... This large sector of intellectually independent people believe that the ‘Holocaust Industry’ – as Finkelstein aptly describes it – is shamelessly used not only to steal public and private moneys around the world for the benefit of the State of Israel, but also to justify the *constant acts of genocide and aggression* perpetrated by Israel against the captive Palestinian people to this very day. (Salbuchi 2006, emphasis added)

The ultimate intention of the Jewish state is to annihilate or “transfer” the indigenous population is a fact that the Palestinians have always known and what a growing number of observers are beginning to realize: Israel does not want peace with the Palestinians. On the contrary, it wishes to provoke resistance in order to provide an excuse for violently putting it down and confiscating more land in the process. In her excellent book *The Fate of the Jews* (1984), Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht expresses this insight very well: “Zionists executed the psychological coup of the century by taking Palestine from the Arabs and then pretending Jews were Arab victims” (246-47).

When the threat of peace lifts its ugly head, Israel strikes out violently, demolishing more houses, shelling

another refugee camp, bulldozing another orchard, confiscating more land, imprisoning and torturing more Palestinians. So great is the number of Palestinians imprisoned and tortured that their number approaches that of the “Pipeline” system used by the British in Kenya against the Kikuyu to break the spirit and bring about the subjection of a people who were resistant to being incorporated into the colonial economic system. A recent report estimates that over 25% of the entire Palestinian population has been in prison, including some 9 to 12 thousand at the present time, in addition to uncounted numbers held in secret prisons inaccessible to Red Cross, lawyers, or families. In her book *Britain’s Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (2005), Caroline Elkins explains how, using this “Pipeline” system, the British colonial authorities rounded up and detained in squalid barbed-wire concentration camps the entire Kikuyu population, segregating men from their families, putting women and children in equally ghastly enclosures, in all of which slave labor and indoctrination were enforced by beatings, starvation, and torture. Prisoners were rounded up indiscriminately, held without charge or any legal appeal, classified according to the degree of their commitment to Mau Mau, and then the necessary degree of violence applied to either exact cooperation or, in the case of the unbreakable resisters, to inflict torture including castration and finally death. Almost the entire Kikuyu people had bound themselves to resist the loss of their lands and their freedom through a series of oaths, and it was the purpose of the “Pipeline” to break this solidarity and ultimately to break the will of the entire people (Elkins 111, 120, 237). As the West Bank and Gaza have become increasingly gigantic concentration camps, the resemblance of the Palestinian plight to that of the native Kenyans under the “Pipeline” of the British colonial authorities becomes ever more apparent. Like the Kikuyu, some Palestinians resist the most extreme torture even to death. Israel has adopted an even more barbaric alternative to imprisonment and torture by simply assassinating “wanted” Palestinians, saving the trouble of arrest and internment.

Therefore we can only be surprised at the increasing level of Israeli violence if we assume that Israel wants peace with its Arab neighbors. The increasing conflict makes perfect sense, however, if we realize that Israel has always intended to bring about an exclusively Jewish state from which its indigenous population has been purged. As the screws are tightened to force the Palestinians out, resistance increases. As the Palestinians disappear behind walls, their leaders into prisons or cemeteries, as the mass media devotes less attention to their sufferings making them invisible to the outside world, as the remaining area of Palestinian habitation gets smaller, the resistance necessarily becomes more frantic, and correspondingly the violence used to quell it becomes more brutal. Even the homemade rockets flung across the border into southern Israel are more like smoke signals from behind a high wall, not that they do much damage but that they signify “We are still here and we are resisting!” Or in the words of the Stevie Smith poem, they are “not waving but drowning.”

Since 1967, the West, especially the US, contributes billions yearly to the Israeli military build-up including nuclear weapons. As Western/US financial and moral support for Israel has increased, Western/US support for the Palestinians has decreased. Since all resistance has been criminalized, those who resist must be silenced, demonized, discredited. This withdrawal of support has reached its most extreme form in recent months since Israel has imprisoned leaders of the democratically elected Hamas government and closed all entrances to Gaza and to West Bank towns, villages, and refugee camps. Meanwhile the Bush

Administration has enacted legislation making it a crime to send money to the Palestinians. International banks now refuse to execute any attempted transfer of funds even to starving individuals, much less organizations.

The policy of starvation and isolation of the Palestinians is not new though its present form is perhaps the most extreme of any time in the history of Israel. One of the primary purposes of the First Gulf War (that of Bush Sr.) was to ethnically cleanse the thousands of Palestinian guest workers from the Gulf, though it was Palestinian labor and expertise that built and enriched the Gulf. These workers provided support for their families in the Occupied Territories, thus enabling these families to survive the austerities of the Occupation. Consequently, under US auspices, Kuwait set up centers for interrogation and torture of Palestinians, over-seen by American officers, and Palestinians lost their residence permits and were forced to leave. Jordan absorbed thousands of such displaced Palestinian professionals. Without the income from their sons working in the Gulf, Palestinians under Occupation were less independent and suffered a severe decrease in their standard of living. In summarizing Palestinian losses in Kuwait, Robert Fisk speaks of "the killing of hundreds of Palestinians in Kuwait and the 'ethnic cleansing' of tens of thousands of others by the Kuwaitis that followed the war" (Fisk 786).

Similarly in 1982, Ariel Sharon, with the approval and support of the US, finding that the PLO in Lebanon were actually keeping the cease fire though Sharon used severe provocations to goad them into military retaliation, decided he had to invade Lebanon to avoid having to negotiate with the Palestinians. He claimed that this invasion (which he called "Peace for Galilee") was necessary "to stop the rockets from raining down on the northern settlements." In fact the opposite was the case: he had to invade because rockets were NOT raining down on the Galilee. The 1982 invasion was designed to eliminate the PLO and to exterminate as many Palestinians in the refugee camps of Lebanon as possible in order to protect the illegal settlements by preventing the original inhabitants from ever returning to their homes. Insight into the agonies endured by the Palestinians who were ethnically cleansed from the Galilee in 1948 are vividly depicted in the stunning new novel by Elias Khoury, *The Gate of the Sun* (2005), while the ethnic cleansing of Ramallah, Lydda, Ramleh, and Tel a- Termos can be vicariously experienced in works like *Scattered Like Seeds* (1989) by Shaw Dallah, *On the Hills of God* (1989) by Ibrahim Fawal, and Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun* and *The Land of Sad Oranges* (1963).

The principal Palestinian demand in all negotiations has been the right of return of the refugees. Not only is this their legal right under International Law, this was also the condition of UN recognition of Israel, a condition which Aba Eban swore (falsely) would be carried out. The refugees have never been allowed to return. Those who tried to return were imprisoned or shot. Thus UN recognition of Israel should long since have been rescinded.

The plan to eliminate the Palestinians inside 1948 Israel as well as in the Occupied Territories has not gone away. On the contrary it is very much on the agenda. Jonathan Cook quotes Benny Morris, (one of the new Israeli revisionist historians who exposed without condemning the frankly ethnocidal policies of the Israeli founding fathers), in an interview with *The Guardian* as saying that he regards as a mistake the

failure of Zionist pre-state leaders to complete the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian population. Cook says, “The 150,000 Palestinians of 1948 had become the more than one million Israeli Arabs of today,” a group to which Morris refers as a “time bomb.” Morris said further according to Cook:

The place would be quieter and know less suffering if the matter had been resolved once and for all ... because Ben Gurion did not complete the transfer in 1948. Because he left and large and volatile demographic reserve in the West Bank and Gaza and within Israel itself. [BenGurion] made a serious historical mistake in 1948. Even though he understood the demographic issue and the need to establish a Jewish state without a large Arab minority, he got cold feet during the war. In the end he faltered ... I know that this stuns the Arabs and the liberals and the politically correct types. . . . because Ben Gurion did not complete the transfer in 1948. (Cook 2006, 107)

Obviously, then, Israel is a colonial settler state founded with the full intention of ridding itself opportunistically of the indigenous Palestinian population. All of Israeli history is the incremental carrying out of this grand design. One reason why some observers have difficulty in recognizing the genocidal nature of Israel is that, compared with other universally recognized cases of genocide—such as that of the Bosnian Muslims, the European Jews at the hands of Nazi Germany, or the genocide of Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda—there is a difference in the time-line. Each of the genocides just mentioned took place within a fairly well-defined period of time. From the beginning the Israelis tried to proceed secretly, since they were afraid of opposition and therefore loss of financial support from European and American authorities if their genocidal intent became too obvious. Therefore in the case of Palestine, the whole process of ethnic cleansing and extermination of the Palestinians could be said to have started under the British Mandate in the 1930s and continues to this moment. The Israeli genocide of the Palestinians is taking place inexorably over a time-line of some fifty five years, though of late its tempo has been speeding up dramatically.

Among the most troubling aspects of US support for Israeli genocide is the role of Christian Zionists who regard the slaying of the present-day Amelekites as perfectly legitimate since it is mandated by the Biblical Yahwah. Several recent studies offer insights into this phenomenon; space permits mention of only a few of them here. The late Rev. Michael Prior raises the question how Christians can regard Old Testament commands to genocide as consistent with a loving, merciful and universal God (in *The Bible and Colonialism: A Moral Critique* (1997)). Fuad Sha’ban discloses the primordial Zionism of early American founding fathers (including Christopher Columbus!) and traces the astonishing history of Zionism in the Evangelical Protestant churches of America in *For Zion’s Sake: The Judeao-Christian Tradition in American Culture* (2005). And Rev. Charles Carlson has traced the Evangelical obsession with “end times”, Armageddon, and the in-gathering of the Jews in Palestine to the insinuation into the King James Bible of commentaries designed to carry a Zionist message. In “How Zionists Changed Biblical Interpretations Using Scofield and Oxford University in 1908,” Carlson demonstrates that *The Scofield Reference Bible* was annotated by forger Cyrus Scofield, a disciple of John Nelson Darby, apparently at the behest of Zionists whose goal, according to Carlson, was “to create a subculture around a new worship icon, the modern State of Israel, a state that did not yet exist” (Carlson 4). This Bible, which has been

re-issued several times with significant modifications to the original annotations, is used extensively by such Evangelists as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Oral Roberts, and it is the Zionism of the *Scofield Reference Bible* that emerges to dictate uncritical acceptance of Israeli policy, including the ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Palestinian people which they see as part of the Divine Plan (Sha'ban 161-209). Thus the Palestinians have been disaffected from an important segment of American Christians who might theoretically have been expected to oppose genocide in the Holy Land, and who instead have been brain-washed into regarding Israel as a sacred icon that can do no wrong.

Numerically the greatest slaughter of Palestinians occurred in 1948 when, according to Benny Morris, at least 24 massacres took place and this may yet be an under-estimation. . In fact the late Palestinian statesman Saleh Baransi of Tayibih, (unpublished interview 1983), questioned about Deir Yassein and other massacres, told me that “every village had its massacres.” Jonathan Cook quotes Morris as saying:

In Operation Hiram [in October 1948, in the country's northern Palestinian heartland] there was an unusually high concentration of executions of people against a wall or next to a wall in an orderly fashion. That can't be chance. It's a pattern. Apparently, various officers who took part in the operation understood that the expulsion order they received permitted them to do these deeds in order to encourage the population to take to the roads ... Ben-Gurion silenced the matter. He covered up for the officers who did the massacres. (Morris qtd by Cook 2006. 112)

An important source of information about the genocidal practice of the Israelis in 1967 is *The Unholy Land* (1970-1971) by Arthur C. Forrest. who was sent by Christian Canadian colleagues to examine rumors that the Israelis were not in fact allowing the refugees back in to Palestine, in spite of their carefully staged claims to the contrary. Forrest quickly learned that refugees were still fleeing across the Allenby Bridge; that many had been attacked by Israeli planes using napalm; that the camp at Jericho which had held some 65,000 refugees from 1948, had been attacked and thousands driven across the River into Jordan by napalm; that survivors from the Jordanian Army said whole field hospitals had been napalmed.

One of the horror stories being told in Amman was of the experiences of fleeing refugees being sprayed with napalm. At first I didn't believe it and shuddered at the thought of using some of the pictures of victims available in Jordan. ‘If it were pictures of Vietnam you'd publish them wouldn't you?’ a Palestinian said. (Forrest 16)

Forrest was shocked and dubious concerning these reports, so he went to visit survivors of these attacks in Jordanian hospitals. He spoke to Mr. Sami Oweida, the father of a family who had recently crossed the Bridge and whose surviving members were still being treated in hospital in Amman

We crossed the King Hussein [Allenby] Bridge, walking. Planes were going overhead [...] We tried to avoid big crowds, thinking the planes would bomb the crowds.

Then at that moment [about 4 PM] I saw a plane come down like a hawk directly at us. We threw ourselves on the ground and found ourselves in the midst of fire. (Forrest 17)

Forrest also quotes the report of General Sir John Glubb whose interpretation of the Middle East Crisis was published in July 1967 as follows:

The greater part of the Jordan army were destroyed by napalm [...] Glubb quotes from a signed statement by a team of doctors from the American University of Beirut.[...] ‘A doctor reported that the Mobile Field Hospital, containing 350 patients, was incinerated with all its patients and staff by napalm,’ Glubb says. (Forrest 16)

Forrest took photographs of some of the burned victims, one of which he later published in the *United Church Observer*, his Church paper in Canada, of a little girl recovering from napalm burns. “That, I was told, proved I was anti-Semitic. To condemn napalm in Vietnam is alright. To report its use by the Israelis is considered anti-Semitic” (Forrest 17). When Forrest asked for permission to visit the three destroyed villages Yalu, Beit Nuba, and Emmaus, he was refused on grounds that “There isn’t any Beit Nuba!” (15). Nevertheless Forrest managed to travel to the devastated area. From survivors whom he asked about the destruction of these villages in retribution for their resistance in 1948 he learned that Israeli bulldozers demolished houses over the heads of the infirm elderly who perished in the rubble (15).

Perhaps Forrest’s documentation of the use of napalm against both civilians and military personnel offers an explanation for the Israeli attack on the American spy- ship *USS Liberty*. It was not in Israel’s interest to have its ethnic cleansing known in the West, especially since the Americans had supplied the cryptographers whose expertise enabled the destruction of the Egyptian Air Force. Early in the afternoon of June 8, 1967, Israeli jets and missile boats opened fire on the *USS Liberty*, an American surveillance ship operating off the coast of Gaza. Struck by rockets, cannons and torpedoes, the vessel suffered extensive damage and over 200 casualties. Israeli forces were then engaged in the fourth day of what would soon be called the Six Day War. Though Israel claimed the attack was a “tragic mistake,” the incident has never been resolved. If the motive for this attack was to hide the war crimes being committed against the Palestinians, it seems to have worked, since very few people in the West even today know what Israel was doing. In subsequent investigations, however, it has emerged that those directly connected to the attack on the *Liberty* rejected Israeli claims the ship was attacked by accident. In his biography of President Lyndon Johnson, for example, Robert Dallek says “The highest officials of the [Johnson] administration, including the President, believed it ‘inconceivable’ that Israel’s ‘skilled’ defense forces could have committed such a gross error” Dallek. 430- 31). If Israeli intention was to cover up their criminal napalm attacks on Palestinian civilians in order to drive them out of Palestine, it seems to have been a success. What Israel was covering up, by trying to sink the *USS Liberty* was the crime of genocide.

Another witness to Israel’s use of napalm against civilians in 1967 is Norman F. Dacey, who had been chairman of volunteers for Nixon, whose open letter to then President Richard M. Nixon was published in Lebanese newspaper *Al-Anwar*, January 17, 1972. In it he tells Nixon that he will henceforth campaign for

Nixon's defeat, citing his disgust with US policies in the Middle East. "I have walked through Egyptian hospitals and seen row on row of beds of little children, their bodies burned black by American-made napalm, dropped from American-built planes in claimed 'defense' of Israel" (Dacey qtd in Ashiurakis 1974).

In addition to its ongoing murders of Palestinians (such as the massacre of Jenin refugee camp in 2002) and the present campaign of assassination and wholesale killing in Gaza, Israel also continues its genocidal plans for the destruction of Palestinian cultural institutions. In *Imperial Israel and the Palestinians* (2002), Nur Masalha documents recent Israeli plans for the destruction of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, the two great mosques on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem (122-23), and for the "final solution" to the Palestinian problem which they hope to put into practice with the help of their American accomplices. This plan is now euphemistically called "transfer." According to this approach population transfer should be carried out between Israel and its Arab neighbors. An article published by Irving Moskowitz in *Moledet* (which Masalha grants often carried "disinformation articles"), the American Jewish millionaire says, "only one sole option has been left to American policy-makers: to come up with a completely new approach." This so-called new approach is euphemistically termed by Moskowitz as "population exchange." Moskowitz goes on to envision the relocation of the refugees from "Judea and Samaria" in Jordan as well as Syria and Iraq" (Masalha 182-83).

If proof were needed, Masalha demonstrates that Israeli pressure was behind successive US wars against Iraq including the present disastrous one. Meir Lifschitz is quoted as saying (in *Ha'olam Hazeh*, 22 August 1990, reprinted in *Moledet*, No. 24 (October 1990):

A war against Iraq is a real (religious) duty. If it is possible to make provocation, we must carry this out immediately. Such a golden opportunity in a convenient international situation falls into our hand once every hundred years... No one will busy himself with the triviality of transfer which we will carry out in parallel at the same time... Who exactly will be interested in the fate of two million Palestinians, who supported the butcher of Baghdad and are settled on the lands of the little king (King Hussein)? (184)

And Masalha summarizes: "The gist of Lifschitz's argument is that war against Iraq should be provoked if only so it could be utilized for the forcible mass expulsion of the Palestinians"(185). Masalha's evidence that the ethnic cleansing (read genocide) of the Palestinian population has always been Israeli policy is confirmed by Jonathan Cook in *Blood and Religion* in which the focus is on growing pressure for the "transfer" not only of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza but those within 1948 Israel as well. With these powerful texts in mind, it is impossible not to see the present siege on the entire Palestinian community, as a prelude to the "final solution." Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun* contains a cryptic message of the coming horror according to a brilliant reading by Joe Cleary in *Literature, Partition, and the Nation State* (2002). Cleary points out that readers found the conclusion of *Men in the Sun* too dark because Kanafani (assassinated with his young niece by a Mossad car bomb in Beirut in 1972) made his readership face "not merely their own political paralysis but the even more dreadful spectre of their ultimate

disappearance as a nation” (Cleary 223).

By the end of the novel all three Palestinian migrants are dead, and only Abul Khaizuran, rendered sterile by his catastrophe, remains. This threat of national extinction is the real terror provoked by the ignominious dumping of the three Palestinian protagonists on the Kuwaiti garbage dump while Abul Khaizuran pilfers Marwan’s broken watch—a metaphor for the termination of Palestinian time. ‘Pessimism’ is a totally inadequate term, however, to express what is involved in this act of imagination (Cleary 223).

Cleary’s analysis of Kanafani’s thesis seems to me a salutary though stark necessity which must be faced not only by the Palestinians but by all who would wish to prevent another genocide. Signs of a coming finale to the genocide already long in progress in Palestine are far clearer than those from which Lemkin understood that Hitler really planned to liquidate the Jews, Gypsies, Slavs and others. As Cleary concludes:

To counter the possibility of such an ignominious ending [extinction], Kanafani requires that his readership disavow the very disavowal that dismisses this fate as ‘unthinkable.’ The wager of *Men in the Sun*, then, is that nothing less than the courage to contemplate the possibility of their own erasure from history can steel the determination necessary for Palestinians to avert that fate. (Cleary 223)

It is hoped that this paper will go some way towards hastening a general awakening to Kanafani’s message.

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Palestinian Art and Possibility: *Made in Palestine*, an Examination.¹

By Kathy Zarur

Palestine is a place burdened with the weight of representation.² The majority of images projected by western media outlets are one-sided, showing Israeli defense against so-called Palestinian militants and terrorists. This carefully crafted narrative has been firmly fitted in the western imagination, and excludes knowledge of the historical circumstances of the situation. Considering American and European economic interests in the region and the use of the media to shape public opinion, it is difficult to foresee a shift in the understanding of the situation, one that can be described in simple terms as the resistance to an illegal and inhumane occupation. Misunderstanding of the situation in Palestine serves to aggrandize mainstream support of Israel and its activities. Herein lies the importance of the contemporary art exhibition *Made in Palestine*, for art has the potential to communicate vastly under represented perspectives with a language that requires engagement beyond the level of the straightforward presented in the media.

Made in Palestine also offers a generous slice of modern and contemporary Palestinian art history, one that is virtually unknown to Western audiences. Artworks by long-established artists, such as Samia Halaby, Suleiman Mansour, and Rula Halawani were presented alongside those of emerging artists. Over half of the artists have since emigrated from their homeland, but many still live in the Middle East, reflecting diaspora and the experience of occupation as defining aspects of Palestinian reality. Artists manipulate colors, shapes and forms to visually draw audiences into their subjective, often personal perspectives, resulting in an engagement with art on intuitive, visceral levels. Another important contribution of the show concerns artistic and cultural legacy. The production of fine art is associated with the existence of a long-standing civilization and higher learning. By exposing US audiences to the work of both well-established and young contemporary Palestinian artists, *Made in Palestine* states clearly that yes, there exists an active, healthy and vibrant community working in the realms of art and culture.

Made in Palestine opened in 2003 at the Station Museum in Houston, Texas and was the first museum exhibition of Palestinian art in the United States.³ The show was the brainchild of James Harithas, a museum director and curator known for his politically engaged and socially critical projects such as

Frontera 450+, which focused on the ongoing disappearance and killings of women in Juarez, Mexico.⁴ Given its dedication to critical contemporary art practices that focus on political, cultural, and social issues, Harithas and his team approached Palestinian artist and art historian Samia Halaby with the idea of producing an exhibition of Palestinian art. Along with co-curators Gabriel Delgado and Tex Kerschen, Harithas traveled with Halaby throughout Jordan, Syria and Palestine to visit the studios of Palestinian artists, courting the most accomplished of them for the show. The trip spawned an impressive exhibit of art high in aesthetic and conceptual quality.

Harithas planned on touring the show throughout the US, but despite the pedigree of the artists and the many notable works chosen for the exhibit, finding venues was not an easy task. He received 90 rejections from various museums and art centers. Friends in the museum world revealed that institutions feared losing funding for exhibiting Palestinian art. Finally in 2005, two small art centers — SomArts Cultural Center in San Francisco, California and T.W. Wood Gallery and Arts Center in Montpelier, Vermont agreed to host the show. When it came to finding a New York venue, Halaby intervened early on, engaging the efforts of Al Jisser (“the bridge” in Arabic), a New York arts organization founded in 2001 to bring Arab artists to international attention. It amounted to a nearly three-year grassroots fundraising campaign, for she too found no museum or gallery that would host the show. With the support of the Station Museum, Al Jisser raised approximately \$100,000, rented and fixed up a raw loft space in the Manhattan neighborhood of Chelsea and called it The Bridge. *Made in Palestine* opened in New York on March 14, 2006. It was such a success, the show ran an extra month and brought in over 5000 visitors. The New York manifestation of *Made in Palestine* was slightly different than the original at the Station Museum. Certain works like Emily Jacir’s *Memorial to 418 Palestinian Villages Which Were Destroyed, Depopulated and Occupied by Israel in 1948*, an embroidered refugee tent, were too expensive to bring. However, even in its abbreviated version, the show revealed innovative and visually engaging responses to a political situation fraught with turmoil.

Samia Halaby was born in Jerusalem in 1936 and currently lives in New York City. Her contribution to the exhibition, the 12-foot-long *Palestine, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River* (2003), is a composition of acrylic painted pieces of canvas and paper. Various organic shapes are joined with glue and thread into strips. Each instance of Halaby’s installation of *Palestine*, a process that involves sewing and gluing together the organically shaped pieces, yields a different version of the work. This not only reflects her interest in improvisational jazz and rhythmic musical compositions, but the flexibility and fluidity required of her as a person in diaspora. She evokes the Palestinian topography with a palette that ranges from sunny yellows and oranges to forest greens and midnight blues. Halaby’s work breathes beauty and poetry into a landscape predominantly pictured as war-torn. Her title refers to Palestine as it was before the brutal creation of Israel in 1948, reminding viewers that the current map of the region, pocked with settlements and ripped with bypass roads and the apartheid wall is only temporary.

Nida Sinnokrot was born in the United States in 1971, raised in Algeria and is based in New York City. His piece, *Rubber Coated Rocks* (2002, see Figures 5 & 6) is a site-dependent installation of smooth stones half coated in rubber—a reference to the often fatal rubber-coated bullets used by the Israeli army against

Palestinians wielding rocks.⁵ Sinnokrot's blend of natural and synthetic materials creates a multi-tiered commentary on Palestinian life. Though simple in appearance, the production process was a complex one that required exact timing and temperatures. At the Bridge Gallery, hundreds of the rubber-coated rocks were lined up on the floor along one wall of the large loft space. Installed single-file, the work suggests people waiting in line, a constant circumstance forced upon Palestinians when they attempt to cross through checkpoints set up to regulate and control travel within and out of Gaza and the West Bank. *Rubber Coated Rocks* have yet to be tested in the field.⁶

John Halaka was born in Egypt in 1957 and presently resides in San Diego. His contribution to *Made in Palestine* was an impressive 22 foot-long black, gray and white canvas titled *Stripped of Their Identity and Driven From Their Land* (2003, see Figure 7). Because of the artist's formal technique, the walking figures appear to emerge from the depths of the canvas space. Halaka created the bodies in the painting by stamping the words "forgotten" and "survivors," producing a pulsating effect of anonymous bodies that recede into space and blur in and out of the background. Halaka purposefully excluded marks of identity, underscoring the universality of displacement and exile. In addition, the life-size scale of the figures implicate the viewer, prompting self-questioning: am I a victim, a perpetrator, or both? The artist's pared down palette is a representational play in recollection of black and white photography. Photography is assumed to represent a real scene, one "that has been." Roland Barthes came up with this idea in his ruminations on the medium, where he explained that photography always refers to a past that can never be recovered.⁷ In evoking the supposedly objective medium of photography through a hand-crafted and therefore subjective process of image making, Halaka blurs the lines between real and fiction, between past, present and future. Halaka's formal and conceptual strategies yield no answers, and instead generate more.

Mustafa Al Hallaj (b. 1938 in Haifa) created the most commanding piece in the show, *Self Portrait as God, the Devil, and Man* (2000, see Figures 3 & 4). Eight 37-foot masonite-cut prints combine the ancient and the modern, creating a horizontally arranged narrative that casts the self as man, god and devil. Al Hallaj took a transhistorical approach to Palestine, integrating Canaanite legends, folk tales and Palestinian cultural icons up until the present. The massive work features imagery of human/animal hybrids that are reminiscent of the works of Hieronymus Bosch. Tragically, Al Hallaj died in his attempt to save the original print in a studio fire in 2002. The print hanging in the show was created by his students in the Palestinian Artists Union.

Photography being the language of the media, its use in art practice can teeter on the side of journalism. Artists who choose to steer away from obvious representations must therefore approach photographic practice more conceptually. Rula Halawani's photographic series *Negative Incursion* (2002, see Figure 1) includes negative black-and-white prints showing the aftermath of a devastating Israeli incursion into the West Bank in 2002. Her use of the negative print technique prohibits a quick and superficial viewing, instead requiring an intense focus on the scenes she depicts, such as the displaced family sitting under a tent in front of their crumbled home. Noel Jabbour's 2000-01 series *Vacant Seats* consists of large-scale portraits of Palestinian families who lost members to warfare. Family members stand stiff, directly gazing at the camera with sad, stoic faces. The incomplete family portraits are made visually whole with the

inclusion of a framed photograph of the often young martyr. Jabbour's combination of the formal portrait format and the snapshot quality offered by the use of natural light imbues the photograph with an unsettling air paralleled by the representation of the lost son as a photographic remnant. Her strategy echoes similar 19th century daguerreotypes, pointing to not only a lasting, but transcultural belief in the power of images. Vera Tamari's ongoing *Tale of a Tree*, begun in 1999, focuses on the Israeli army's destruction of olive trees owned and harvested by Palestinian farmers (see Figure 2). A black-and-white phototransfer on Plexiglas of an old olive tree was hung above a platform holding hundreds of 3-inch brightly colored ceramic olive trees. Tamari's use of black and white makes the iconic image of the olive tree is made even more so. The tree is a symbol of Palestinian cultural, economic, and spiritual heritage. As the large image looms over tiny hand made trees, the juxtaposition reminds us that the production of culture and heritage remains in the hands of individuals working collectively.

The significance of *Made in Palestine* touches on two fronts – the potential for art to impact people's understanding of the social, cultural, and political, and the contribution it makes to the field of art history. In the case of Palestine, a place where the simple act of hoisting a national flag became legal only 15 years ago with the Oslo Peace Accords, the exhibit offers audiences a unique way to approach the place, the issues with which Palestinians struggle, and the art they make. Art can play a crucial role when viewers engage honestly with the questions it asks, the problems it poses and the demands it makes. Only in this way can we truly appreciate the unique perspectives of the multiple lives made in Palestine.

“Made in Palestine” debuted at the Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, [May 3-Oct. 3, 2003]. It traveled to SomArts Cultural Center, San Francisco [Apr. 7-22, 2005]; T.W. Wood Gallery and Arts Center, Montpelier, Vt. [Oct. 18-Nov. 20, 2005]; and The Bridge Gallery, New York [Mar. 14-May 27, 2006].



Figure 1. Rula Halawani



Figure 2. Vera Tamari



Figure 3. Mustafa Al Hallaj



Figure 4. Mustafa Al Hallaj (in detail)



Figures 5 & 6. Nida Sinnokrot



Figure 7. John Halaka

Notes

¹ This article is a revised version of an earlier article. See Kathy Zarur, “Looking at the Levant,” *Art in America* 94, no. 8 (September 2006) p 154-7.

² By “Palestine,” I refer to the West Bank, Gaza and what is known as Palestine 48, the land occupied in 1948 now known as Israel.

³ Samia Halaby very generously gave me access to her unpublished article, from which I drew information about the inception and research of, and issues related to the exhibit of *Made in Palestine*.

⁴ These systematic killings are thought to be connected to the presence of US and Mexican-supported transnational corporations in the border region around El Paso, Texas and Juarez. For an account of the relationship between gender, representation and the killings on the borderlands, see Rosa Linda Fregoso, *MeXicana Encounters: The Making of Social Identities on the Borderlands*, University of California Press, 2003.

⁵ Rubber coated bullets are 1 to 2 mm metal bullets coated in rubber that, when used are “impossible to avoid severe injuries to vulnerable body regions such as the head, neck and upper torso, leading to substantial mortality, morbidity and disability.” See <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article527.shtml>.

⁶ Nida Sinnokrot in a telephone conversation with the author on 27 July 2008.

⁷ Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Richard Howard, trans. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.

The One Palestine: Past, Present and Future Perspectives.

By Ilan Pappé

A clear sense of 'Palestine' as a coherent geo-political unit dates back, according to both the Palestinian and Zionist narratives, to 3000 BC. From that time onward, and for another 1500 years, it was the land of the Canaanites. In around 1500 BC the land of Canaan fell under Egyptian rule, not for the last time in history and then successfully under Philistine (1200-975), Israelite (1000-923), Phoenician (923-700), Assyrian (700-612), Babylonian (586-539), Persian (539-332), Macedonian (332-63), Roman (63BC-636CE), Arab (636-1200), Crusade (1099-1291), Ayubi (1187-1253), Mamluk (1253-1516) and Ottoman rules (1517-1917). Each rule divided the land in administrative way that reflected its political culture and time. But apart from the early Roman period and the early Arab period when vast population were moved out and in, the society remained – ethnically, culturally and religiously – the same. Within what we recognize today as Mandatory Palestine this society developed its own oneness and distinctive features.

In modern times, some of the above periods were manipulated and co-opted into a national, or colonialist, narrative to justify the takeover and conquest of the country. This historical chronology was used, or abused, by the Crusaders and later European colonialists and the Zionist movement. The Zionists were different from the others as they deemed, as did the powers that be when they emerged in 1882, the historical reference as crucial for justifying their colonization of Palestine. They did it as part of what they termed 'the Return' to or 'Redemption' of the land, which was once ruled by Israelites; as the historical checklist above indicate this is a reference to a mere century in a history of four millennia.

Apart from the national narrative, we should say that Palestine as a geo-political entity was a fluid concept since the rulers of the country quite often were the representatives of an empire, which disabled any local sovereignty from developing. The question of sovereignty began to be an issue – one that would inform the land's history and conflict until today – once the Empires disappeared. The natural progress from such disintegration, almost everywhere in the world, was that the indigenous population took over. Ever since the emergence of the concept of Nationalism, the identity of this historical revolution is clearer and common. Where the vestiges of imperialism or colonialism refused to let go – such as in the case of while

settlers' communities in North and South Africa – the national wars of liberation lingered on. In places, where the indigenous population was annihilated by the settlers' communities, they became the new nation (as happened in the Americas and Australia).

The takeover from the disintegrating empires succeeded a longer process, so many of the theoreticians of nationalism believe, of social and cultural cohesiveness. The liberated land varied in structure and composition: some having a heterogeneous ethnic, religious and culture societies, finding it difficult to become a nation state, others, were fortunate due to their relative homogeneity – although they had their share of the economic polarity, social differentiation and a constant struggle between modernity and tradition. A liberated Palestine would have belonged to the latter model – which developed in Egypt and Tunisia – and less similar to the more troubled cases of Iraq and Lebanon.

With the turn of the 21st century, the political map of the world consolidated in such a way that only in very few areas where the nation building of the state still continues or the issue of sovereignty is still open. A rare case, which distresses the world at large and destabilizes it, is Palestine. Why did not this Arab land become another Arab nation state – as all the other states in the Middle East (including the smallest of the emirates in the Persian Gulf) - is a known story. What is quite often neglected is the fact that the present geo-political reality, while been depicted in the world as normal, is in fact a *sui generis* that runs contrary to the land's history and the wishes of its native population, who still constitute a vast majority of the people (the Palestinian refugee community and those living inside Palestine are double than that of the Jews inside the land). The gap between the external depiction of the reality, and the reality itself as perceived by the Palestinians, is the major source of the conflict and only attempts to tally the former with the latter have a chance of brining reconciliation and peace to the torn country of Palestine.

The purpose of this article is to stress the pattern of continuity in Palestine's modern history (beginning with the late Ottoman Period) as a geo-political entity with its own cultural cohesiveness and distinctiveness. The search is for both the political structures that existed and those offered as alternatives.

Even a cursory journey into the past reveals that Palestine was most of the time ruled as a unitary political unit; namely, the political structure fitted the ethnic, social, cultural and religious realities on the ground. Such a long span of time, lying on deeper layer of ancient existence, explain the emergence of unique features such as dialects, customs and local patriotism in what we recognize today as Palestine.

The rise of ideologies such as nationalism, the intervention of European colonialism and the decline of Ottomanism contributed to a clearer conceptualization of what Palestine meant and stood for, both to its inhabitants and those coveting it from the outside.

Palestine in the late Ottoman Rule

The above sub-title is a title of a book published in my own university in 1986. More than 25 historians, most of them Israeli Jews, reconstructed life in Palestine: a geo-political unit that was predominantly Arab in ethnicity (more than 95% out of half a million of Arabs) The old Jewish community considered itself to be Arab and only few thousands Jewish settlers who arrived for the first time in 1882 regarded their ethnicity, and not only religion, as Jewish.

Palestinian historians would have no problem with defining the land in 1882-1917 as Palestine in the late Ottoman period. However, they would find it bizarre to learn from the book's introduction that in that period there were two communities, Jewish and Arab, 'which began aspiring toward national liberation' and therefore, both groups were anti-Ottoman. It was 'only natural that much of their protest and grievances be directed against their Ottoman masters'. Historical fabrication at its best, one should say. The naive reader would think Palestine in late Ottoman period, and centuries, if not millennia, before was the land of Jews and Arabs, equal in number, presence and claim, who disliked each other and the Ottomans. In this typical Zionist narrative of the mid 1980s, Palestine is already partly Israel. Partition was already in the air.

We need Palestinian scholarship to remind us that even in 1917, the vast majority of people in Palestine were Palestinians – 600,000 – with few thousand foreign settlers hoping to colonize the land on behalf of European Jewish nationalism or Christian millennialism. A year later Palestine was clearly defined as such with the name Palestine given to it officially for the first time as a political unit, and through dramatic dispossession, colonization and aggressive British imperialism became a historical case study lying somewhere between the annihilated indigenous populations and the liberated colonies of the European empires. It is still there today.

As long as the demographic, social and cultural realities on the ground fitted the political structure for the land, conflict was sparse and very localized. For most of the Ottoman period, Palestine was only divided administratively, but maintained as mentioned cohesion distinguished by dialect, customs and the people itself [give reference from my book, Khalidi and Doumani]. The country was composed of three principal Ottoman subdistricts, Acre, Nablus and Jerusalem, which were connected by history and tradition. These similarities had all along been recognized by the people themselves, which is why the people of Jabal Nablus had made every possible effort to remain connected to Jerusalem. When Nablus was officially annexed in 1858 to the vilayet of Beirut, a protest movement arose, so massive that it turned into a blood-bath in which, according to the British consul in Jerusalem, 3,000 people were killed. (He was, however, known to have exaggerated in the past, so the number could well have been much lower).¹

In the very last years of their rule, the Ottoman allowed the Arab elite to take a more intensive part in the politics of the land – turning its cities such as Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa and Nablus – into epicenters of social, and later even national, unity [butrus abu manneh]. Like all the Arab lands around Palestine, under the spell of nationalism, Palestine progressed into becoming a Wattaniya – a geo-political locality – within a

Qawmiyya – the pan-Arabist sphere of belonging.

The new rules of Palestine, the British Empire, did not stop this process, nor did it create a political structure that collided with the cohesiveness of the society and its uniqueness. But, it did lay the foundations, through the various political solutions it offered, for the construction of a new Palestine - that deprived the Palestinians of their land – and making it into Israel.

One Palestine Complete.

Yet again, a title by a Zionist historian, this time Tom Segev. Here too Palestinian historiography would not object to the title, but Segev's English title is misleading. The book was originally written in Hebrew and titled *Eretz Israel in the Mandatory Period*; a typical Zionist parlance. The One Palestine, is thus an aberration, almost a foreign occupation by a very civilized culture, according to Segev, which enabled the native population – which here include too the Zionist settlers and colonialists, to live in relative peace and prosperity.

Palestine became more complete, in this Segev is right, because the British continued where the Ottoman reformers left the work of unison, before they collapsed. The British combined the three Ottoman sub-districts into one geo-political unit (a smooth operation that went with great local satisfaction compared to the uneasiness that accompanied similar unifications in Iraq, where Kurds, Shiites and Sunnis were to become the Iraqi nation state under British rule). The making of a unitary mandatory state was a calm historical process that corresponded to the harmonious ethnic and religious fabric on the ground. It lasted until 1923 and the final stages were devoted for negotiating over the land's final border, creating a better defined space for the national movement to identify with, but also for colonialism and Zionism to fight for.

This was Palestine's tragedy that in the same period when it crystallized as a typical Arab nation state, it enabled the Zionist movement to define clearly what meant geographically by the concept of Eretz Israel, or the land of Israel; with Zionism came also the idea of partitioning Palestine.

The political elite of the native Palestinians conceived its homeland as a unitary state. In fact, in the very early years of British occupation and nascent Zionist presence it imagined the future more in pan-Arabist than Palestinian terms. But the balance of forces on the ground undermined the dream of a pan-Arabist entity stretching from Morocco to Iran and crashed even less ambitious plans such as creating a Greater Syria out of the eastern Mediterranean countries. By 1922, the majority of the Palestinian leaders, and one guesses the population at large, conceptualized Palestine as the national homeland of the Palestinians lying between the river Jordan and the Mediterranean. When this was the trend, and given the vast majority they enjoyed in the country, the Palestinians, through their elected leaders, became aware of their need to make a claim to a land that was theirs, until a foreign movement challenged them. Their entry into the game of diplomacy in the post 1918 global arena was hesitant, and ineffective, compared to the European based

Zionist movement, with its growing power base in America.

On the face it, being such a vast majority, they should have succeeded, despite their leaders' lack of experience. The new nation states in the Middle East were promised independence, under the guidance of the League of Nations, based on principles of democracy and self-determination. Had Palestine been treated by these measures, it would have been today in a similar position to any other Arab nation state.

But, unlike any other Arab state, the international verdict about Palestine's future, in the form of the mandatory charter, included clauses that defeated the right of the Palestinians to their homeland. The Balfour declaration and with it the ambiguous British promise to make Palestine a homeland for the Jews was incorporated in the charter. Few bursts of violent waves and more reflective British strategic thought led London to rethink its previous concepts. This is probably why until 1937, the British were still visualizing the future within a one state paradigm. In 1928, these fresh insights turned into the first significant peace initiative. In a country that by then had a majority of Palestinians (85% of the population), the British must have felt triumphant when they succeeded in persuading the Executive Committee of the national Palestine congress – the de facto government of the Palestinians - to share the land with the Jewish settlers. The idea was to build a state on the basis of parity – in the executive, legislative and judiciary system. It was a concept of a unitary state that was accepted by a Palestinian leadership – in a rare moment of unity in a polity that hitherto and after was divided by clannish cleavages of prestige and ancestry.²

It was also an opportune moment for allowing the two communities to try and coexist within an acceptable political structure. But the Zionist leadership refused to partake in such a solution. Interestingly, as long as its leaders had been aware of a total rejection of the idea on the Palestinian part, the official Zionist position was that this kind of a solution is acceptable. Once the intelligence unit of the Jewish Agency reported a change of wind on the Palestinian side, the Jewish leadership reversed its policy and rejected the idea of parity.³ The Zionist leaders preferred the idea of partition, with the hope of annexing more of Palestine when favorable conditions for such expansion would develop.

When the future of Palestine was discussed once more in the wake of the British decision to leave Palestine in February 1947, the Zionist leadership, although representing the minority group of settlers, determined the peace agenda. A very inexperienced inquiry commission was appointed by the UN – the international body took responsibility for Palestine after the British withdrawal. The new commission acted within a vacuum which was easily filled by the Zionist ideas. The Jewish Agency provided in May 1947 the inquiry commission, UNSCOP, a map that included a creation of a Jewish state over 80% of Palestine – more or less Israel of today without the occupied territories. The commission in November 1947 reduced the Jewish State into 55% of Palestine and formulated the plan as a UN General Assembly resolution 181. The Palestinian rejection of the plan, which did not surprise anyone as they had been opposed to partition ever since 1918 and the Zionist endorsement of it, which was foretold since partition was after all a Zionist solution to the problem, were in the eyes of the international policeman a solid enough base for peace in the Holy Land. Imposing the will of one side on the other was hardly a productive move towards reconciliation and indeed rather than bringing peace and quiet to the torn land, the resolution triggered violence

on an unprecedented scale in the history of modern Palestine.⁴

The Partitioning of Palestine, 1947-1967

The Jewish leadership returned to its May 1947 map; if the Palestinians rejected the Zionist idea of partition, it was time for unilateral action. The map showed clearly which parts of Palestine were coveted as the future Jewish state. The problem was that within the desired 80% the Jews were a minority of 40% (660,000 Jews and one million Palestinians). But this was also a passable hurdle. The leaders of the Yishuv had been prepared ever since the beginning of the Zionist project in Palestine for such an eventuality. They advocated in such a case the enforced transfer of the indigenous population so that a pure Jewish state could be established. Therefore, on March 10, 1948, the Zionist leadership adopted the by now infamous Plan Dalet which ordered the Jewish forces to ethnically cleanse the areas regarded as the future Jewish State in Palestine.

The international community realized that the partition plan was more an incentive for bloodshed than a peace program and five days after the 1948 war erupted attempted once more a reconciliation effort. The mission was entrusted in the hands of the UN first mediator in the history of the post-mandatory conflict, Count Folke Bernadotte. Bernadotte offered two proposals to end the conflict by partitioning the land into two states. The difference between them was that in the second proposal he suggested the annexation of Arab Palestine to Transjordan. But in both proposals he stipulated the unconditional repatriation of Palestinian refugees as a precondition for peace. He was ambivalent about Jerusalem wishing it to be the Arab capital in the first proposal but preferring it international in the second. In any case, he seemed to place the refugees and Jerusalem at the center of the conflict and perceive these two dilemmas as indivisible problems, for which only a comprehensive and just solution would do.⁵

Even after Bernadotte's assassination by Jewish extremists in 1948, the Palestine Conciliation Commission appointed to replace him, pursued the same policy. The three members of this commission wished to build the future solution on three tiers: the partition of the land into two states – but not according to the map of the partition resolution but in correspondence to the demographic distribution of Jews and Palestinians, the internationalization of Jerusalem and the unconditional return of the refugee to their homes. The new mediators offered the three principles as a basis for negotiations and while the Arab confrontational countries and the Palestinian leadership accepted this offer, during the UN peace conference in Lausanne Switzerland in May 1949, as had done before them the UN General Assembly in resolution 194 of December 1948, it was nonetheless buried by the intransigent David Ben Gurion and his government in summer of that year. At first, the US administration rebuked Israel for its policy and exerted economic pressure on it, but later on, the Jewish lobby succeeded in re-orientating US policy onto pro-Israeli tracks, where it remained until today.⁶

Palestine was not divided. It was destroyed and most of its people expelled. The expulsion and the

destruction kindled the conflict ever since. The PLO emerged in the late 1950s as an embodiment of the Palestinian struggle for return, reconstruction and restitution. But it was not a particularly successful struggle. The refugees were totally ignored by the international community and the regional Arab powers. Only Gamal abd al-Nasser seemed to adopt their cause, forcing the Arab League to show at least concern for their case. As the Arab ill-fated maneuvers of June 1967 showed, this was not enough or efficient.

In those days when the PLO phoenix hatched (1948-67), a more systematic conceptualization of the idea of one state emerged. In the paper *Filastinuna* several writers envisaged a secular democratic state as the only viable solution for the Palestine problem. But a thorough reading shows that the concern was an unidentified 'Palestinian entity' that would trigger the rebirth of the movement, rather than focusing on actual political models or structures.⁷ The debate was mainly between a pan-Arabist point, wishing to oppose what they called separatism from the *qawmi* (the pan-Arabist version of nationalism) future in the name of a Palestinian *watniyya* (nation-state territorialism).

Neither was the nature of a future Palestinian entity seriously discussed in the regional or international arenas. There was a lull in the peace efforts in the 1950s and 1960s, although into the air schema such the Anglo-American Alpha program and the Johnston Plan were thrown.⁸ These and more esoteric initiative, almost all of them American, wished to adopt a business like approach to the conflict. This meant a great belief in partition according to security interests of Israel and its Arab neighbors, while totally sidelining the Palestinians as partners for peace. The Palestinians were cancelled as a political partner in the business like approach. They existed only as refugees whose fate was treated within the economic aspect of the American Cold War against the Soviet Union. Their problem was to be solved within a new Marshall plan for the Middle East. This plan promised American aid to the area in order to improve the standard of living as the best means of containing Soviet encroachment. For that the refugees had to be resettled in Arab lands and serve as cheap labour for their development (and by that also distancing them from Israel's borders and consciousness). Although the PLO showed enough resistance to encourage Arab regimes to leave the refugees in their transitional camps, despite their perception as a destabilizing factor, the association of the PLO with the Soviet Union, on the other hand, pushed the Palestinians, wherever they were, from any prospective pax Americana.

The Partition Formula and Its Demise, 1967-2000

In June 1967, the whole of Palestine became Israel - a new geo-political reality that necessitated a renewed peace process. At first, it was the UN that took the initiative, but soon it was replaced by American peace-makers. The early architects of Pax Americana had some original ideas of their own which were flatly rejected by the Israelis and hence remained on paper. Then the mechanism of American brokering became a proxy for Israeli peace plans. At the center of the Israeli perception of a solution stood three presumptions: the first was that Israel should be absolved from the 1948 ethnic cleanings by not mentioning any more the issue as part of a prospective peace agenda; secondly and consequently, negotiations for peace

would only concern the future of the areas Israel had occupied in 1967; namely the West Bank and the Gaza strip and thirdly, the fate of the Palestinian minority in Israel was not to be part of a comprehensive settlement for the conflict. This meant that 80 percents of Palestine and more than 50 percents of the Palestinians were excluded from the efforts of making peace in the land of Palestine. This formula was accepted unconditionally by the US and sold as the best offer in town to the rest of the world.

At the heart of this formula stood an equation of territories for peace, produced by the Israeli peace camp and marketed by the Americans. It is a strange formula if you stop and think about it: on the one end of the equation you have a quantitative and measurable variable, on the other, an abstract term, not easily conceptualized or even illustrated. It was less bizarre as a working basis for bilateral peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors where indeed it operated quite well, for a while, in the case of Egypt and Jordan. And yet we should remember it produced ‘cold peace’ in the case of these two countries, as it did not offer a comprehensive solution to the Palestine question. And indeed what had this equation to offer to the ultimate victims of the 1948 war; whose demand for ‘justice’ is the main fuel kindling the conflict’s fire?

The architects of the Oslo accord thought it could. They resold the merchandize of ‘peace for territories’. Hollow concepts such as Israeli recognition in the PLO and ‘autonomy’ for the Palestinians was meant to strengthen the business like approach for a solution. The reality on the ground was one state, 20 percents of which was under indirect Israeli military occupation, while it was represented as the making of a two states solution with the display of a dramatic discourse of peace.⁹

I am not underestimating the progress made in Oslo, but one should never forget the circumstances of the accord’s birth, they tell you why it was such a colossal failure. Dramatic changes in the global and regional balance of power, and an Israeli readiness to replace the Hashemites of Jordan with the PLO as a partner for peace, opened the way to an even more complicated formula of ‘territories for peace’. Oslo was a celebration of the idea of partition: territories, and everything else which is visible and quantifiable could be divided between the two sides. Thus the only non Jewish parts of post-1948 Palestine - 22 percents of the land – could be re-divided between Israel and a future Palestinian autonomous entity. Within these 22 percents of Palestine, the illegal Jewish settlements could be divided into 80 per cent under Israeli control and 20 percent under Palestinian authority. And so on, most of the water resources to Israel, most of Jerusalem in Israeli hands. Peace, the quid pro quo, meant a stateless Palestinian state robbed of any say in its defense, foreign or economic policies. As for the Palestinian right of return, according to the Israeli interpretation of Oslo, which is the one that counts, it should be forgotten and erased. This Israeli conceptualization of a solution was presented to the world at large in the summer of 2000 at Camp David.

For Palestinians the summit in Camp David was meant to produce the final stages in the Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza strip (according to resolutions 242 and 338 of the UN security council) and prepare the ground for new negotiations over a final settlement on the basis of UN resolution 194 – the return of the refugees, the internationalization of Jerusalem and a full sovereign Palestinian state. Even the US voted in favor of this resolution at the time and ever since.

The Israeli Left, in power ever since 1999, regarded the Camp David summit as a stage for dictating to the Palestinian their concept of a solution: maximizing the divisibility of the visible (evicting 90 per cent of the occupied areas, 20 percent of the settlements, 50 percent of Jerusalem) while demanding the end of Palestinian reference to the invisible layers of the conflict: no right of return, no full sovereign Palestinian state and no solution for the Palestinian minority in Israel. After Camp David an acceptable solution for the Israelis, meant that as long as the Palestinian would not succumb to the Israeli dictate, the occupation, exile and discrimination would continue until the Palestinians would budge. With or without Ariel Sharon's violation of the sacredness of *Haram al-Sharif* in September 2000, the second uprising broke out in the territories and in Israel a month later, in October 2000, and is still going on while this article is written.

In first four years of the second Intifada, 'Territories for Peace' was absent from the peace table. The uprising spilled over into Israel itself leading the Palestinian minority there to call for the de-Zionization of the Jewish state, allowing West Bankers to demand the Palestinization of the Muslim and Christian Jerusalem, the inhabitants of Gaza to raise arms against the continued occupation and uniting refugees around the world in their call for the implementation of their right of return. What this last intifada made abundantly clear was that in the eyes of the Palestinians, the end of occupation was a precondition for peace and can not be peace itself. The Israeli peace camp, so we are told by its 'gurus' was insulted in October 2000. The narrative provided by the Israeli prime minister at the time of the Camp David summit, Ehud Barak, was accepted widely by the peace camp. According to this version the Israeli leadership maximized the equation of 'territories for peace' by offering most of the territories Israeli occupied in 1967, and the Palestinians stupidly rejected this 'generous' offer.

This version was endorsed by the United States, although several European governments and personalities doubted its validity. This narrative delineated very clearly what was the final settlement in the eyes of the political camp led at the time by the Labour party and its leader Ehud Barak. Such a 'comprehensive' solution was an essence an Israeli demand of the Palestinians to recognize the Zionist narrative of the 1948 war as exclusively right and valid: Israel had no responsibility for the making of the refugee problem and the Palestinian minority in Israel – twenty per cents of the population – was not part of the solution to the conflict. It also included an Israeli demand of the Palestinians to acquiesce in the new reality Israel created in Greater Jerusalem and the West Bank. A final peace settlement was therefore one in which the world recognizes as for ever Jewish the settlement belt encircling Jerusalem and planted at the heart of the Palestinian cities such as Nablus and Halil (Hebron).

This dictate returned as a peace process in 2004 under the auspices of a new body, the Quartet – a committee composing of the most senior UN, American, European and Russian diplomats. The presented a 'Road Map' – which was an international endorsement for the Israeli ideas of how best to divide the occupied territories between the Jewish state a future Palestinian entity, that could be called, even according to the Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon (who won the elections of 2001 and 2003) a 'state'. When the two sides failed to move ahead toward the Map, for the same reasons they failed to reach an agreement in the previous 36 years of Israeli occupation, Sharon offered his own version of the Map. He suggested a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the north of the West Bank. The

Quartet wished this disengagement to be part of the Map, Sharon did not care one way or another. He is motivated by an Israeli consensus that regards half of the West Bank (the big settlements blocs and Greater Jerusalem) as an integral part of future Israel in a solution that has no right of return for the refugees. In a way, if Sharon, backed now by the political center in Israel, succeeds that a one state solution is being implemented which includes a Palestinian Bantustan (in fact two Bantustans: one in the Gaza Strip and one in the shrunk West Bank), which the world will probably hail as a two state solution.

The Failure of Partition

The historical perspective on the peace efforts, offered hitherto, indicate that the attempt to focus on the fate of the territories Israel had occupied in the June 1967 war – territories which are 22 per cents of Palestine – has been a total failure. Even, Israeli offers to withdraw from most the territories (from Oslo, through Camp David 2000, Ayalon Nusseibah initiative, the Road Map and the Geneva accord) could not illicit a meaningful Palestinian consent to end the conflict. These offers had one thing in common, they emptied the concept of statehood from its conventional and accepted notion in the second half of the twentieth century. These peace offers, without exception limited the future independence of the Palestinians in those 22 percents, accrediting Israel an exclusive say in security, foreign and economic matters in the future mini- state of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The mini-state structure failed to offer a solution to the refugee question; nor did it relate to the internationally recognized Right of Return. It is also a political structure that has no relevance to the fate of the 1.4 million Palestinians who live inside Israel, subjected to formal and informal apartheid policies. And finally, as the annexation of most of east Jerusalem has been tolerated by the international community for such a long time, it seems that a two states solution retains much of Jerusalem in Jewish hands and disables the Palestinians from having a proper capital there.

What unites these four unsolved problems is the extension of the peace effort both geographically and chronologically. Geographically, we are looking for a political structure that is different from the contemporary one in all the area of mandatory Palestine. Chronologically, we are looking for recognition in the significance of the 1948 Nakbah in determining the future chances of reconciliation.

The two are interconnected in a required recognition, globally and locally, of the imparity built into this conflict. More precisely, it means, that the whole process of reconciliation can be activated unless Israel acknowledges the ethnic cleansing it committed in 1948 and is willing to be accountable for it.

I have written elsewhere on the various possible mechanisms for such a process¹⁰; here I would like to associate the end of conflict and the question of the desirable political structure that should accompany such a process and eventually a solution. I use the term accompany, as I believe the process of mediation and reconciliation between Israel and its Palestinian victims is a first preconditioned stage that should

commence even before the final construction of an appropriate political structure.

Both the outstanding problems and the mechanism of reconciliation have a better chance of being dealt once the idea of two states is abandoned, and with it the paradigm of parity is substituted with recognition of the imbalance between colonizer and colonized, expeller and expelled and occupier and occupied.

Buds of New Thought: Contemporary Support for the One State

Insert the quartet and so on and include the new buds in process no. 4....and change subtitle.

Reaching such noble objectives may rightly seem now is sheer utopia. Such a way forward is vehemently rejected by most of the Jews in Israel and objected to by a considerable number of West Bankers. In the long run it may be, for good or for worse, the only game in town as recognized even by those who still are ardent supporters of the idea of two states, such as Mustafa Barghouti.¹¹

In Israel two long time comrades of Barghouti struggle for two states, Haim Hanegbi and Meron Benvenisti have decided in the end of the summer of 2003 that the time has come to forsake the two-state solution.¹² The former sees it as a just solution to the question the latter laments it as unfortunately the only feasible one given the range of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, the unwillingness of any Israeli government to massively withdraw settlers and the growing demography of Palestinians inside Israel. However, both advocate the bi-national model, a kind of a federation between two national entities which share the executive, legislative and constitutional authorities between them on a parity and consensual basis.

The more veteran advocates of such a solution tend to prefer the idea of a secular democratic state for all its citizens. But also some of them regard the bi-national structure as a more feasible one, to begin with. As Tony Judt put it recently in the New York Review of books¹³ article on the subject, it will be easier to win over those disappointed with the chances of a two-states solution to the notion of a bi-national state. A similar argument was made by two Israeli academics: a Palestinian and a Jew in 2004.¹⁴

The powers that be – be they in politics, the economy or the media – are still putting all their energies in consolidating in Palestine a two-state solution; each according to its own understanding. The political elite in Israel, wishes for a structure that would shrink Palestine into oblivion; the Quartet asserts that it could convince Israel to allow a mini-state over 15% of what used to be Palestine and this Bantustan seems to satisfy some of the Arab regimes which are within the American sphere of Influence.

Given such a local, regional and global balances of power, can there be a return to political structures that would reflect more fairly and usefully the history, geography, culture and demography of Palestine?

The time has not as yet arrived for detailing the nature of the political structure that would replace the two state solutions, and the two models of the secular state and the binational that would compete in the theoretical discussions on the subject.

Surely, one way forward is to continue the extrapolation of the concept of one state as the only sensible solution that can prevent a civil war in Israel, grant equal rights to the Palestinian minority in Israel and provide equitable solutions to the Right of Return and the status of Jerusalem. Much work is still to be done in this theoretical sphere beyond the stage of slogans and rhetoric. Moreover, there is a need to draw into the discussion other groups, such as feminists and ecologists, to widen the scope of the debate regarding how to structure the needed political entity.

This can begin with joint historiographical effort that seeks non-ethnocentric, polyphonic reconstruction of the past that can produce in its turn more reflective and humanistic attitudes towards the suffering of those victimized by structures of evil in the land. The historiographical endeavour is not merely academic, as it looks for a de-nationalized, as well de-genderized and de-colonized history. This means that salvaging the deprived voices in the past means giving them a voice today and towards a different future.

However, how to move from the historical deconstruction to the future reconstruction is almost an impossible task. The comparative historical lessons, one has to admit, are not very encouraging in this respect. And thus with all due respect to an important and significant debate that continues today between the proponents of the various ideal types of one-state solutions in Palestine, one has to assess the chances arriving to the moment in which these theoretical broodings will become, inevitably reduced, real models on the ground.

More urgent, therefore is the deconstruction of the present political power willing the life of newcomers, indigenous and future inhabitants of Palestine. A power that suckles from an international system governed by ideals and motivations that seem to seek perpetuation of the present reality rather than changing it.

Four processes have to be closely looked at, if one wishes to assess the chances for a new reality to emerge in Palestine. These processes are intertwined in a dialectical relationship that as a whole is likely to impact the reality on the ground in contemporary Palestine.

The first is the Israeli policy – with the backing of global powers such as the American industrial-military complex, Christian Zionists and the pro-Zionist Jewish lobbies in the world. This policy if unabated and unhindered will continue to destroy Palestine, in the name of two states.

The second is the growing resentment in the Third, Muslim and Arab worlds with this reality. So far, this anger is only reflected in extremist fanaticism, which feeds and benefits the first trend, but it can grow into a far more lethal, effective, and even acceptable force countering Israel and its policies.

The third is a fundamental change in the Western public opinion and in what can be called, for lack of

a better term, the civil society. In July 2005, a survey showed that only 14% of Europeans and 42% of American showed sympathy and understanding of the Israeli position; and the trend is towards reducing these percentages even more. Against these statistics, one can appreciate the mushrooming of boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Israel; reminiscent of the way the anti-Apartheid movement grew in the 1960s.

The fourth is a cautious emanation of desegregated spaces of coexistence, on a parity basis, inside areas in Israel where Palestinian and Jews live in proximity, such as the Galilee. It is reflected mainly in the opening of joint kindergartens and schools, but it also beginning to pervade the business, judicial and municipal fields. These are too early days to assess the significance of the phenomenon, a drop in a sea of segregation from above. But if the three processes mentioned above would have their impact, this may develop both as a refuge for people who wish to live differently than the reality around them, or even as a model for a future Palestine.

Notes

¹ See more details in Ilan Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine; One Land, Two peoples*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004, pp. 14-26.

² Eliakim Rubenstein, 'The Treatment of the Arab question in Palestine in the Immediate period after the 1929 events and the Establishment of the Political Bureau – Political Aspect' in Ilan Pappé (ed.), *Jewish-Arab Relations in Mandatory Palestine; A New Approach in the Historical Research*, (Institute of Peace Research, Givat Haviva 1995), pp. 65-102 (Hebrew).

³ Ibid.

⁴ This is detailed in Ilan Pappé, *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947-51*, I. B. Tauris, New York and London, pp. 16-46.

⁵ Ilan Amitzur, *Bernadotte in Palestine 1948: A Study in Contemporary Humanitarian Knighterrantry*. Macmillan London 1989.

⁶ See Pappé, *The Making*, pp. 203-243.

⁷ Helena Cobban, *The PLO*, The Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1984, 28-29.

⁸ Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall; Israel and the Arab World*, W. W. Norton and Company, New York and London 2000, pp. 109-110.

⁹ See Ilan Pappé, 'Breaking the Mirror – Oslo and After' in Haim Gordon (ed.), *Looking Back at June 1967 War*, Prager, Westport Connecticut and London, 1999, pp. 95-112.

¹⁰ Ilan Pappé, 'Fear, Victimhood, Self and Other', *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, May 2001.

¹¹ Mustafa Barghouti, 'Sharon's Nightmare', *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 690 (13-19 May 2004).

¹² Haim Hanegbi and Meron Benvenisti cited in Ari Shavit's "Cry, the Beloved Two-State Solution" *Haaretz*, 8 August 2003.

¹³ Tony Judt "Israel: The Alternative" *The New York Review of Books* 50(16), 2003. n.p.

¹⁴ See for instance, As'ad Ghanem and Sarah Ozacky-Lazar, 'The Status of the Palestinians in Israel in an Era of Peace: Part of the Problem But not Part of the Solution', *Israel Affairs*, 9/1-2 (Autumn/Winter 2003), pp.263-289.

A One State Solution for the Palestine-Israel conflict: an Interview with Ali Abunimah.¹

By Savera Kalideen and Haidar Eid

In this interview, Abunimah discusses a 'one-state solution' for all the people of Palestine; Jews, Christians and Muslims

A two-state solution, with the land of Palestine divided into the state of Israel and a state for Palestine seems racist and unjust in the modern world. Why did the two- state solution win the support of the Palestinian leadership?

The two-state solution was adopted by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as a pragmatic move, without conviction. Up until the 1980s, the official Palestinian position was in favor of a one-state solution, but the PLO leadership – and Yasser Arafat – then accepted a Palestinian state only in the West Bank and Gaza. They did so with the expectation that Israel would limit its' state to the other 78% of historic Palestine.

There seems to be a strong current of political support both inside Palestine (including Hamas) and in the international community for a two-state solution. How, when and why did the one state movement (which calls for a single state of Palestine in which Jews, Christians and Muslims will live as equal citizens) emerge in Palestine?

The support for the two-state solution is without real conviction. Increasingly, those policymakers are recognizing that the two-state solution is a convenient political fiction that is unachievable on the ground. As for the Palestinian movement for one-state, I think it never went away. I do not think many Palestinians ever bought into the two-state vision with real conviction. They were persuaded it was “pragmatic.” Once they saw that it was merely a way for Israel to continue colonialism by other means – exactly like the Bantustans – they have started to question it. But there is a real lack of political leadership to begin to

present alternatives.

What extent of support exists among Palestinians for a one state solution?

Polls show that in the West Bank and Gaza, support for the two-state solution has never been above about 60 percent, and support for a one state solution has reached about 35 percent. It is remarkable how low support for a two-state solution has been given how heavily marketed it is. And it is encouraging that support for a one-state solution is so high, given that no major political figures have openly supported it. Among Palestinian refugees who live outside Palestine, support for a two-state solution has always been low – though we do not have exact figures. But the reason for that is clear: a two-state solution means that the right of Palestinian refugees to return to most of Palestine will have to be given up (the area that would be recognized as “Israel”). They will never accept that. This is the reason that the PLO leadership gradually excluded Palestinian refugees and others outside Palestine from decision-making. Finally, among Palestinians inside the 1948 borders of Israel, there is massive support for a state of all its citizens – in other words abolishing all forms of Jewish privilege in the state. So in principle, Palestinians in Israel are in favor of such a state. When I have spoken about this issue to Palestinians, principally in North America, the main response I get by far is ‘This is a great idea, but the Israelis will refuse it.’

Have there been other forms of the one state vision presented as possible solutions in the past. If so, what led to their failure to win support? What can be learned from those experiences?

Yes. Most recently it was the PLO’s position in the late 1960s through the 1980s’s to support a secular democratic state. But in reality this never went beyond a slogan. No serious work was done to build support for this idea among Palestinians, nor was any work done to describe what it means in practice. In particular, there was no discussion of what the position of the Israeli Jewish population would be in this vision.

How would you respond to accusations that supporters of a one state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict are calling for the ‘destruction of the State of Israel’ and denying Israel’s ‘right to exist?’

We have to be clear what we are talking about. Israel, as it has existed for 60 years, is a racist state, built on the pillars of colonialism, ethnic cleansing, and legalized discrimination. This discrimination takes several forms: against Palestinians inside Israel face discrimination-- discrimination in every aspect of life, from civil rights, to land allocations to separate and unequal education, to laws confiscating the property

of non- Jews and so on. Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, areas occupied in 1967, live under a military regime with all of its inhumane policies. And millions of Palestinian refugees who were forced out of Palestine in 1948 and 1967 cannot return to their homeland because of the racist Israeli laws which prevent them from returning because they are of the wrong religion. Many people describe the situation in the West Bank and Gaza (the 1967 occupied territories) – as apartheid. It should be our goal to dismantle this system and replace it with a democracy for all the people who live in Palestine/Israel. But the target is not the Israeli Jewish people. It is the racist state. The Israeli Jewish people have a right to live in peace and security, fully protected as citizens in a non-sectarian state.

In South Africa, the ANC government has close and strong ties with the Fatah movement as well as with the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Do you see this as an obstacle or an opportunity for the one state movement?

The ANC is very loyal to those who supported the anti-apartheid struggle. That is understandable and admirable. At the same time it would be a mistake to ignore the changes in the Palestinian political landscape. Twenty years ago, Hamas was a much more marginal group. Now it cannot be ignored. It must be engaged. So, while the ANC is indeed loyal to Fatah and the PLO, we know that South Africa is actively engaged in consultations with the Hamas authority which was elected in January 2006. I see that as very positive. Whether that helps or hurts a one-state movement is another matter. I have criticized both Fatah and Hamas for so far failing to articulate a compelling vision that can serve the interests and fulfill the rights of all Palestinians, those in exile, those in Israel, and those in the West Bank and Gaza. There needs to be a much bigger vision, drawing in all segments of the Palestinian movement. That has not happened yet.

The South African struggle benefited from an international climate in which former colonies were gaining independence from colonization as well as from the promotion of liberal principles such as equality for all. Palestinians and Arabs face the reality of a ‘global war on terror’, with racial profiling of Arabs and the labeling of Palestinian freedom fighters as Al Qaeda-type terrorists. What strategies are Palestinians (within and outside the one state movement) using to counteract this and to tell their story to international civil society?

Do not forget that for many years the South African struggle was labeled as “terrorist” and “communist” in the context of a US-led global war on communism. The discourse of civilization versus barbarity is as old as colonialism itself, but it just gets reinvented in new disguises. So the Afrikaners were the ‘democrats’ and ‘civilized’ westerners facing the barbarian, communist hordes. Interestingly, the same discourse was used in Ireland, where the Catholic nationalists were portrayed by the British as backward and uncivilized. Nowadays the Israelis claim to be the ‘civilized’ westerners facing the forces of Islamic barbarism. There

is nothing new in this. It poses an enormous challenge, but one that has proved surmountable.

What forms of action do you think South Africans can take to support and promote a one state solution in Palestine?

First, it is very important that we recognize that no just solution will come about simply through persuasion. The Israelis will not wake up one morning and say ‘we were wrong, let’s dismantle this racist system we have built.’ Therefore pressure in the form of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) is essential as it will force Israel and its supporters to pay for the continuation of the Israeli apartheid system. The goal is not to punish ordinary Israelis, but to force them to consider the cost of their support for Israel’s racist policies against Palestinians. COSATU has voted to support the BDS movement, as have other South African civil society institutions, and I hope that all South Africans would follow suit.

Second, it is just as important that along with pressure, there be a vision of the future. We have to be able to say to Israeli Jews ‘here is our destination. You will be stripped of your legal privileges, and there will be restitution, but you will have a safe place in the future with full guarantees for your civil, political and cultural rights – if you want it.’ It has to be a principled and credible vision. I think this vision needs to be developed among Palestinians, but we can benefit from the experiences that South Africans have had. What went right? What would you do differently? South Africans did not have a road map when they set out on their unfinished journey towards a nonracial and socially just democracy. We should at least try to benefit from the experience they gained at such enormous cost.

Notes

¹ Ali Abunimah is the son of Palestinians who fled in 1948. He is the cofounder of a website on Palestine called ‘The Electronic Intifada,’ www.electronicintifada.org, and the author of *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*. (Metropolitan Books, 2006),

Outsiders on the Inside

By John Halaka

*in the remains of the dawn I walk outside of my own body
in the remains of the night I hear the footsteps of my own being*

Mahmoud Darwish

Mahmoud Darwish's stanza from the poem "A State of Siege"¹ is part of a call for continued resistance against looming cultural extermination. His verse implores us to reflect on the long journey to define one's personal, cultural and political identity and brings to mind the often asked, but not easily answered questions, *Who are we? Where do we come from? and Where are we going?*

Identity is not a monolithic entity but a complex psychosocial organism that we inhabit while it inhabits us. Within this organism, multiple identities coexist interdependently in visible and invisible layers that are constantly in flux. Some of those layers creatively inform and support each other, while others exist in an oppressive duel of supremacy. An individual's identity and by extension a nation's identity, is shaped by personal, familial, cultural forces and desires. Parts of our personal and national identities are projected upon us by outsiders; other parts are carefully cultivated by the individual, while others are a blend of the innate and a response to externally imposed vision of the self. How we define ourselves and how others define us through inherent, selected and imposed affiliations are important issues with which artists often grapple. This paper will investigate how a Palestinian artist, living in the Galilee as an Israeli citizen, explores and expresses aspects of her personal, cultural and national identity in her artwork.

This reflection on the complexity of cultural and political affiliations began to crystallize during the late summer of 2005, where five travelers who were unfamiliar with each other, gathered on the balcony of a hostel in Jaffa to enjoy the early evening breeze. During that brief and coincidental gathering, two casual conversations occurred simultaneously. I participated in the English conversation while being aware of the Hebrew conversation occurring next to me. I suspected that one of the two young men conversing in Hebrew was a Palestinian. When only the two of us remained on the balcony, I asked him in Arabic if he was Palestinian (he had heard me speak only English up to that point). He gave me a surprised look and after a brief pause replied in English "My father was a Palestinian. I, am an Israeli-Arab."

I had always heard Americans, Israelis and Europeans refer to the Palestinians in Israel as Israeli-Arabs, but I had never heard a Palestinian refer to himself as a such and was surprised by this man's internalization of what I had always considered to be a racist term that underscored the colonialist and supremacist character of the Zionist enterprise. I was disappointed, even angry at his response. Didn't he know that

Palestinians have a duty to maintain their historical identity in the face of looming cultural extermination? Had he become a willing instrument of cultural self-oppression in exchange for tenuous assimilation and marginal acceptance as a non-Jewish citizen in the Jewish homeland? Was he simply projecting a public façade of the “good Arab” as a tool of self-preservation? Was this the way that Palestinians who became citizens of Israel viewed and identified themselves?

I realized on that old balcony in Jaffa that in my lifelong attachment to Palestine and my reflections on the Palestinian struggle, I had never carefully considered the complex identity of Palestinian-Israelis; an identity defined in large part by the opposing forces of forgetting and remembering who you are.

In a culture of occupation and resistance, the history and image of the oppressed is always in conflict with the image and history imposed by the oppressors. The entity that holds the reigns of power has the upper hand in defining the public discourse on the struggle and shapes that discourse, in large part, by constructing and promoting a distorted image of the subjugated population in order to undermine their identity and standing on the international stage. The projection of a subverted identity by the occupier on the occupied makes the elusive questions, *Who are we? Where do we come from? and Where are we going?* substantially more complex to answer, but all the more critical to ponder. In the Palestinian / Israeli conflict, the construction and repression of identity continues to play a crucial role in how the parties view each other, how they view themselves and how the conflict is viewed, understood and treated in the international arena. As the obvious wielder of the reigns of power, the Israelis have defined the international discourse on the conflict. Israel has been very strategic and extremely successful at constructing and projecting an image of itself as a society under the constant threat of annihilation by belligerent, irrational and racist foes that “hate Israel more than they love their children”². The Israelis have defined the “Arabs” and by extension the Palestinians, as a people bent on destroying a divinely sanctioned and democratic homeland for the world’s most aggrieved people. They have also succeeded, until fairly recently, in depicting the conflict as one between Israelis and Arabs and not, as it originally is and continues to be, between colonialist settlers dominating the indigenous Palestinian population while stripping it of its land, history and cultural identity. The Palestinians continue to survive in the shadows of Israel’s militaristic culture and to struggle with the task of defining themselves independently from Israel’s definition of them. The fact that the Israelis have succeeded in dividing the Palestinians from each other, physically, economically and politically makes the complex process of defining and asserting one’s cultural and national identity even more difficult.



Plate 1. *The Ruins of Kafr Bir'im. Galilee. 2006*

The term “Israeli Arab” has been and continues to be used by most Israeli Jews to dismiss the Palestinian identity of the non-Jewish citizens of Israel. Instead of acknowledging and embracing the distinct Palestinian cultural heritage of its non-Jewish population, Israel simply refers to almost 23% of its population as “Arabs”.³ This consciously dismissive label avoids acknowledgment or even the existence of an indigenous and historical Palestinian culture that was decimated with the creation of Israel. It also strategically equates the Palestinian people with all other Arab speaking countries and cultures. The Israeli tactic of repeatedly denying the Palestinian character of its non-Jewish population and referring to them simply as Arabs has been part of a calculated attempt to make the entire Palestinian population eligible for transfer to and habitation in any Arab country. As Avigdor Lieberman, the overtly racist Israeli Deputy Prime Minister For Strategic Threats has said on numerous occasions “let them pack their bundles and leave for an Arab country.”⁴ Lieberman’s call for the expulsion of all Palestinians, including those that hold Israeli citizenship, is not unique in Israel, nor is it new, but is part of a long pattern of denying the very existence of Palestinians in order to establish an exclusively Jewish state in Palestine. Since its inception, political Zionism has deliberately projected an image of Palestine as “a land without a people, a wasteland and a cultural vacuum”⁵. The seductive and enduring Zionist myth that Palestine was a land without a people, for a people without a land, denied the very existence of an established and thriving indigenous population in Palestine. It also made it easier for the Jewish founders of Israel, the great majority of whom were at the time, recent European immigrants to Palestine, to expel over 800,000 Palestinians in 1948, another 375,000 in 1967, and to destroy over 500 Palestinian villages in their quest to establish a purely “Jewish Nation”⁶. The genocidal process that facilitated the establishment of the Jewish State is incomplete. Today, over 1.3 million Israeli citizens are Palestinians⁷. They are individuals and their descendants who survived the ethnic cleansing of Palestine in 1948 and managed to remain in, or return to, the part of historical Palestine that became Israel.



Plate 2. *Boys taking a break from playing soccer in a destroyed neighborhood. Rafah, Gaza Strip. August 2005”*

There are essentially three categories of people comprising the approximately 10,000,000 individuals who identify themselves as Palestinians: First are the exiles who live outside the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel and who are denied the right to return to (and in most cases to even visit) their homeland; second are the insiders, who live in the West Bank and Gaza (considered by many to be the world’s largest outdoor prison, whose borders, air space and coastal access, are completely controlled by the Israeli Occupation Forces); thirdly are the Palestinian citizens of Israel, who exist as marginalized third class citizens in the land that was once theirs. I refer to this group as *outsiders on the inside*, since they exist outside the mainstream of Israeli culture as well as outside of the lands that are often seen as the future Palestinian state. This large group of Palestinians in Israel subsists in a zone of cultural and political ambiguity. Their identity is constantly tested by complex and competing historical, political, cultural, economic and personal affiliations. As non-Jewish citizens of the Jewish nation they are treated with great suspicion, and often overt contempt by Israeli Jews. They have been called the worst of all traitors, by right wing members of the Israeli parliament and government and live in the shadow of potential expulsion from their land. (Avigdor Lieberman is not unique as a right wing Israeli politicians who speak openly of “transferring” the Palestinian citizens of Israel to neighboring Arab countries). Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza treat Palestinian-Israelis with some ambivalence as well. As Israeli citizens, they are, in most cases, indeed more privileged than the Palestinians living under the grinding restrictions and humiliation of occupation. One has to wonder how many Palestinian-Israelis would voluntarily choose to relocate and live in the occupied West Bank, poverty stricken Gaza or even in a future Palestinian state comprising those territories. The opinion of Palestinian-Israelis is never considered and their future rarely ever discussed in the “negotiations” for peaceful co-existence between Palestinians and Israelis. As Asad Azi, a Palestinian Israeli artist from the Galilee who lives in Jaffa told me in a interview, “When Arafat signed the Oslo Accord with the

Israelis, he never even thought of asking me [referring by extension to all Palestinian- Israelis] where I wanted to live and how I felt about this deal. He never even considered my presence and opinion.”⁸ In fact, when the PLO in 1988 recognized Israel and renounced claims to all pre 1967 Palestinian lands, they in effect severed political (although not cultural or historical) ties with Palestinian-Israelis. The 1993 Oslo Accord and all subsequent “agreements” that posit a two state framework for co-existence further severs the ties between Palestinian-Israelis, the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza and the Palestinians living in the diaspora. It would be helpful to reflect on how Palestinian-Israelis (the so called Israeli-Arabs) view and identify themselves. It is also crucial to consider the significant role they could play in a culture of co-existence that must replace the current culture of occupation and define the peaceful outcome of the ongoing Palestinian / Israeli conflict.

They are called Israeli-Arabs and apparently some have now begun to refer to themselves as such. Yet most still strongly affiliate themselves with Palestine and consider themselves first and foremost Palestinians. Indeed they are Arab, they speak, read and write the Arabic language (in addition to the required Hebrew) and share Arabic cultural customs and traditions. But to continuously deny their Palestinian heritage would be the same as dismissing an Egyptian her Egyptian national and cultural heritage or an Algerian his Algerian national and cultural heritage and lumping them all together under the very broad and dismissive title of “Arab”. That is exactly what Israel has accomplished over the past 60 years with its Palestinian citizens. Palestinian-Israelis are arguably the most forgotten group of Arabs in the Arab world. Many if not most Arabs throughout the Arab world do not even know that over 1.3 million Palestinians exist in Israel and think that only Jews populate Israel. Many of the Arabs think that Palestinians continue to exist only in the West Bank and Gaza or survive in the shadows of various host countries in the Palestinian diaspora.

The experience of Palestinian Israelis should be seen as the model for future co-existence between the competing claims for land in Israel and Palestine. I will elaborate on that further below, but first, a look at the artwork of a Palestinian-Israeli artist may help to shed some light on the complex identity of this group and illuminate the potentially constructive role they could play in the settlement of the conflict.



Plate 3: Rana Bishara. *Bread for Palestine*.

Rana Bishara sewing bread in a performance, August 2006

Rana Bishara

Rana Bishara is a 37-year-old Palestinian artist who was born in Tarsheha, a Palestinian village in the Galilee⁹. Her art studio is spread across the three rooms and courtyard of the old stone house where her grandmother was born. Rana lives with her aging parents in a comfortable apartment directly up the hill from that studio. The Bishara family has been in Tarsheha for several generations and all feel a profound attachment to their village, the Galilee and Palestine. In 1948, most of the Palestinian population of

Tarsheha was expelled from their homes and the Israelis bombed the village heavily. After a couple of years in exile, Rana's father, along with other men and women who were forced from their homes in 1948, managed to return to Tarsheha and begin to rebuild their lives in their historical village¹⁰. The current population of Tarsheha is considerably smaller today than in 1948 and most of the rich farmland that surrounds Tarsheha has been taken over by Israeli Jewish farms and settlements. Numerous Jewish suburbs as well as a few mixed Palestinian / Jewish suburbs, have heavily encroached upon the farmland and surround the historical village that is gracefully located on a steep hillside.

Rana's artwork is both poetic and literal. Her sculptural installations, paintings and recent performance pieces express, through a very personal voice, her attachment to and love for the land she inhabits. Her work also expresses her profound frustration with and rage against the ongoing occupation of Palestine and the oppression of Palestinians.

Rana Bishara's work functions simultaneously as an elegy for the Palestinian Nakba (disaster), an unmasking of the brutality of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and a critique of the biased western media's depiction of the Palestinian's struggle against their occupiers. Her conceptual approach is diverse. Some of her projects employ relatively confrontational and overt depictions of the brutality and humiliations inflicted upon the Palestinians by the occupying forces. Other projects develop subtle and often enigmatic metaphors that visually and emotionally seduce the viewers to contemplate the strength, tenderness, resilience and passions of the Palestinians. Her choice of materials, as I will discuss in greater detail below, range from conventional sculptural elements such as wood, glass and steel to common utilitarian elements such as chocolate, cactus, bread and balloons, that perform as surrogates for the body and spirit of Palestine and its people. Her work, in both its physical and conceptual manifestations is an expression of the inseparable blending of the personal and political experiences that define the identity of most Palestinians.



Plate 4. *Detail of cactus growing in the ruins of Kafr Bir'im. Galilee. 2006*

The cactus plant, called *sabar* in Arabic, has become one of the most enduring and widely recognized symbols of the Palestinian Nakba and Palestinian resistance. The native, broad leafed cactus, with its prickly skin, moist interior and sweet, seed laden fruit can be seen growing wild throughout Palestine and Israel. Very often, dense clusters of cacti are the only markers indicating the ruins of the 512 Palestinian villages that were depopulated, completely destroyed and erased from all maps, in or shortly after 1948, by the newly founded Israeli state. In those destroyed villages, the cactus grows freely and wildly in and around the ruins of old stone homes and public buildings. The cacti of Palestine stand as stubborn living reminders of the deceased and dispossessed. They are also seen as powerful symbols of resilience and hope. The cactus is a plant that refuses to die, refuses to disappear. It survives, even thrives, with little or no moisture, requires no tending and even when cut or uprooted, will eventually grow back in the same area. Cuttings from one cactus, when transported to a different garden, adapt to the new soil, set broad roots and gradually begin to thrive. It's no wonder that the cactus has become one of the dominant and most revered symbols of modern Palestine. Ironically, Israeli Jews have also adapted the word for cactus, or *sabra* in Hebrew, as a national symbol. In this case the cactus refers to Jewish Israeli females as being tough, sharp and dangerous on the outside but moist, sweet and fertile on the inside.



Plate 5. Rana Bishara. *Homage to Palestine*. 1998

In the creative work of Rana Bishara, the cactus is used to depict the trauma imposed on Palestine and to express the tremendous resilience of its people. In a simple yet powerful work by Bishara called “Homage to Palestine” created in 1998, the artist tightly packed fresh cuttings of cactus in a sealed, clear, pickling jar to express the constant pressure and restrictions imposed on the Palestinians. The cuttings in the jar reference the violent dismemberment and displacement of Palestinians from their land. It also references the oppressive restriction of movement created by tightly sealed and heavily guarded borders imposed on the Palestinian territories, as well as the limited growth opportunities available in the densely packed and carefully preserved container of occupation. This simple, eloquent piece addresses Palestine and Palestinian nationalism as an entity that has been securely contained and controlled. It represents the current reality of Palestine as a presence that can be easily moved to the back shelf of the international discourse on liberation, justice and human rights. Hidden from view, Palestinian aspirations would inevitably fall into the category of “out of sight, out of mind” and continue to be forgotten and neglected until

they perished. The most menacing aspect of this work is that it addresses the desire by right wing Israelis to transfer the Palestinian population from Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Uprooted, dismembered and restricted, the sealed container of Palestinians can be easily transferred to a distant land. With a simple jar of cactus, Bishara eloquently deconstructs Israel's historical strategy towards the Palestinians. Yet, Bishara's jar of occupation contains a persistent degree of hope. The content of the jar, cactus slices, are remarkably adaptive and patient (the Arabic work for cactus, *sabar*, means patience). When the jar is broken (it is after all made of glass) and its contents released, many of the resilient cactus slices will manage to set roots and gradually begin to thrive in their native soil.



Plate 6. Rana Bishara. *Who buys the Road Map to Peace?* 2005

Bishara has made numerous works with cactus, both fresh and dried, uprooted and re-rooted. In her “Who Buys the Road Map to Peace”, she has sewn dozens of old cactus leaves together, forming ghostly screens of the uprooted, decomposing, lace-like cactus leaves. Her suspended cactus screens create a haunting, yet beautiful presence that evoke the ghosts of the dispossessed still haunting their ruined and occupied villages. Bishara’s “Who buys the Road Map to Peace” is a poignant reflection on the deadly course charted for the Palestinians within the framework of the Quartet’s Road Map for Peaceful Co- existence between Israel and Palestine. This road map, as it is eloquently analyzed in Bishara’s ghostly veil of desiccated cacti, leads only to the further and permanent displacement of Palestinians from their lands and to unending denial of the right of return for exiled Palestinians. When permanently detached from the land, even the *sabar*, the most patient and resilient hope for Palestinian nationalism, could eventually dry up and die.¹¹



Plate 7. Rana Bishara. *Who buys the Road Map to Peace?* 2005 Detail



Plate 8. Rana Bishara. *Sweetie*. 1999

In another deceptively simple work, Bishara dipped freshly picked cactus slices in unsweetened chocolate, referencing the bitterness of occupation that covers the body of Palestinian identity. The unsweetened chocolate suggests that the sweetness of life has been replaced by the bitterness of occupation. Although, the chocolate's aroma, clearly perceived when viewing the work in person, reminds us that the potential sweetness of life still exists and lies somewhere beneath the dark and bitter veil of occupation. The prickly cactus thorns penetrating the hardened chocolate serves as a double metaphor. The thorns reinforce for the viewer the sharp pain experienced by Palestinians under occupation, as well as the pointed spears of resistance that define the right and duty of the occupied to resist their oppressors. Here again, the cactus slices also remind the viewer of the resilience, toughness and endurance of the Palestinians. This piece is indicative of Bishara's subtle and layered references that require the viewer to become an active participant in decoding complex and often competing, cultural and political signifiers.



من فلسطين إلى لبنان مع
الدعم و التضامن

In Solidarity and support from Palestine to Lebanon

Rana Bishara رنا بشارة

Plate 9. Rana Bishara. *In Solidarity and Support*. 2006

During the July-August 2006 invasion of Lebanon by Israel, Bishara created a compelling image employing the motif of the cactus. The image replicates the Lebanese flag, but replaces the iconic cedar on the flag with a cactus leaf that has been carefully cut to assume the shape of the cedar tree. Bishara's blending of Palestinian and Lebanese national icons is a powerful gesture of solidarity that pays homage to the

brutalized Lebanese population and unifies the two people in the repeated horrors inflicted upon them by the genocidal actions of the Israeli military. The image is also a defiant declaration to the oppressors that the Lebanese and Palestinians are more united than ever in their will to resist, persevere and eventually thrive in their respective homelands.



Plate 10. Rana Bishara. *Homage to 512 Destroyed Palestinian Villages and Towns. 1948-2000*

Another medium that Bishara has used in a number of projects are thin sheets of glass. Viewing the works she produced with glass physically and psychologically involves the viewer in the images and ideas she depicts. This fragile, transparent and potentially dangerous medium is extremely difficult to handle when presented as a book and even more difficult to traverse when arranged as a spatial installation. The images drawn and printed on the glass are translucent and consequently difficult to clearly see and understand. Bishara's strategy of employing translucent images on fragile and potentially dangerous surfaces forces the viewer to become hyper aware of his/her position in relation to the images and ideas she depicts. This physical awareness extends, in the mind of the perceptive viewer, to a consideration of one's emotional, intellectual and political affiliations with the experiences she presents.

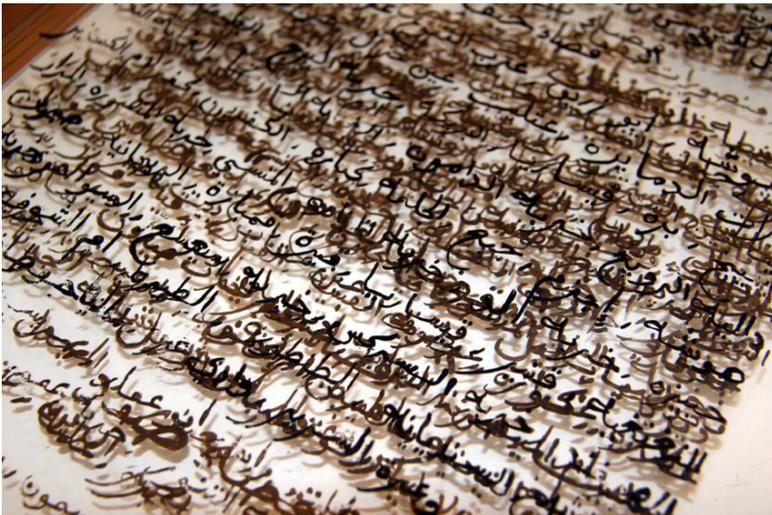


Plate 11. Rana Bishara. *Homage to 512 Destroyed Palestinian Villages and Towns*.

Bishara's *Homage to 512 Destroyed Palestinian Villages and Towns* commemorates the Palestinian villages eradicated by Israel. The fragile, yet physically heavy object is made of thin sheets of glass that have been bound together into a book. The ten glass pages are covered with translucent, hand written text listing the names of all of the destroyed villages. To view the book, one must very carefully turn the glass pages. This action is performed with the conscious risk of shattering the fragile book and injuring oneself. Bishara's book eloquently speaks of the disappearance of those villages and the delicate and potentially dangerous responsibility we have in preserving their ghostly memories.

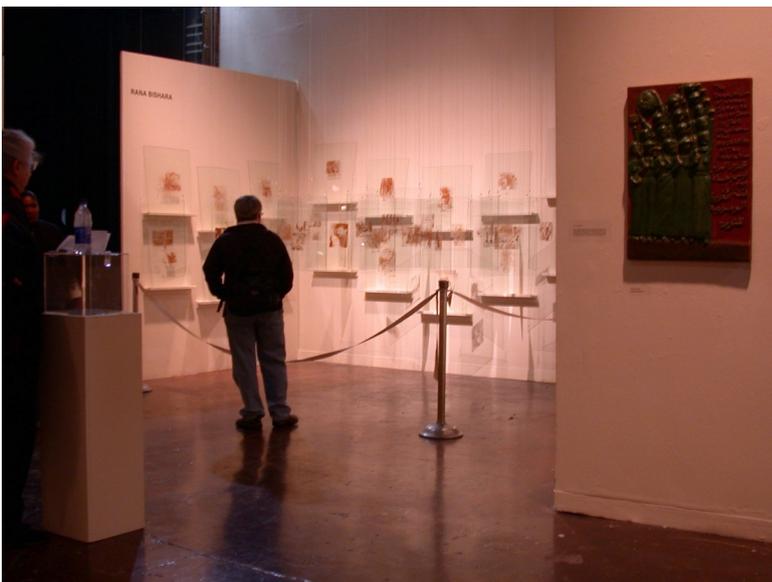


Plate 12. Rana Bishara. *Blindfolded History*. 2003

One of Bishara's most ambitious works is an installation entitled "Blindfolded History 1948-2003". The work was first exhibited in 2003 and consisted of fifty-six sheets of thin glass. The number of sheets of glass reference the fifty-six years of occupation that had passed since the beginning of the Palestinian Nakba. The majority of the sheets of glass are suspended from the ceiling with thin, almost invisible, nylon wire. A few of the sheets of glass are arranged vertically on shelves that are hung along the wall of the deliberately cramped installation space. When approaching the installation, the viewer is struck by the seductive shimmering light glittering off the glass. The immediate feeling conveyed is that the space is simultaneously dense and vast. Before entering the installation, the viewer notices a translucent reddish brown rectangle imposed at about eye level on each sheet of glass. They appear to be photographic images, but they are difficult to discern from a distance. The viewer is compelled to approach and enter the shimmering maze like installation in order to clearly see the individual photographic prints.



Plate 13. Rana Bishara. *Blindfolded History*. 2003 Detail



Plate 14. Rana Bishara. *Blindfolded History*. 2003 Detail

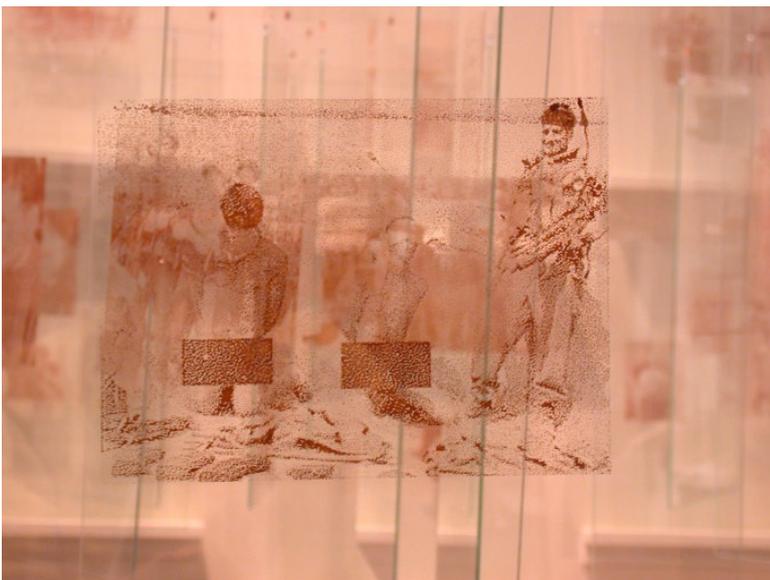


Plate 15. Rana Bishara. *Blindfolded History*. 2003 Detail

Upon entering the installation, the feeling of glittering opulence experienced from the perimeters is immediately replaced by a powerful sense of dread and tragedy. The events rendered in the prints depict the brutal humiliations, terror and suffering that are experienced daily by the Palestinians under occupation. On each sheet of glass Bishara silk-screened a single image, referencing the brutality of the occupation and illustrating the ongoing horror resulting from the marriage of political convenience imposed by the international community on the Palestinians in 1948. The fifty-six images were selected by Bishara from

the international media and unflinchingly illustrate, individually and collectively, the sadistic relationship between the occupiers and the occupied. The photographs selected by Bishara are reminiscent of Francisco de Goya's indelible images from the series "The Disasters of War". Goya's etchings were created between 1810 and 1820 in response to the storm of violence that engulfed his native Spain during the Napoleonic invasion. Yet, instead of Goya's hand drawn etchings representing the artist's dark Romantic vision of "man's inhumanity to man", Bishara's photographic silk-screened prints depict a remarkably sober and equally indelible, post-modern vision of a pre-moral, albeit highly mechanized, human brutality. Each of the fifty-six images conveys a fragment of an ongoing story. The viewer instantly recognizes that the individual frames are not the whole story, but represent only a single moment, captured by the camera, of a contemporary grand epic of human suffering. Many of the images on the glass are heart wrenching and elicit an involuntary emotional response to step away from them. That response is instantly checked by the realization that suspended sheets of glass tightly surround you and that any abrupt movement could result in the disastrous shattering of the installation and multiple lacerations to the viewer. Trapped within the translucent glass maze, the viewer has no choice but to walk carefully and look closely at the painful images that are suspended in irregular, overlapping proximity to each other. From any vantage point inside the installation, you can see all of the images, yet you can only see them clearly from close proximity. The color and thin texture of the grainy prints, a warm translucent brown created by pointillist dots on the glass, suggests that they have been silk-screened with blood that has darkened through oxidation. How appropriately horrible such a medium would be for these dreadful, yet indelible scenes. Yet while thinking that the images are printed with oxidized blood, the viewer becomes aware of a sweet aroma of chocolate permeating the installation and realizes that the images are silk-screened with dark, unsweetened chocolate to represent the bitterness of life under the longest military occupation in modern history. Standing in this shimmering, delicate and dangerous forest of glass, surrounded by images representing fifty-six years of brutal occupation, one becomes aware of his/her moral position and responsibility to the tragedy depicted. The emotions stirred by the images in the mind of the viewer directly implicate her/him in the political tragedy that has been unveiled by the artwork and compel him/her to ponder the following questions: Why have we been living with these heavy blindfolds that obstruct our view of this ongoing tragedy? Who placed these blindfolds upon us? Why is the epic suffering of the Palestinians not adequately conveyed in the media? What are our moral responsibilities to this tragedy? Where do we stand in relationship to the oppressor and the oppressed, and what can we do to help resolve this inhumane misery? The installation leaves the viewer with a deep sense of mourning for the profound loss and agony conveyed in the fragile and grainy images and at the realization that the final chapter in this tragic epic has not yet been written, as the agony of occupation continues to this day. Bishara's "Blindfolded History" is not a complete work. In subsequent presentations of the work, the artist will add new sheets of glass to commemorate the additional years of occupation that have passed. One is left to wonder how many sheets of glass will this installation contain before it is finally completed?

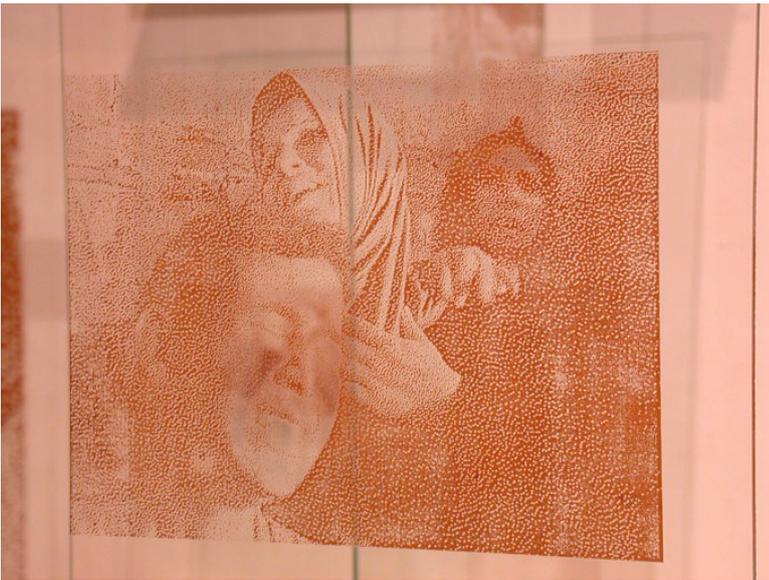


Plate 16. Rana Bishara. *Blindfolded History*. 2003 Detail

Bishara's identity as a Palestinian permeates her work. As a Palestinian citizen of Israel, she stands in both societies and is able to critically reflect, through the prism of her personal experiences, on the intimate, albeit violent union of Israeli and Palestinian cultures. Being a Palestinian-Israeli defines the political landscape of her identity. It is precisely from that complex cultural vantage point that she can unmask the false facade presented to the international community of a benevolent, democratic Israel that acts only in self-defense to secure the safety of its citizens. Bishara's artwork also reveals to that same international community, the colonialist, racist and often sadistic face that Israel presents to the Palestinian. Her experience as a Palestinian citizen of Israel provides her with the insights of an insider to both cultures. Because of her family's history and her personal experience living as a marginalized "Arab" citizen of Israel, she understands the tragic suffering and epic loss of land and identity experienced by the Palestinians. She also understands Israeli history, culture, fears and national aspirations because they were imposed on her throughout her education and lifelong interactions with Israeli Jews. As a member of the often detested "Arab" minority of Israeli society, she will continue to be, under the current conditions, a mistrusted outsider inside Israeli culture. Bishara, like the majority of Palestinian-Israelis, is emotionally unable and politically unwilling to embrace the discriminatory ideology of a "Jewish Nation" that has been imposed on her historically multicultural homeland. Also, under current negotiations protocols, she will continue to be an outsider to a future Palestinian state. Bishara, like the 1.3 million other Palestinian-Israelis, exists in a state of national, political and emotional ambiguity. Their identity as Palestinians is overtly rejected by the Jewish state they have been forced to fit in to in order to remain in their historical land. Consequently, most do not feel that they could belong to Israel as a Jewish state without willingly forfeiting their Palestinian cultural identity. This dilemma of affiliations is clearly a burden that Bishara and others like her struggle with on a daily basis.

Is it possible for Palestinian-Israelis to exist in a nation that would equally embrace Palestinians and Jews?

The bi-cultural experience of Palestinian-Israelis may well prove to be the real road map to peace. The complex bi-national identity of the 1.3 million Palestinian-Israelis should be seen and used as a bridge that could carry the competing parties over the deep chasm of territorial dispute and separation, to a future of coexistence and reconciliation in a single democratic state¹².



Plate 17. Israel's Apartheid wall. Village of Abu Diss, East Jerusalem. 2005

The resolution of the Palestinian / Israeli conflict through the formation of a single state is not a new idea. It has been considered for decades and abandoned due to the competing parties' deep attachment to their respective, opposing nationalist ideologies. The emotional commitment of Palestinians and Israelis to separate states continues to be an obstacle to co-existence and the source of further violence and regional as well as international destabilization. Dividing the land has clearly not worked and will never work due to the political, economic and military inequity of the warring parties.

The majority of Palestinians recognize that Israeli Jews are not going to go away. In turn, the majority of Israeli Jews recognize that the Palestinians, barring a major genocide, are not going to disappear. Neither the Palestinians nor the Israelis are willing to abandon their claim to the land. Neither population is willing to leave or be forced to leave alive. The increasing violence and deepening mistrust created by the intransigent ultra-nationalist positions of both the Israeli and Palestinian leadership has resulted in a political impasse that foreshadows catastrophic results for the civilian populations. The current path is clearly leading both parties into a deeper abyss of conflict and suffering. Since the signing of the Oslo accord over 14 years ago, the intermittent, but consistently disingenuous, negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian leaders have been based upon the principle of establishing an independent Palestinian state that would exist peacefully along side Israel. The framework of a two state solution is in theory desirable but in practice impossible to achieve due to the tremendous imbalance of power and resources between the

negotiating entities. The entity that holds the greater power, Israel, manipulates and controls the “peace process”, fully aware that the weaker entity, the Palestinians, are unable to check Israeli actions. In fact, the road to a two state solution has been effectively bulldozed by Israel’s calculated and repeated efforts to undermine the weak and ineffectual Palestinian Authority and to destroy nascent Palestinian economic and physical infrastructures. Israel’s decades long program to destroy thousands of Palestinian homes, bulldoze and uproot miles of farmland and orchards and brutally repress and starve the Palestinian population, is part of a larger strategy to continue imposing its will on the Palestinians and further appropriate their land. Israel’s oppressive “security wall” has further divided the West Bank, appropriated large areas of Palestinian territories and isolated the Palestinians from the outside world as well as from each other. There is little left for a contiguous and sustainable Palestinian nation. Continued talks of a two state solution are completely misleading and detached from reality.

With the option of a two state solution effectively nullified by the fragmentation, dismemberment and isolation of the West Bank and the virtual destruction and starvation of Gaza, we are left with only four other options, each with its own daunting challenges and unacceptable outcomes for one or both of the competing parties: The first option is to expel all of the Palestinians from the West bank, Gaza and Israel and create a truly Jewish Nation in “Greater Israel”. The second option is to continue the current occupation of Palestinian territories and the subjugation of its inhabitants by the Israeli military. The third option is to annex the West Bank and Gaza, make them part of Israel, and offer the Palestinians limited Israeli citizenship that would be equal to South Africa’s former Apartheid policies towards its Black citizens. The fourth option is to create a single democratic nation where Palestinian Muslims, Christians, Druze and Atheists can live as equal citizens with the Jewish inhabitants of the current state of Israel. The one state solution may be the most moral, equitable and sustainable of all of the options but it will also be the most challenging for a large number of Palestinians and Israelis to accept and implement. A single democratic state that equally protects and nurtures the current populations of Israel and Palestine requires a dramatic shift in the regional and international political discourse on the conflict. It demands that Palestinians surrender the dream of an independent state just as it would require that Jews give up the idea of a Jewish Nation. In a single state, the current border between Palestine and Israel would be dismantled and the new state would encompass both territories. The constitution of the new state must guarantee equal rights and safety for all of its citizens, regardless of religion, race, cultural affiliations or gender. The current numerical equality between Palestinians and Jews, combined with the historical claims and emotional attachment to the land by both people, makes the one state solution attainable. All of the other options are completely unacceptable.

Can violent competition for territory be replaced by respectful co-habitation on the land that is equally cherished by Palestinians and Jews? Can the mistrust that defines the current relationship between the survivors of the Nakba and the survivors of the Holocaust give way to mutual recognition of the other’s epic suffering? Can the tragic anguish of the two traumatized populations be reconciled in an inclusive nation that would neither be called Israel or Palestine? The complex bi-cultural experience of Palestinian-Israelis should be seen as the foundation (albeit a very imperfect one due to the racial discrimination they experience in Israeli society) upon which the equitable future of Palestinians and Jews, co-existing in a

single state, could be built. The common national symbol of resilience and survival for both people, the cactus, reinforces the conviction that Palestinians and Jews can creatively co-exist and eventually thrive in a common national homeland. When that new nation is formed, I would like to respectfully suggest that Rana Bishara, be invited to design its flag.

A very special thanks goes to Rana Bishara who graciously and generously allowed me to interview her in her studio for three days during the summer of 2006. She also provided me with images of her work and a copy of her MFA thesis, entitled "Blindfolded History". Her thesis was presented to the Savannah College of Art in 2003.

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The images in this paper are provided and copyrighted by John Halaka and Rana Bishara. The images cannot be reproduced or duplicated in any form without the written consent of the artists.

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¹ Mahmoud Darwish "A State of Siege. Ramallah January 2002". Translated by Ramsis Amun. Arabworldpress.com

² Thomas Friedman in an Interview with Terry Gross on the NPR program Fresh Air. August 1, 2006

³ U.S. Department of State. Central Intelligence Agency's World Fact Book. Israel. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html>

⁴ Avigdor Lieberman as quoted in Jonathan Cook's article: "Out of the Shadows. Israel's Minister of Strategic Threats". Information Clearing House. October 26, 2006. <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article15405.htm>

⁵ Muhammad Hallaj. "Palestine-The Suppression of an Idea". American for Middle East Understanding. Jan-March 1982. Volume 15, Issue 1. Page 2

⁶ Salman Abu Sitta. Palestineremembered.com

⁷ U.S. Department of State. Central Intelligence Agency's World Fact Book. Israel. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html>

⁸ Asad Azi in a video taped interview with John Halaka, recorded June 2006 in Jaffa.

⁹ Interview with Rana Bishara conducted by John Halaka at her studio in Tarshiha in June 2006.

¹⁰ Interview with Rana Bishara, June 2006. Also <http://www.palestineremembered.com/Acre/Tarshiha/index.html>

¹¹ Since it does not positively address the Palestinian refugees' "Right of Return"; does not insist on the dismantlement of massive Israeli settlement in the West Bank; does not insure the equitable division of Jerusalem; does not provide the Palestinians a contiguous state, and does not give that future state genuine control over its borders and consequently its economy, the Quartet's "Road Map to Peaceful co-existence between Israel and Palestine" essentially codifies and perpetuates the current status quo and the severe imbalance of power between the Palestinians and Israelis.

¹² For a comprehensive and eloquent discussion of the one-state option read Virginia Tilley's The One

State Solution. A breakthrough for peace in the Israeli Palestinian Deadlock University of Michigan Press,
Ann Arbor. 2005

Edward Said: Agent Provocateur.

By Haidar Eid & Khaled Ghazal

And this role [the intellectual's] has an edge to it, and cannot be played without a sense of being someone whose place it is publicly to raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma (rather than to produce them) to be someone who cannot easily be co-opted by governments or corporations, and whose *raison d'être* is to represent all those people and issues that are routinely forgotten or swept under the rug. Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, p9

Were I to use one word consistently along with criticism, (not as a modification but as an emphatic) it would be oppositional. Edward Said, *The World, the Text and the Critic*, p29

One of the most acclaimed writers in the latter part of the last century, Edward Said, who had a distinctive, irreverent approach to literature and criticism—not to mention politics-- propounds a re-invention of reading against the grain. Disaffiliating from almost all orthodox literary traditions, this *homme de lettres* is an authentic epitome of an intellectual in opposition. In this paper, we subscribe to the premise of Edward Said as a figure of dissent. Far from claiming comprehensiveness, our task here is to critically trace some of the ideas conducive to Edward Said being the oppositional intellectual, the *agent provocateur* in post-colonial literary theory and practice, of which he is an indisputable progenitor.

Our concern will be, in the main, focused on *Orientalism* (1978) as a discursive strategy that manufactures, and hence (mis)represents the Oriental Other; the complicity of culture in European imperialism; 'contrapuntal reading' as a 'counter-narrative'; the interrelation between 'affiliation' and 'worldliness' and 'secular criticism' being a strategy of intellectual interference.

With a subversion of the role of aesthetics in colonialism and imperialism as one of its most salient features, *Orientalism* has granted Edward Said a "foundational place in the growing school of postcolonial studies." (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 2001:1) To address the issue of Orientalist texts operating to construct and dominate the Orient, the book posits that at the heart of this process of setting up the Orient as a textual construct lies the application of Michel Foucault's theory of knowledge/ power (Foucault, 1980). In *Orientalism*, Edward Said avails himself of the dialectics of knowledge/power to repudiate the 'purity' and 'disinterestedness' of the Orientalist scholarship. His distrust of an 'innocent' European discursive field

pertinent to the East is instructive. So is his seminal disclosure of “how Orientalism’s classification of the East as different and inferior legitimized Western intervention and rule.” (Lewis, 1996: 16)

Perhaps this can be clarified by a passage early in *Orientalism* in which Said defines the ‘Scope of Orientalism’:

With such experiences as Napoleon’s the Orient as a body of knowledge in the West was modernized ... From the outset of the period I shall be examining there was everywhere among Orientalists the ambition to formulate their discoveries, experiences, and insights suitably in modern terms, to put ideas about the Orient in very close touch with modern realities. Renan’s linguistic investigations of Semitic in 1848, for example, were couched in a style that drew heavily for its authority upon contemporary comparative grammar, comparative anatomy, and racial theory; these lent his Orientalism prestige and--the other side of the coin-- made Orientalism vulnerable, as it has been ever since, to modish as well as seriously influential currents of thought in the West. (43)

Here and throughout his study, Said regards philology as essential to the discipline of Orientalism properly speaking.

Said’s concern stems from the fact that as an Oriental who grew up in Egypt, Palestine, and Lebanon, all subject to the domination of the colonizing West, he found it important to define the impact of the United States, where he later received his education and which has had such a profound effect in his own life and that of all other Orientals. As he says in the introduction, he writes from the perspective of an Arab/Palestinian with a strong concern and empathy for the region.(25) This identification is obvious from such statements as this: “*Orientalism* is written out of an extremely concrete history of personal loss and national disintegration,” recalling that Golda Meier’s ‘notorious and deeply Orientalist comment about there being no Palestinian people’ had been made only a few years before he wrote the book. (337).

At the most basic level, what Said delineates are those manifestations of prejudicial thinking--undocumented blanket postulations coupled with a rhetoric of manipulation-- which denote a significant impulse to contrive an image of the ‘Orient’ in alignment with Western views of the Islamic Arab world. In his own highly original way, Said marshals a thorough repertoire of European stereotypical stances contingent upon a binary opposition where the ‘West’ denotes such traits as enlightenment, progress, reason and ‘civilization’ while the ‘East’ is a typical embodiment of a negative inversion of these traits.

In his introduction to *Orientalism* Said writes “I have found it useful here to employ Michel Foucault’s notion of a discourse...to identify Orientalism.” (1978: 3) One cannot help perceiving Said’s debt to his, then, *maitre a penser*; a debt evinced through his use of such Foucauldian concepts as ‘discourse’, ‘field’ and ‘archive’ as tightly related to the history of Western thought (Foucault, 1980). Notwithstanding, the inclusion of Foucault’s theory of ‘discourse’ has engendered criticism.

The crux of the claim against Said relates to his belief that “[a]ll representation is misrepresentation of one sort or another,” echoing the Nietzschean dictum that ‘truths are illusions’ (Said, 2001:237). Germane to this discussion at this point is Said’s taking on board two antithetical strands in his thesis. While he has spared a great deal of space to disprove any correlation between the Orient as reality and the one contrived discursively by the guild of Orientalists, Said maintains that the former kind of reality is textually contorted by these selfsame Orientalists, thus implying the possibility of representation. However, it makes perfect sense to note that the insidious paradox inherent in Said’s vacillation between representation and misrepresentation of the Orient has brought forth another opposing critical perspective paradox amongst his critics in that while “he is criticized by Porter and others for implying a real Orient, he is criticized by Ahmad for not invoking an Orient that is real enough.” (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 2001:76)¹

Apropos of Said’s clinging to the Foucauldian discursivity and power dialectic, he is arraigned for imaginatively constructing a holistic, monolithic and homogeneous Orientalist discourse. James Clifford found a reason that impels and inbreeds a critique of Said’s book as it “sometimes appears to mimic the essentializing discourse it attacks.” (1988:262) The interpretation is suggestive of censuring Said for producing an Orientalism – in – reverse. A corrective to such misconception is perhaps best instantiated in Said repudiating “Foucault’s downgrading of the role of individual agency.” (Young, 1990:134) We see it fit to argue that Said had always been conscious of the existence of disorientation and resistance within Orientalism:

Yet, unlike Michel Foucault, to whose work I am greatly indebted, I do believe in the determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism. (1978: 23)

This is a Saidian dual gesture of parting company with Foucault and also a positioning of himself at a dialectical vantage point to substantiate--much against the arraignments of some of his critics--the heterogeneity of Orientalist discourse as long as it comprises a space “for the play of a personal--or at least non-Orientalist--consciousness.” (1978:158) Said’s prime example to attest to his view is the French poet and essayist Gerard de Nerval, whose “Orient untied itself from anything resembling an Orientalist conception of the Orient, even though his work depends on Orientalism to a certain extent.” (1978:183)

Said has been castigated by his critics for his obliviousness to the narratives of resistance. It should be noted, however, that nowhere in his thesis is Said explicit about Eastern resistance to the coercive structures erected by Orientalism. In the critical work itself, he writes about Louis Massignon in glowing terms to reveal the prospect of dissimilitude and resistance from within the realm of Orientalism itself. Despite his incontestable affiliations with French Orientalism, Massignon is an Orientalist whose “personal style, [and] individual genius, may finally supersede the political restraints operating impersonally through tradition and through the national ambience.” (271)

The rationale behind Said’s dialectical strategy--to perceive colonial discourse as commuting between a consistent, homogeneous totality and an inconsistent, heterogeneous formation--now becomes patent. Said is, however, still relentlessly censured for his “theoretical and methodological inconsistencies.”

(Kennedy, 2000:145) We wish to argue that Said had deliberately designed *Orientalism* to be theoretically inconsistent so that it could testify to the determinism inherent in Orientalist discourse itself. In an interview with Imre Salusinszky, Said admits that “*Orientalism* is theoretically inconsistent, and [he] designed it that way.” (1987:137)

The broader point to emerge out of this is the interrelatedness of resistance and individual agency as a substantial constituent of Said’s critical enterprise. This is predicated upon Said’s prescription for the intellectual as an oppositional figure who revels in transgressing the official lines of power, as

someone whose whole being is staked on a critical sense, a sense of being unwilling to accept easy formulas, or ready-made clichés, or the smooth, ever-so- accommodating confirmations of what the powerful or conventional have to say, and what they do.(1994:23)

It is, then, left to intellectuals—including Said himself—to wield their critical consciousness in a way that withstands Western imperial discourse and, to borrow a phrase from Eqbal Ahmad, the ‘pathologies of power’ that continue to sway such discourse. It is this critical consciousness which is pivotal in Said’s conception of resistance and oppositionality.

Despite critics chiding *Orientalism* for its ‘inconsistencies’, heedlessness to gender, and remissness to incorporate in its dissection of Orientalist discourse the Maghreb and parts of East Asia, Said’s thesis has impeccably evinced the powerfulness of amateurism in the realm of intellectuality. Thanks to his analysis, we have become cognizant of how Western linguistic conventions and epistemologies underpin global cultural relationships.

If the effectuality and forcefulness of colonial discourse reside in its capability to disguise its institutions and divert attention away from its materiality, then, unveiling such camouflage is the work of postcolonial intellectuals whose role it is to act as a reminder of colonialism and its machinations. Antithetical to the Kantian contention that aesthetics and culture are in fact fenced off from the worldly realm, Said’s *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) provides an insight far more suited to the task of better disentangling the complicity between European imperialism and high culture.

Synoptically presented, Said’s thesis can be stated as follows: the European imperialist project in the non-Western world was consolidated by European high culture with the collusion of rarefied intellectuals who have rationalized and concealed the use of moral power to achieve what Said has called an ‘ideological pacification.’ (Said, 1994b:67) Functioning in exact conjunction with hegemony, Western imperial discourse corroborated the pretence that, because of European supremacism, the Europeans were destined to rule and the inferior races to yield to that rule. In this spirit, Said’s attempt to bring to the fore the subscription to the imperial enterprise of intellectuals embracing universalistic, humanistic ideals and egalitarianism is both instructive and illuminating. According to Said, these intellectuals had broken faith with their very own ideas when they committed themselves to the belief that there was a hierarchy of peoples (1994b).

For the sake of brevity, it is possible to say that by way of upending a received wisdom about the “seemingly impartial, objective academic disciplines,” Said has accentuated their involvement in the process of colonial subjugation (Young, 159). His most pioneering effort to demystify the essence of this involvement is his evocation of a radicalized mode of reading he calls ‘contrapuntal method’. The concept of ‘contrapuntality,’ is a literary manifestation of “the great culture of resistance that emerged in response to imperialism.” (Said, 1994a: 64) With an intent to unmask and deconstruct the imperial mindset, Said’s ‘contrapuntal method’ is both a reading against the grain and an endeavor to blur the lines demarcating the centre and periphery in Western academia. Doubtlessly, Said’s argument owes something of its cogency to his dual command of extensive narrative structures and Western classical music.

This approach seems to be in keeping with the spirit of Edward Said’s life work. He tries to show that what Samuel Huntington called “a clash of civilization” (1998) was actually a “clash of ignorance.” (Said: <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20011022/said>) It is this kind of complete brutal ignorance that Said tried to ameliorate in all his work, striving to replace ignorance and contempt with understanding and appreciation. His work has consistently striven “to cross rather than to maintain barriers”. (1978:336) In a series of books distinguished for their inclusiveness and what Thomas Hardy called “meliorism,” (Duffin, 2000:256) Said presents a profound and nuanced analysis of this conflict (i.e. Western imperial discourse vs. resistance discourse), following Vico’s conviction that human culture, since it is man-made, can be positively shaped by human efforts. (1982)

In *Culture and Imperialism* Said, contrapuntally, manages to draw parallels between disparate episodes as “coronation rituals in England and the Indian durbars of the late nineteenth century.” (1993:36) A colonial sugar plantation in the Caribbean perceived to be sustaining a sumptuous life style in England is another case in point. It is in this respect, in the intersection between all aspects of polyphony / polyvocality that a ‘counter – narrative’ “bring[s] the stage of modern imperial history ... to life for a late twentieth – (and early twenty- first-) century audience that is no longer purely Western.” (Hussein, 263) Said’s unflinching attention to the convergence of the ‘imperialism of ideas and nations’ (Hussein, 2002) and the resistance to it accounts for his ‘contrapuntal method’ as a way of a ‘reading back’ to the cultural archive of high European imperialism. Said detects an outstandingly revealing affinity between contrapuntal reading and the hybridity of culture. In this vein, hybridity signifies ‘worldliness’.

Disenchanted with poststructuralism and its renunciation of ‘meaning’, Said formulated a new historicist interpretation of literature whose function it is to bring the domain of literary criticism back to ‘the mundane, the quotidian’ hence, insure its ‘worldliness’. Consequently, the text is no longer conceived to be confined to the book. Instead, it has become part and parcel of the world. This Saidian interpretive approach to literature has made it all the more challenging for the oppositional, postcolonial intellectual to intervene and alert us to “the perdurable inequalities of the contemporary world.” (Hussein, 165) For this to be attained, Said argues, intellectuals / critics ought to act ‘affiliatively.’ (Said, 1983:19-20)

With literary modernism in full swing, affiliation (as opposed to filiation) has signified a withdrawal from the stringency of literary theory. In this sense, one could argue that affiliation, being a hallmark

of ‘worldliness,’ is meant to emancipate the critic and broaden his / her critical perspectives. Narrative horizontality has brought the world closer for investigation in a way that transcends the precincts of European canonicity. The correlation between ‘affiliation’ and ‘worldliness’ has brought forth a dystopian approach that “releases the text from its isolation and imposes upon the scholar or critic the presentational problem of historically recreating or reconstructing the possibilities from which the text arose.” (Said, 1983:175) Such critical concepts as ‘contrapuntality’, ‘affiliation’ and ‘worldliness’ have contributed to the uniqueness of Said in the contested field of postcolonial criticism. There is, however still an urgent need for books, courses, and lectures which encourage what Said called for so eloquently in *Culture and Imperialism*: ‘the possibility of a more generous and pluralistic vision of the world.’ (230)

One reason for this need is Said’s scepticism about the narrow functionalism that besets many contemporary theoretical approaches. The trouble with these approaches is that they “retreated into the labyrinth of textuality.” (1983:3) For the text to be connected to its worldly reality, Said puts forward ‘secular criticism’ as a way to bring theory back to practice and the intellectual work back to its constituency. “Criticism,” he writes in *The World, The Text, and The Critic*, “must think of itself as life-enhancing and constitutively opposed to every form of tyranny, domination, and abuse; its social goals are noncoercive knowledge produced in the interests of human freedom.” (21) Moreover, secular criticism

insists upon the possibility of emancipation even as it expresses profound skepticism about the transparency of all such claims. Secular criticism does not imply the rejection of universalism per se. It implies a scrupulous recognition that all claims of a universal nature are particular claims. Furthermore, and most importantly, it means rescuing the marginalized perspective of the minority as one from which to rethink and remake universalist (ethical, political, cultural) claims, thus displacing its assignation as the site of the local. (23)

For him, “texts are worldly, to some degree they are events, and, even when they appear to deny it, they are nevertheless a part of the social world, human life, and of course the historical moments in which they are located and interpreted” (1983:4)

The net effect of Said’s approach is to do away with the specialization of theory which has severed ties between the contemporary critic and his / her audience. Because of the ‘worldliness’ of texts and their interconnection with societies, politics and other human realities, intellectual ‘quietism’ and political inaction have become problematic for a secular intellectual like Said who considers texts as “practices, rather than as reified objects” (Marrouchi, 2004: 57) Any withdrawal of contemporary literary theory from the real world is a “triumph of the ethic of professionalism.” (Said, 1983: 3)

Instead, he propounds ‘amateurism’ as a strategy of intellectual intervention to ‘write / speak back’ to neo-imperialism, address authority, raise moral issues, reveal injustices and ‘speak truth to power.’ (1994b) Seen from a revisionary stance, there is no denying the force of Said’s theoretical dissent, especially when read against the current orthodoxy of postcolonial discourse.

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Notes

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The Zionist-Palestinian Conflict: An Alternative Story.

By Haidar Eid

I know that history will have its say some day, but it will not be history as written in Brussels, Paris or Washington, it will be our own. Patrice Lumumba. *The New African*. http://www.africasia.com/archive/na/00_02/nacs0201.htm

But they are not human beings, they are not people, they are Arabs. David Hacoen. (Qtd. in Ribhi Halloum, 1988:37)

*For Europe we shall be a part of the wall against Asia...the vanguard of culture against barbarism...*Theodor Herzl. (Qtd. in Tom Segev, 1999:150)

A combination of Edward Said's *The Question of Palestine* (1980) and Norman Finkelstein's *Image And Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict* (1995) offer a very good starting point in formulating some of the questions (and answers) this article attempts to redress in its drawing of the (cognitive) political map of post-Oslo Palestine. Addressing the question of the (post) colonial, in this particular context, is a complex issue in that one seems to be dealing with a colonist who denies his colonialism and argues to the contrary, and with a victim whose victimization has been denied for decades. To understand the intertwined complex relationship between Israelis and Palestinians in a (post) colonial context, I will revisit the classical Zionist- colonial narrative, and try to fill the 'ideological gaps' that have always, deliberately, been concealed. My reading of this narrative is consciously Palestinian, namely, a victim's interpretation. Dialectically, this reading will lead to what Said has consistently been calling for: a 'Palestinian Story' (1980; 1994; 1995).

The difficulty, and necessity, of addressing the current situation in Palestine emanates from the euphoria of the mainstream media accompanying the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993 and their inability to contextualize these accords.¹ That is to say, the mainstream media's intentional avoidance of the agreement's total denial of Palestinian historical, political and national rights, and its endorsement of the establishment of an apartheid state, is a distortion of history by means of ideological misrepresentation. I will, therefore, juxtapose, the media coverage of the so-called 'peace process' and its aftermath against the political reality on the ground (i.e. in the occupied territories). My purpose is not to expose the mainstream media as means of Zionist-American propaganda—an issue that has been dealt with very convincingly by Noam Chomsky

(1983), Edward Said (1980, 1994, 1995), Norman Finkelstein (1987), Robert Fisk (various articles in *The Sunday Independent*), David Hirst (1997; various articles in *The Guardian*) and Graham Usher (1995; *Al-Ahram Weekly*)—to mention but a few. Rather, it is because the fragile nature of the mainstream media misrepresentation, which has become a conventional political wisdom, needs a very careful reading. In other words, the myth of the ‘peace process’ is what is at stake in my reading.

I also make use of the new scholarship arising in Israel itself, which provides a history of the conflict that is influenced by the recent historiographical debates taking place around the academic and intellectual world, and which, ironically, legitimizes the works of the Palestinian historians. As Ilan Pappé maintains, this ‘post-Zionist research’ provides us with a more skeptical view: it shows how the conflict is between a colonial Party, Israel, and a weaker, colonized one, the Palestinians. The problem with what has been presented to us by conventional scholarship is that it is done under the claim of ‘striking a balance.’ But a ‘balance of power’ which dominates this discourse ignores the fact that Israelis have colonized the land and history altogether (see Pappé, 1999:1-10). In his introduction to *The Israel/Palestine Question*, Pappé convincingly argues that “the stronger party has the power to write the history in a more effective way. Israel, the powerful party, is a state whose apparatus has been employed successfully to propagate its narrative in front of external public. The weaker party, the Palestinians, is engaged in a national liberation struggle.” (9)

Within the context of my re-reading of the events that have been going on since the accords, including the current *Intifada*, I will argue that what urgently needs to be addressed is an alternative program that is necessarily dialectical and secular in its treatment of the Palestinian and Jewish questions—an alternative that never denies the rights of a people, one that guarantees equality, and that abolishes apartheid, Bantustans and separation in Palestine altogether.² Thus in contrast with the mainstream media’s ahistorical (mis)representation, my argument is a historical one. It is a reading which maintains that any attempt to understand the Oslo Accords, their disastrous consequences and the power mechanisms that had led to them, needs a critical rereading of classical Zionism. My argument is that Zionism, like apartheid and Nazism³, had been based on the idea of separation, rejection of difference, and racial-religious supremacy⁴. I will, therefore, proceed in my argument by dealing with a modern historical background of the conflict and relate it to ideology and representation within the power-resistance binary.

* * *

“There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism”(Walter Benjamin 1992:258).

A close (re) reading of classical Zionist literature reveals a dogma which proclaims that Jews all over the world constitute one nation (see Herzl, *The Jewish State*; Jabotinsky, “The Iron Wall” in Avi Shlaim’s *The Iron Wall*, 2000; Ben Gurion in Shabtai Teveth’s *Ben Gurion and The Palestinian Arabs*, 1985). Therefore, by virtue of being one nation, Jews are entitled to a territory, a territory that grants them unity against the ‘anti-Semitic world.’ The territory chosen was Palestine in which the Jewish state as the embodiment of

‘justice and liberty’ would be guaranteed for all Jews. Palestine therefore must become a Jewish state for *all* Jews-- only by Jews. Ironically, the horror of the inhuman Nazism in Germany in the 1930s gave boost to the immigration of Ashkenazi Jews to Palestine in search of a safe haven.

However, the idea of moving from a space that had ‘othered’ them to one where the ‘authentic self’ can flourish, was confronted with the reality that the ‘Promised Land’ was inhabited by its natives. In Zionist consciousness, the native Palestinians, exactly like Native Americans, became a surplus population that had to be gotten rid of (see Hertzl, *The Jewish State*; Jabotinsky, “The Iron Wall” in Avi Shlaim *The Iron Wall*, 2000; Ben Gurion in Shabtai Teveth’s *Ben Gurion and The Palestinian Arabs*, 1985). Those who remained would be considered a minority without political or national rights. That is, the native Palestinian was viewed by hegemonic Zionism as an obstacle to realizing the Zionist dream by his/her mere existence and presence.⁵

Like any other colonial-settler power, Zionism denied the existence of Palestinians, hence the ‘rationale’ of the Zionist slogan ‘A land without people for people without land.’ In order to concretize this slogan, the Palestinians had to be eliminated whether through massacres or dispossession. Further, the Zionist goal of engineering a population shift from being the ‘Other’/Slave to being the Master/ majority required not only massive Jewish immigration but also expulsion of those Palestinians who decided to remain in Palestine.⁶

‘A land without people for people without land’ is a Zionist slogan that has always expressed the way Zionists looked at Palestinians: invisible if not absent, or rather ‘present absentees.’ The Zionist rationale was ‘since the land was empty, what is the ground of the moral opposition to the creation of a ‘land without people’ for ‘us’, i.e. ‘people without land’? In an extreme contempt for the Palestinian people, Golda Meir--the former Israeli prime minister--said: “There was no such thing as Palestinians... They did not exist.” (qtd. in Ribhi Halloum, 1988:37). In order to concretize this idea, the Palestinians had to be eliminated. Hence, Deir Yassin massacre (1948), which forced hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to flee their homes.

Thus, the implementation of Herzlian Zionism led to the inevitable, a confrontation between natives and colonialists, between legitimate resistance and illegitimate power. Like any settler- colonial power, especially the founders of America, Zionism viewed natives as an ‘other’ element of nature to be fought against. Palestinian resistance was, therefore, viewed by Zionists--as it still is --as ‘criminal violence,’ ‘illegitimate,’ ‘terrorism’...etc; these are the same terms that were used by the white supremacists of Apartheid South Africa against Black resistance. Palestinian inhabitants were considered anti-Semitic gentiles engaging in a war against the peaceful Jews.

To create Jewish sovereignty in Palestine, not only had land been taken away by force from the native Palestinians, their aspirations for independence had to be squashed since they were the greatest threat to the success of Zionism. Obviously, the creation of an independent sovereign state ruled by parliamentary elections and majority rule before 1948 could have meant the end of Zionism because it would have

meant the rule of the majority. It becomes clear, then, why Zionism has fought against the creation of a representative, legislative assembly in historic Palestine. This assembly would have represented the Arab majority, which was a mortal danger for Zionism.

The political goal of Zionism was to engineer a population shift from being a minority to being a majority. Massive Jewish immigration and the expulsion of the Palestinians was the means by which this goal was achieved. Inevitably, the expropriation of land went hand in hand with the denial of the rights of Palestinian majority. Basic human and political rights of Palestinians were completely denied since Zionism, in principle, could not allow them to exercise their rights because it would mean the end of the Zionist enterprise.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nation General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 which called for the partition of Palestine with Jews, 30% of the population, getting 55% of the land (“The Origin and Evolution of the Palestine Problem 1917-1947”; <http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/561c6ee353d740fb8525607d00581829/aeac80e740c782e4852561150071fdb0!OpenDocument>) . In fact, this resolution laid the ‘legal’ basis for the legitimization of racism and separation, the denial of the majority rights, and the establishment of a theocratic state based upon mythological justifications without taking the democratic rights of the original inhabitants into account. By 1949 more than 600.000 Palestinians became homeless with Israel occupying 77% of historic Palestine (Pappe, 2007). The *Nakba*, catastrophe in Palestinian collective consciousness, in 1948 led to the total destruction and disintegration of Palestinian society. In Zionist literature, the Israeli acceptance of the partition resolution was a ‘tactical move.’⁷ Thus the greatest achievement of 1948 war was the prevention of the independence of Arab Palestine, which had been all along the major political goal of Zionism in Palestine.

The name Palestine, which existed as a well-defined unit between 1922 and 1948, had to be eliminated, together with the elimination of the natives from Jewish consciousness. From its inception, Israel never accepted the idea of negotiations with the native Palestinians, until 1990--albeit under different conditions. In Zionist consciousness, Palestinians have no political rights in Palestine and even have no existence.

The realization of the Zionist dream has meant redemption for some Jews, but what is pushed back to the ‘unconscious’ is its other half, namely the crime against and dispossession of the natives of historical Palestine. Thus, from the Palestinian perspective, the crystallization of the Zionist dream has meant dispossession and *Ghurba* (exile). Zionism wanted them to be forgotten forever in the ‘political unconscious.’ However, massacres, humiliation, dispossession, defeat, expropriation, invasion, denial of existence... etc, have not led to the ‘disappearance’ of Palestinians. They have been robbed of their land, deprived of their identity and history; even their future has been stolen. The Zionist response to these atrocities is that the Palestinians should not have existed in the first place and should not have been a part of the Story. Thus they must remain invisible; or rather ‘hidden victims’ like Native Americans. The Palestinian ‘guilt’ is that they were passive, peaceful and disorganized--no match for the well-organized active Ashkenazi Zionists.

Every victory on the part of Israel has always meant disaster for the Palestinians, who have become the

victims of the victims. The goal of Zionism has always been to make the Palestinians invisible, faceless and voiceless refugees from nowhere, removed from the world's active consciousness. They had no history, no consciousness, and thus no story to tell. Hence the extreme importance of Edward Said's insistence on rewriting the Palestinian Story, neither from an 'official' perspective, nor from a Zionist Robinson Crusoe's perspective, but rather from that of the victim's, namely that of the dispossessed refugee.

The story to be told cannot but use the so-called western grand narrative of universal rights in order to deconstruct the basis upon which a myth is used to legitimize the denial of the rights of a people to exist. This 'story' cannot but use the universal slogans of the enlightenment--freedom, liberty, equality...etc--in order to clarify the 'other' side of the powerful story.

Such story should, then, re-address the relationship between Israel, as a political entity, and the Palestinians. What needs to be emphasized in this narrative is that, contrary to what has been central in modern liberal thinking, the idea of the citizen in Israel is totally missing. Israel is the only state in the 'modern' world in which citizenship and nationality are two separate, independent concepts. In other words, Israel is not the state of its citizens, but the state of the Jewish People. Moreover, the story to be told must address the fact that Israel does not have a constitution. Further, since Judaism is a religion and since it is the basis of the existence of a "modern State," why can Islam, Christianity or Hinduism not be so? (Israel Shahak) Thus, if one is to follow the logic of Zionism, one should ignore the achievements of humanity and the ideals of the enlightenment since what is acceptable for some (i.e. Jews) is not acceptable for others (i.e. Palestinians). The story thus will deal with what 'the powerful story' ignores, with what Walter Benjamin would call 'allegories of absence.' (1977:172) The reign of the 'Other of Reason' cannot prevent Reason from participating--if not completing--the Story.

The provocative questions in the Palestinian story will, then, deal with the 'universal' liberal slogans and ask why they have never applied when it comes to Israel? Can one imagine the USA being the state of Protestant Christians? This question sounds like a joke, but, again, it is a fundamental theme of the story.

Thus the 'Palestinian story' will ask questions and help readers to answer. A picture of Palestinians in Israel will be drawn, a picture of foreigners in their own homeland, because Israel is defined by its Basic Laws as "the state of the Jewish people" i.e. not the state of all of its citizens. This is the direct result of Zionism and its ideology of separatism. In other words, there is no place for integration in Israel. In apartheid South Africa, blacks were not expected to share political rights and cultural heritage with whites. Similarly, Palestinians are 'native aliens', who became foreigners by birth. But they are also the enemy by their mere presence. Every Palestinian is by definition a threat because of the mere fact that she is a part of the Palestinian people. The contradiction between professed ideals and actual behaviors, which has been the engine of political change in many places, does not exist for many Israelis because the democratic creed, or civic democracy, is absent. There is no promise of equality for all citizens in Israeli political culture and praxis. In short, there is no tradition of civil liberties in Israel because such a tradition would mean the end of Zionism. True equality means the dismantling of the state. If Israel belongs to all its citizens, it would mean the end of the Zionist state. Hence, one can understand the antagonism of the

establishment to Azmi Bishara, the Palestinian member of Knesset whose programme calls for the creation of a secular democratic institution. When South Africa was declared the state of all its citizens, political apartheid came to an end.

Thus there is clear contradiction between the Zionist ethos and democratic ideals. The Zionist system is quite clearly incompatible with democracy, which stems from the colonialist problem and the presence of the Palestinians. The story, then, does not only deal with the Palestinians but also with Zionism as the essence of the political system in Israel, which is based upon discrimination against Palestinians and a preference for Jews.(Shahak) Our story will therefore be a mirror for real liberals: a liberal cannot be Zionist. She is supposed to admit the injustice done to the Palestinians and the responsibility, or rather guilt, towards such injustices involved in Zionism.

The story will show how the Palestinian position, on the other hand, in its consensus form, has been principled, albeit flexible--a position that takes a broad historical, and human, stand. The Palestinian Covenant of the PLO calls for the establishment of a 'secular democratic republic' in Palestine, which is (mis) interpreted by Zionists as a call for the destruction of Israel. To repeat, the establishment of a real secular democratic state means the end of Zionism and its theocratic justifications for the establishment of Israel. Further, in the 1970s, the Palestinian National Council adopted a more flexible resolution that calls for the establishment of a sovereign, independent state in the West bank and the Gaza Strip as soon as they are liberated, with the emphasis on the right of all Palestinian refugees to return to their homes.

Thus what we have is two contradictory positions, one that is democratic with secular demand, and another that lends itself to religious and mythical interpretations.

* * *

The Oslo Accords in 'The Story'

What about the current situation in Palestine? Has Israel, under the previous Ashkenazi Zionist Labour government, decided to recognize the Palestinian people as a people when it signed the Oslo accords? Are the Oslo accords a radical change in Zionist ideology with regard to gentile Palestinian? Do the accords guarantee the restoration of a long lasting comprehensive peace? And does the current leadership of the PLO represent the political and national aspirations of the Palestinian people?

The Oslo accord was claimed to be the first step towards self-determination and an independent state. But it is clear now that no state in the short run will be established because of the fact that Oslo simply ignored the existence of the Palestinian people as a people. In other words, these accords have offered Zionism what it has always been striving for. And if any Palestinian speaks out about this great injustice, s/he will be accused of 'terrorism' and 'incitement'.

And yet, to claim that 'Oslo' and 'Camp David' were great missed opportunities and breakthroughs, and

that the so-called ‘peace process’ was on track until the Palestinians (i.e. colonized victims) blew it is a deliberate ideological distortion of reality, and a misreading of the story, claimed in order to prepare Palestinians for more concessions. And to claim that the Palestinian reaction to aggression (the *Intifada*) is ‘terrorism’ and ‘incitement’ is a deliberate misinterpretation of the whole dilemma. Real comprehensive peace was not created in Oslo and Washington; rather what was created is an American/Israeli plan to resolve the conflict after the destruction of Iraq and the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Oslo accord was born dead because it did not guarantee the minimum national and political rights of 6 million Palestinians. As long as there are refugees, unemployment, cantons, detainees, blockade, settlements, ‘legal torture’ of prisoners, dispossession, assassinations and occupation, comprehensive peace cannot be achieved. It is an illusion in the minds of those who signed the Oslo accords—and it is a fundamental section of the story.

Everything in the West Bank and Gaza Strip mirrors V.S Naipaul’s novel *A Bend in the River* (1979)—a novel set in post-independent Zaire⁸. But is Gaza independent? Even if the Palestinians boast that they, for the first time in history, have a ‘national authority,’ Gaza and the West Bank are still occupied.

What makes the PNA (Palestinian National Authority) beyond questioning? What is the ‘legitimate’ ground upon which it was established? Very simple: The Oslo Accords. It has now become very obvious that despite the famous hand shake on the White house lawn, and the optimistic talk of the ‘New Middle East,’ these accords, in contradistinction with UN and Security Council resolutions, have not guaranteed the establishment of a sovereign, independent Palestinian state, or the return of the refugees, nor even the demolition of the Jewish settlements, and compensation for those Palestinians who have lost—and are still losing—their homes, lands and properties. Nor has it guaranteed the release of all political prisoners, or the opening of all checkpoints, which have become daily nightmares for residents of the WB and GS; ...etc. This is the political reality that Palestinian officials who signed the agreement do not like to be reminded of. In fact, what has been created in parts of Gaza and the West Bank is a very strange entity—an apartheid-type Bantustan endorsed by the international community.

A short trip from Gaza refugee camps to Gaza beach, where the villas of the PA chiefs and ministers intrude natural view, draws a very gloomy picture.⁹ When we bear in mind that 70% of Gazans are refugees (<http://www.un.org/unrwa/refugees/gaza.html>), the current *Intifada* becomes more comprehensible not only in its anti-colonial context, but also in socio-political terms. What Oslo has created in Gaza is literally two different worlds, both of which have been led by undemocratic institutions, eleven security apparatus (the figure might be higher), a Third Worldish military court (commended by the former American vice President Al Gore during his visit to Jericho), corruption, mismanagement, inefficiency and nepotism—to mention but few neo-colonial qualities. Ali Jarbawi’s diagnosis is worth quoting in its entirety (2001):

On the political level, the Authority did not perform as was expected from it – at least from a Palestinian perspective, in terms of enforcing the rule of law, and the separation of authorities. Thus it did not perform adequately in reinforcing the independence of the judiciary or its effectiveness, or guaranteeing legal, practical and respectable leeway for a fundamental assortment of public and individual rights and liberties, in order to guarantee that the executive authority

does not act arbitrarily against the society and the citizen. Adding to this setback in the political situation was the calcification of the political life of Palestinian [political] movements or parties that no longer had any real ability to affect the political decision-making process, which had become manifest in practical terms, within the executive authority, whose center and decision maker has been one person – the President [Arafat].

As for the economic level, the popular maxim of transforming the country in the era of ‘peace’ into ‘the next Singapore’ failed. Instead, rumor after rumor and fact after fact about the abuse of official positions for financial and illegitimate gains, flowed – the spread of corruption, monopolies and agencies. A new class of the rich from the “PA era” [*Ahd El Sulta*] began to appear, which was perceived either with envy or contempt. This led to the creation of a gap that began to widen between the minority of beneficiaries of these economic resources and privileges, and the growing number of the poor and people deprived of these benefits. Despite the fact that criticism began to grow concerning these issues, this criticism was always responded to with indifference and resistance by the political leadership.

As to the societal level, the Authority relied upon the revival of tribal and familial affiliations in the country, in order to unravel the societal fabric and make it easier to politically infiltrate. The polarization of economic classes led to instability in the status and effectiveness of the middle class, which began to shrink in terms of its status and influence as well as in imposing its values and ethics on society. As a result, the society began to vacillate between the values and ethics of the “new opportunism” on the one hand, and “traditional conservatism” on the other. Between these two poles, many values of liberalism and tolerance were lost as was accountability, and the vivacity to participate and be open for criticism. In their place was either greedy chaotic disorder, which calls only for concern for the self, or a predestined resignation to the prevailing reality, expressed through criticism and accusations, but only behind closed doors.

Similarities with the ‘fictional’ world of *A Bend* are striking. Naipaul’s officials do not know the meanings of the slogans they repeat, nor do they understand the extent of corruption and rottenness their state has embraced. In their newly independent state, i.e. Zaire, the political equation that runs the foreign policy of their state is reflected on the state itself. All the people are entirely dependent on ‘Big Man’, the president. But that relationship is unrealistic: it is a relationship that can never lead to real independence, sovereignty and democracy. The state the ‘Big Man’ tries to construct has nothing to do with the real Africa. Are the Palestinian Bantustans different? Are they really ‘the first step towards an independent state?’

Although it seems that Naipaul is of the opinion that that ‘Third World’ peoples can get anywhere in their struggle to achieve prosperity, and despite his reactionary, pessimistic views in that National Liberation Movements move from one cycle of destruction to another, one cannot avoid the comparison, though the conclusion need not be the same. That is, Naipaul’s conclusion is that neither nationalism nor traditionalism succeeds. However, what I have a problem with, within this context, is the kind of nationalism he

(mis)represents, and the kind of nationalism that has been in control in the Palestinian cantons. In the absence of historical and social consciousness, this kind of corrupt, feudo-bourgeoise nationalism has flourished and has become a fundamental constituent of the general political and social disorder.

Naipaul's Zaire is left stranded between a heritage to which it cannot return and a world it is not permitted to enter. Hence the question of what the withdrawal (or redeployment) of the colonial powers has left the colonies with. According to Naipaul, decolonization, fundamentally, brought corruption, poverty and chaos. However, that is not to say that this paper follows a strict binary between 'organic nationalism' and occupation. On the contrary, what we have in Gaza and the West Bank now is the direct outcome of occupation, even though it is one in disguise.

In order to make myself clear, I need to elaborate more on this issue. By winning the 1948, 1956 and 1967 wars, and by getting international, Arab and Palestinian recognition, Israel--as a settler-colonial state—has moved into a more blatant economic war; a war that requires 'new individuals' through the formation of 'new consciousness' among colonized Palestinians. This is what I call a 'moral war'; one that through which you wash out the consciousness of your supposed enemy—the 'Other'—and replaces it with a one-dimensional mentality.¹⁰ This is what the whole issue of Shimon Perez's 'New Middle East' is all about.

Put differently, to aim at creating the one-dimensional Palestinian is to aim at creating artificial needs represented in consumerism and the irrationality of goals that Palestinian people are prepared to accept. That is, it is a kind of false consciousness led by assimilated intelligentsia that has a revolutionary past. The enforcement of consumer desire, regardless of production, is intended to guarantee the subordination and conformity of the Palestinians, especially those with revolutionary ideas.

This goal, however, never sees the antithesis it creates as a result of economic exploitation and the logic of the surplus underlying the occupation as a capitalist system. What is ruled out is the fact that the majority of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, whether in area A, B or C, are not economically qualified to consume. Moreover, this outlook sees the Gaza Strip and the West Bank only as an extension of the Israeli market, and a source of cheap labour regardless of the oppositional, revolutionary consciousness that has been formulated throughout the different phases of the Palestinian struggle. Nor does it take political resistance into account. Hence the necessity of the formulation of Palestinian alternative politics. To be conscious of the corruption of the Palestinian Authority, and of the huge class gape that the Oslo Accords have created has definitely been the beginning of action represented in the current *Intifada* (uprising). This is an oppositional consciousness that the signatories of Oslo did not take into account. If 'true needs' under Oslo agreement were not met, since 70% of Gaza's were jobless, how could 'false needs' be satisfied? And if the promoted 'false needs' are not met, questioning the logic behind them begins. Hence the extreme significance of the 'Petition of the Twenty,' which called upon the Palestinian people to reject the Oslo Accords and their consequences, and resort to resistance instead. This is exactly what happened less than a year after the publication of the petition.¹¹

The Gaza Strip, however, is seen by the PA as one of three building blocks of an independent state, although

it is geographically separated from the second block, i.e. the West Bank. The third block, Jerusalem, is under total Israeli control. None of the Palestinians in the occupied territories believe that the ‘semi-autonomous’ zones in the GS and the WB –that is, the ones that fall under category A—can lay the foundation for an independent state. What Oslo has led to is, in fact, a kind of conditions resembling those in South Africa under Apartheid. When black South Africans needed to move from their townships to big ‘white’ cities, they needed to get a ‘pass’. During ‘peace time,’ Palestinians, not only those who work in Israel, but also those who wanted to visit the WB from Gaza, or vice versa, needed to apply for a ‘permit’. Beside the permit, Palestinians needed a so-called ‘magnetic card,’ which is a computer card that has a password to its holder’s security file. No one could work in Israel, or visit the WB, or even go to a hospital inside the ‘green line’ without a ‘permit’ and a ‘magnetic card’. If one was granted such invaluable cards, one was still not allowed to visit any other area except the one s/he was entitled to visit. If one was ‘caught’ at another area, one’s permit and card were confiscated immediately, not to mention the torture one was exposed to. Nowadays, no one is even given such luxurious ‘permits’ and cards. How was apartheid South Africa different?

The tribal chiefs of the South African Bantustans used to believe that they were the heads of independent states. Luckily, the ANC, despite its many compromises with the National Party, had never accepted the idea of separation and Bantustans. The official Palestinian leadership on the other hand, at the end of the millennium, boasts of having laid the foundation for a Bantustan, claiming it to be an independent state on the make. Undoubtedly, this is the ultimate prize Zionism can offer to its ‘Other’ after having denied her existence for a century, and after that same ‘other’ has proved that she is human. For Zionism’s continued presence in Palestine, the ‘Other’ must be assimilated and enslaved without her/ him being conscious of her/his enslavement. Hence the granting of ‘semi-autonomous’ rule over the most crowded Palestinian cities, which shares the logic of the Oslo Accords.

Post-Oslo Palestine is surely as different from pre-Oslo Gaza and the West Bank as the Democratic Republic of Congo is different from Mobutu’s Zaire. However, ‘out of great catastrophes come great solutions.’

Conclusion: The current situation

The conflict has been misrepresented as a ‘war’ between ‘two sides’. In fact, as I have argued, and as the late Palestinian intellectual Edward Said put it, there are not two sides involved in the “violence” in the Middle East. There is a colonial state turning all its great power against a stateless people, repeatedly refugees, and dispossessed people, bereft of arms with the aim of destroying this people. What is left for the Palestinian people after the fourth, some say third, strongest army in the world, with its navy and air force has been bombarding the West Bank and the Gaza Strip? Ten years of “negotiations” created only Bantustans, and when Palestinians asked for the implementation of international law (in Camp David,) they were accused of blowing Ehud Barak’s “generous offer.” Palestinians have been at the receiving end

of merciless assaults by Israeli troops, and reservists, hidden in their helicopter gun ships, F16's and Tanks.

The current American government considers the killing of Palestinians by tank and plane missiles "legitimate," whereas acts of Palestinian resistance are "terrorist attacks." Israel, therefore, is given the green light to conduct its genocidal attacks against Palestinians whose death is considered collateral damage.

George Bush's administration does not have a balanced plan to resolve the crisis in the Middle East. What all American envoys to the region, have been trying to do is reaching a cease-fire in accordance with Israeli conditions and without linking it to any clear political programme that is based on Security Council resolutions and international legitimacy. Of course, the logical outcome of this American biased, even antagonistic position, and the lack of will to find a just solution/peace, is catastrophic. It also means the failure of the American "anti-terror" campaign, not to say the possible dismantling of the alliance it is trying to form in the region under the guise of "The New Middle East."

The Israeli reoccupation of the already occupied West Bank and parts of the Gaza strip has not stopped Palestinian resistance; on the contrary, it has intensified it. When Sharon, the minister of defense then, decided to invade Lebanon in 1982, Lebanese National and Islamic resistance emerged as a bigger challenge, which led to the humiliating withdrawal of the IOF from South Lebanon.

Israel has won almost all of its previous wars against the official Arab regimes, but has lost against resistance and liberation movements. It will surely lose the current war against the Palestinian resistance and will be forced to withdraw its forces from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank unconditionally. Lebanon is still a fresh example. The most reactionary Arab leaders could come up with to help their Palestinian brothers and sisters is prince Abdullah's proposals while foreign volunteers are in Ramallah, Dheisheh and Beliin, are doing all they can to protect ordinary Palestinians. The generals and marshals of the Arab states are busy condemning Israeli attacks and begging Bush to intervene and Ehud Olmert to soften his brutality while Palestinians sacrifice their lives

The impact of the current Intifada is expected to remove the immunity of the Arab regimes against revolutions and popular anger. Current demonstrations in Cairo, Amman, Damascus, Sana'a, Manama, and even Kuwait might only be the beginning. Significantly, at the beginning of the first Intifada (1987-94), the American Secretary of State, George Schultz said "we are not worried only about Israel, but also about the surrounding Arab countries". From what we are witnessing now in the Arab world, it seems that Schultz's fear of the Arabization of the Intifada was an imperialist far-sightedness.

* * *

All of this, therefore, does not mean that 'the story' will be a gloomy, nihilistic one against compromise or political solutions in principle. On the contrary, it will envisage a minimum fair solution at this stage based on resolutions of international legitimacy, which accord the Palestinian people some of their rights such as self-determination, establishment of a sovereign independent state, return of the dispossessed

refugees, Jerusalem, the removal of all Jewish settlements, and equality amongst all citizens of the state of Israel. The story will, then, paint a picture of an historic solution that envisages reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis, an image of Palestinians and Israeli Jews living in one secular democratic state in which ALL citizens are treated equally regardless of their religion, sex, or color.

Notes

¹ My reference to mainstream media, within this context, is meant to distinguish them from what is considered alternative media. On the one hand, CNN, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*—to mention but few American controlled media Apparati—hold a different view from that of *The Nation*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, *News From Within*, *Challenge*—to mention but a few courageous magazines and news papers

² Ironically, one year after the signing of the Oslo Accords, apartheid in South Africa came to an end.

³ On the Nazism-Zionism analogy see Finkelstien's excellent *Image and Reality of the Israel- Palestine Conflict* (1995) Part I, pp7-88. See also his *From The Jewish Question to the Jewish State* (1987).

⁴ On the colonial-settler nature of Israel see Maxim Rodinson's (1973) *Israel: A Settler State* (1987).

⁵ The Israeli 'Law of Return' grants every Jew who immigrates to Israel a citizenship.

⁶ On the question of the premeditated expulsion of the Palestinians see the various works of Israeli New Historians, especially Beni Morris (1987) and Ilan Pappé (1999; 2007)). See also Nur Massalaha (1992) and Wlidi Khalidi (1988). See also the latest research of Arnon Soffer, *Israel, Demography 2000-2020: Dangers and Opportunities* (2001). Soffer argues for the expulsion of Israeli Palestinians, the presence of Israeli sovereignty in all settlements, and limiting the number of Palestinian children. Soffer's research was presented to the Israeli Knesset in 2001.

⁷ This is in Ben Gurion's words (see Shabti Teveth, *Ben Gurion and the Palestinian Arabs*, 1985).

⁸ My following argument was published in *News From Within* (XIII.9). Jerusalem. October 1998. 29-32.

⁹ There are eight over-populated refugee camps in the GS: Jabalia, Shatti, Nusairat, Bureij, Maghazi, Deir el-Balah, Khan Younis and Shabara (in Rafah).

¹⁰ The doctrine of the 'Iron Wall' has been central to Israeli policy since its inception: negotiations with the Arabs must always be from a position of supreme military strength. (see Shlaim, 2000).

¹¹ 'Petition of Twenty' was signed by the most prominent Palestinian intellectuals who refused to be 'legitimizers of power', and was supported by the likes of Edward Said, Hisham Shiraby, and Haidar Abdul Shafi.

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