CO-OPTING THE PLO:
A CRITICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE OSLO ACCORDS, 1993-1995

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UMI Number: U172053

UMI
Dissertation Publishing

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Abstract

This study analyses the Oslo Accords, the interim self-government agreements signed between the government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), during the period 1993-1995. It suggests that the Israeli recognition of the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people did not translate into an acceptance that the Palestinians possessed an equal national right to the territories that both peoples claimed. The acceptance of the PLO as a strategic partner ironically served to consolidate Israel's post-1967 settlement presence in the West Bank and Gaza strip. It provided Israel with the means to achieve a separation of peoples without a withdrawal from the occupied territories, to keep the land but not its indigenous population. Through the structure of the Palestinian interim self-governing agreements, the Rabin government sought to 'persuade' the PLO to abandon its goal of Palestinian statehood through a complex co-optation process. In this situation, Israel would control the terms and momentum of the interim period, bringing the PLO into a position of substantial authority under its aegis while simultaneously creating an irreversible *fait accompli* that would impel the Palestinian leadership to forego its demands for sovereignty and settle for an alternative, permanently sub-sovereign final status arrangement instead. But in contrast to preceding analyses of Oslo, this study argues that these circumstances cannot be wholly interpreted in Realist terms, as an instance of traditional power politics or an act of shrewd statecraft. It is undeniably true that the key Israeli leaders at the time, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, were manipulating the Oslo Accords to their own ends, but this deliberative process cannot be fully explained at the level of agency. It must instead be understood as reflecting a new logic of rule that has been explicated in the works of the theorists Gilles Deleuze and Michael Hardt.

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Acknowledgements

This thesis is in many ways an outgrowth of my work with the Washington DC based organisation Nonviolence International and its Jerusalem affiliate, the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, during 1994-1996. I wish to thank Basima Adawin, Mubarak Awad, Sami Awad, Sami Jundy, Lucy Nusseibeh, Hazem Qutteneh and Hussam Shaheen, who befriended me and showed me a world that forever changed my life.

I would like to acknowledge Max Ticktin of George Washington University, whose personal example demonstrates the centrality of peace and justice within the Jewish tradition.

I want to thank Michael Salla of American University, who first introduced me to many of the critical thinkers who are explored in this work and who encouraged me to pursue my PhD.

I wish to thank my supervisor, Mark Hoffman of the London School of Economics, for his support and guidance during this endeavour.

I am especially indebted to the following friends and colleagues, whose feedback proved to be invaluable in the development of this thesis: Kathlean Fitzpatrick, Louiza Odysseos, Ralf Rettig, and Carlos Yordán.

I am grateful to Bettina Hernandez, Alex Kepnes, Sujith Kumar, and Matt Taylor, who pushed me to continue in times of doubt and despair.

Lastly, I want to thank my parents, Sam and Beth Weinberger, who never wavered in their support for me.

Introduction
Unstated Continuities of Political Outlook

It is unedifying to besmirch the reputation of a slain leader. The shock of political killings frequently creates an aura of inviolability and tends to stifle critical assessments of the legacy of the statesman in question. The assassination of Yitzhak Rabin on 4 November 1995, for example, is often viewed as the first of a series of calamitous downturns to the achievement of the 1993 Oslo Accords. Rabin was undoubtedly murdered because of opposition to the sweeping political changes that his administration had begun to implement as part of the Israeli-Palestinian conciliation process. In stark contrast to his ultra-nationalist predecessor Yitzhak Shamir, Rabin both recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and assented to its incorporation as the seat of an interim self-governing authority. However, both Rabin's detractors during his time of office and his later eulogisers failed to understand the entirety of his intentions regarding the Palestinians. A noted scholar of Israeli-Palestinian relations remarked in 1994, for instance, that '[b]y starting the withdrawal from occupied territory, Rabin is not leading Israel to commit suicide, as his critics on the right claim, but laying the only secure foundation for peaceful coexistence between Israel and the Palestinians'.[1] It is thus believed that Rabin had come to accept the inevitability of a Palestinian state, that it was the logical outcome of a process of compromise in which Israel was to receive security guarantees in exchange. From such a standpoint, Rabin's positive legacy was undermined by a number of spoiler events that followed

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[1] Avi Shlaim, 'Prelude to the Accord: Likud, Labor, and the Palestinians' *Journal of Palestine Studies* 23 no. 2 (Winter 1994), 19.

his assassination, namely sensational acts of terrorism commitment by Palestinian Islamic militants and the dubious commitment to peace of the Likud government that came to power in June 1996. But instead of emphasising how markedly different the Rabin government was from its predecessor and successor, it is worthwhile to examine its innate similarities to them, how its recognition of the PLO was only seemingly transformative and in fact represented unstated continuities of Israeli political outlook.

Rabin: Ambiguous Intentions

Yitzhak Rabin's approach toward the Oslo Accords was puzzling. According to his advisers and members of cabinet, he never discussed the long-term implications of the interim agreements that he reached with the PLO.[2] He kept all his deliberations on this monumental matter to himself. This almost unbelievable development has been explained as a function of Rabin's personality and style of leadership. It was noted in 1995 in this regard that:

> Rabin, who never viewed himself as a politician, disparages, distrusts, and tends to ignore party functionaries. He holds the reins of power tightly in his grip and is considered to be a "lone wolf" because he rarely takes his colleagues into his confidence.[3]

If Rabin had any additional strategic goals or any clear vision where the Oslo process should go, he simply did not share these thoughts with others. The cabinet member Shimon Shitreet prodded Rabin several times to discuss the impending plans of the government, particularly Israel's future borders, but to

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[2] Efraim Inbar, *Rabin and Israel's National Security* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999): 152.

[3] Myron J. Aronoff, 'Labor in the Second Rabin Era: The First Year of Leadership' in Robert O. Freedman, ed., *Israel Under Rabin* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995): 137.

no avail.[4] Yossi Beilin, one of the key Israeli architects of the Oslo

Agreements, commented in this respect that:

> For Rabin, the absence of a discussion on the permanent arrangement was a political preference. After his death, I sat with Leah Rabin and said to her, "If anyone could know what Rabin was thinking of as a permanent settlement you are the one." She said to me, "Look, I can't tell you. He was very pragmatic, he hated to deal with what would be many years down the road. He thought about what would be now and the immediate future. As far as I know, he didn't have a very clear picture of the permanent settlement."[5]

Others argued that Rabin believed this ambiguity to be useful in reducing the

opposition to the concessions he had in mind for the future. For example,

Yehuda Ben-Meir, a former Israeli deputy Foreign Minister and Eitan Haber,

an adviser to Rabin and head of the Prime Minister's Bureau, both speculate

that this process of deferral may have been Rabin's way of dealing with the

inevitability of a Palestinian state.[6]

Adherents to the view that Rabin had quietly come to accept the idea

of a Palestinian state point to the late leader's frequent talk of the need for

'separation' between Israelis and Palestinians. But a closer examination of the

idea is no more revealing of Rabin's intentions. After a suicide bombing in Tel

Aviv on 19 October 1994, for example, Rabin stated the 'necessity of

separation' and that Israel would continue to face security problems of this

kind 'as long as we continue to occupy another nation of two million people'.[7]

Yet it is not clear if 'ending the occupation' translated into eventual

Palestinian statehood or was meant to lead to a different arrangement.

Following a similar attack in Beit Lid on 22 January 1995, Rabin raised the

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[4]Inbar, 152.

[5]'Interview with Yossi Beilin on the Permanent Status Arrangement', *Ha'aretz*, 7 March 1997.

[6]Inbar, 152.

[7]*Jerusalem Post*, 20 October 1994.

slogan of 'total separation' and began cabinet discussions about building a 'security fence' to create a physical division between Israelis and Palestinians.[8] Again, Rabin never expressly equated these proposals with sovereign borders. The leading Israeli analyst of Rabin's strategic thought depicts this concept of separation in an equally problematic way: 'Separation [was] a new term in Israeli political parlance that denoted the partition of the Land of Israel between Arabs and Jews, as well as a reduction in the contact and the friction between the two populations...'.[9] It must be noted, however, that the terms 'separation' and 'partition' cannot be used interchangeably:

> [F]our different operative terms – "territorial compromise", "separation", "partition", "land-for-peace" – are assumed, mistakenly, to be synonymous with each other, and as a result are employed entirely too indiscriminately. Whereas, most emphatically, in point of practice they are anything but interchangeable. In fact, it would be fair to say they are words – and worlds – apart.[10]

Whereas 'partition', the division of a country into two or more sovereign nations, implies the creation of a Palestinian state, 'separation' or 'reduction in contact and friction' does not connote political division *per se* and thus suggests that any number of non-sovereign formulas could be used to address the status of the Palestinians.

Peres's Role and the Beilin-Abu Mazen Agreement

Rabin's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres played an equally significant role in shaping the Oslo Accords. Indeed, it was Peres who convinced Rabin of the need to recognise and negotiate with the PLO. So even if Rabin's

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[8] *Jerusalem Post*, 31 January 1995.

[9] Inbar, 152.

[10] Aharon Klieman, *Constructive Ambiguity in Middle East Peace-Making*, Research Report Series no. 10 (Tel Aviv, Israel: The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research, Tel Aviv University, 1999): 96.

position can never clearly be known, it might be argued that Peres's ability to sell Rabin on the idea of a partnership with the PLO, coupled with a rational understanding of the kinds of compromises that would be required to achieve a lasting and stable peace, meant that a Palestinian state would have been the foregone conclusion of Oslo – if Rabin had not been assassinated, or, if Peres, as Rabin's successor, had not fallen from power in June 1996. But before dismissing concerns with inconsistencies in Rabin's actions and statements as being mean-spirited or somewhat foolhardy, it is fruitful to relay some equally curious behaviour on the part of Peres, particularly in relation to a highly relevant document known as the Beilin-Abu Mazen agreement.

Between October 1993 and November 1995 a series of secret and unofficial meetings took place between teams led by the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin and the PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas (who is also known as Abu Mazen) to explore practical solutions for the final status agreement that would eventually be negotiated by the Israelis and the Palestinians. The draft agreement that was finally reached was only a tentative understanding in principle – and only on some but not all outstanding issues, but its central tenet was that Israel would agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state.[11] Rabin was never shown the document,

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[11]See Aharon Klieman, *Compromising Palestine: A Guide to Final Status Negotiations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000): 227-229. The gist of the draft of the agreement is as follows:

Israeli concessions:
- agreement to the establishment of a Palestinian state;
- consent for an extraterritorial corridor linking the Gaza Strip with the West Bank;
- a pledge of financial assistance for the absorption and rehabilitation of Palestinian refugees outside Israel's final borders;
- the Palestinians could continue to claim the moral right of return;
- the Palestinians would have functional control over Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem;

which was completed just three days before his assassination. But is it is just as significant to note that when Peres became privy to the content of the Beilin-Abu Mazen agreement on 11 November 1995, *he refused to endorse it.* Peres's objections were not merely formulaic. He was fundamentally opposed to the gist of the understanding that his deputy had reached with the Palestinian team. Beilin, who was in a unique position to gauge Peres's personal positions, later commented on the nature of this disagreement:

> [Peres] believes that a Palestinian state is not necessary. He doesn't see that territorial compromise is an appropriate vision....He believes in a functional compromise. If I were to compare the readiness for concessions..., I cannot say that between Rabin and Peres that Peres is the dove. I can't say that.[12]

Peres was the driving force behind the Rabin government's recognition of the PLO, but at the same time was opposed to the creation of a Palestinian state.

Complex Co-optation

This study addresses the seeming anomalies reflected in Rabin and Peres's actions and statements. It argues that at a deeper level the Oslo Accords represent a continuation of past Israeli positions toward the Palestinians. The Israeli recognition of the PLO as the official representative

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- the Palestinians' capital would be located on the outskirts of Jerusalem, in the Arab villages of Abu Dis and al-Azariyya.

  Palestinian concessions:
- the pre-1967 borders would be open to modification;
- Israel would not be held to return to those 1967 lines, nor held to full withdrawal;
- Israel could annex the largest settlement areas of the West Bank and the Palestinian state would receive lands formerly inside Israel in exchange;
- military areas of the Jordan Rift Valley would temporarily remain under Israeli control but would be scheduled for transfer to Palestinian rule by 2007, at the time of full normalization;
- the Palestinian state would be demilitarised;
- the Palestinian national leadership would declare and end to the conflict and pledge to make no further demands upon Israel.

[12]'Interview with Yossi Beilin on the Permanent Status Arrangement', *Ha'aretz*, 7 March 1997.

of the Palestinian people did not translate into an acceptance that the Palestinians possessed an equal national right to the territories that both peoples claimed. The acceptance of the PLO as a strategic partner ironically served to consolidate Israel's post-1967 settlement presence in the West Bank and Gaza strip. It provided Israel with the means to achieve a separation of peoples without a withdrawal from the occupied territories, to keep the land but not its indigenous population. Through the structure of the Palestinian interim self-governing agreements, the Rabin government sought to 'persuade' the PLO to abandon its goal of Palestinian statehood through a complex co-optation process. In this situation, Israel would control the terms and momentum of the interim period, bringing the PLO into a position of substantial authority under its aegis while simultaneously creating an irreversible *fait accompli* that would impel the Palestinian leadership to forego its demands for sovereignty and settle for an alternative, permanently sub-sovereign final status arrangement instead. *But in contrast to preceding analyses of Oslo, this study argues that these circumstances cannot be wholly interpreted in Realist terms, as an instance of traditional power politics or an act of shrewd statecraft. It is undeniably true that Rabin and Peres were manipulating the Oslo Accords to their own ends, but this deliberative process cannot be fully explained at the level of agency and must be understood as reflecting a new logic of rule.*

The theoretical basis of this study is found in the works of Gilles Deleuze and Michael Hardt. It is possible to raise immediate concerns of bias

because Gilles Deleuze was a vocal supporter of the Palestinian cause.[13] But such concerns should be downplayed. Deleuze was, above all, a philosopher and his writings are utilised for their broad critical perspective. Indeed, Deleuze's support for the Palestinians can be understood in the general context of his works, as the endorsing of views that challenged hegemonic perspectives or what he derided as the 'master's or colonist's discourse'.[14] For Deleuze, the Palestinians represented the quintessential 'Other'. He admired how, in the face of great opposition, they were able to craft a unique identity – and largely on their own terms: 'people don't take enough account, for instance, of how the PLO has had to invent a space-time in the Arab world'.[15] While this study can rightly be said to resonate with the *underlying ideas* that shaped Deleuze's pro-Palestinian views, it should not be viewed as a direct outgrowth of those political beliefs.

For Deleuze, an important aspect of challenging hegemonic perspectives was to conceptually map how forms of power re-manifested through changing relationships and modes of interaction. This study is based upon an essay Deleuze wrote near the end of his life that attempted to detail a new template of ordering in the hope that it might assist in the formulation of future strategies of emancipation. It is relevant to note that Deleuze was gravely ill during the first years of the Oslo Accords and committed suicide in 1995. But had these tragic circumstances not occurred and given his manifest

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[13]See, for example, Gilles Deleuze, 'The Troublemakers', *Discourse*, vol. 20, no.3, 23-4 (1998). Originally published in *Le Monde*, 7 April 1978; 'The Grandeur of Yasser Arafat', *Discourse*, vol. 20, no. 3, 25-9 (1998). Originally published in *Review d'études palestiniennes*, September 1973; and 'Wherever They Can See It', *Discourse*, vol. 20 no. 3, 34-35 (1998). Originally published in *al-Karmel 29*, 1988, 27-8.

[14]Gilles Deleuze, 'Mediators' in Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972-1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995): 172. 126.

[15]Gilles Deleuze, 'Control and Becoming' in Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972-1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995): 172.

interest in Palestinian affairs, it is possible that Deleuze would have produced an analysis of the Oslo Accords that mirrored this investigation. Deleuze's insights, which are very much supplemented in this analysis with the work of Michael Hardt, are crucial in understanding the new power dynamic that began to take hold during the 'breakthrough' Israeli-Palestinian agreements. Without this particular theoretical template, the notion of complex co-optation is likely to be misunderstood as a crafty act of diplomacy, or worse, a grand conspiracy.

Structure of Chapters

Chapter one is a literature review. It gauges inconsistencies and unexplored possibilities that are reflected in the asymmetrical power structure of the Oslo Accords. It suggests that the achievement and dynamic of the agreements can not be fully explained by 1) foreign policy analysis and 'rational choice' models of decision-making; 2) trends in diplomacy rooted in 'constructive ambiguity'; or 3) the 'overly-neutral' character of the Norwegian facilitation/mediation of the Accords. It posits that there is an Israeli strategic element at the heart of the Accords, but that this phenomenon can only be understood at a deeper level and as a complex and diffuse end goal.

Chapter two presents the work of Gilles Deleuze and Michael Hardt. It introduces key concepts: 1) the 'control society', a term developed by Deleuze to convey that traditional ends were increasingly being achieved by new means of devolution, forms of 'empowerment' that seemed to be an improvement from past types of ordering but that were ultimately disenfranchising; 2) 'modulation', a concept that Deleuze used to further describe this new occurrence, which connotes an environment wherein there is

a constant 'changing of the rules' and; 3) the 'extra-dialectical' condition, Hardt's theoretical elaboration of this type of relative acceptance and empowerment. These ideas provide the conceptual basis for the argument that the 1993 Rabin government essentially structured the Oslo Accords to co-opt the PLO as a permanently sub-sovereign authority under Israeli rule.

Chapter three examines Rabin's past experiences in promoting Israeli security needs and the tactics that Shimon Peres long contemplated in relation to the Palestinian question. It suggests that the principal Israeli decision-makers during the Oslo Accords were predisposed toward complex co-optation. It conveys that these 'predispositions' were not simply the sum of these two leaders' political personalities, or their interpretation of foreign policy and security issues, but rather were the result of a somewhat unplanned combination of these factors in a manner that reflected the operative logic of 'control society' forms of governance.

Chapter four maps the process in which complex co-optation unfolded. It maintains that the independent Norwegian initiative that created a line of contact with the PLO provided a divergent opportunity to achieve Israeli political goals. It reconstructs the history and substance of the negotiations, using Deleuze's insights to further elucidate the nature of the Accords' power asymmetries and Israel's related 'concessions' to the Palestinians. It suggests that between 1993 and 1995, the co-optation element came to be structured as a kind of 'phased diminishment of expectations'.

Chapter five examines the on-the-ground relationship between Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Rabin government in 1994 and 1995. It is the principal application of Michael Hardt's insights to the case

study. It suggests that the failure of the Rabin government to wholly embrace Arafat's *modus operandi* to its advantage, and its seemingly contradictory practice of disempowering its partner in peace instead, can best be understood as traits of an 'extra-dialectical' condition that had come to define the relationship between Israel and the PLO after Oslo.

Chapter six addresses conflict resolution strategies. It suggests that the theoretical insights gleaned from the study substantially affect recommendations that seek to address the shortcomings of the Oslo Accords. It examines possible means that might have enhanced the efficacy of Rabin and Peres's 'complex co-optation' programme. It also explores if the principles of the 'control society' affect proposals for new forms of mediation specifically intended to protect the rights of sub-nationals, such as the Palestinians.

The Conclusion utilises the insights gleaned from the 1993-1995 period of investigation to address Israeli-Palestinians relations at the present time. It suggests that the Rabin government's complex co-optation attempt essentially consigned the Oslo Accords to failure, made armed confrontation between Israelis and Palestinians inevitable. Concerned with the immediate safety needs of the Palestinians, it endorses multilateral intervention in the conflict. It then examines Deleuze's ideas on possible ways out from the 'control society' in tandem with the related thought of the philosopher Martin Buber — who long contemplated similar themes in the Israeli-Palestinian context, so as to intimate the first steps needed to permanently end the enmity between the two peoples.

Chapter One
Assessing the Oslo Accords

This chapter reviews analyses of the Oslo Accords. It explores the issues pertaining to the interests and motives of the Rabin government in Israel and the PLO at the onset of the landmark agreement, why both parties decided to recognise each other under the auspices of the Norwegian government and officially began a peace process in September 1993. It focuses on the diplomatic substance of the breakthrough as well as the nature of the Norwegian mediation of the Accords. It examines the link between the Accords and the vision of peace in the Israeli national narrative. Most importantly, it gauges inconsistencies and unexplored possibilities relating to the dynamic underlying the Israeli-Palestinian process of mutual recognition that are reflected in the asymmetrical power structure of the Accords.

Contradictory Intentions

Andrew S. Buchanan, an International Relations scholar, has written the most comprehensive account of the Oslo Accords to date.[1] He examines the background and the framework of the Accords, surveying the dynamics of this attempt to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Buchanan maintains that the Accords, and particularly their chief innovation – the Israeli-PLO act of mutual recognition, emerged because of a broad convergence of interests of

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[1] Andrew S. Buchanan, *Peace with Justice: A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements* (London: Macmillan, 2000). There are of course other chronicles of the Accords, but these works lack the sophistication of Buchanan's analysis and tend to focus on the intrigue of the negotiations at the expense of the actual substance of the agreements. The two most well known accounts of Oslo are journalistic, rather than scholarly in orientation: Jane Corbin, *Gaza First* (London: Bloomsbury, 1994) and David Makovsky, *Making Peace with the PLO* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996). Similar, non-scholarly texts have been written by Israeli and Palestinian policy makers and negotiators. See Mahmud Abbas, *Through Secret Channels* (Reading: Garnet, 1995), Yossi Beilin, *Touching Peace: From the Oslo Accord to a Final Agreement*, trans. Philip Simpson (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999) and Uri Savir, *The Process: 1000 days that changed the Middle East* (New York: Random House, 1998).

the Rabin government and the Arafat-led PLO in the early 1990s. He chronicles how the agreements were highly asymmetrical in structure, often grossly favouring Israel at the expense of the Palestinians, but his assessment of *why* this institutionalised imbalance occurred is problematic, rooted in contradictory assertions.

For Buchanan, '[t]he step towards mutual recognition depended on a number of factors which only when combined led to the Israeli-Palestinian breakthrough, factors which had the timings been different may never have influenced the willingness to negotiate'.[2] First, there was a structural change of the international system from a bipolar to a unipolar one and, as a result, both Israel and the PLO had to re-examine past positions and strategic goals. Whereas the Israelis were uncertain if they would continue to receive US military and economic assistance in the new global climate, the PLO had completely lost the political and logistical support of its superpower patron, the USSR. Secondly, there was a realignment of the political relations within the Middle East after the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The conflict had severely weakened the conventional fighting capabilities and nuclear potential of Iraq, the only regional state that heretofore was capable of rivalling Israeli military strength. But before Israel could begin to consolidate its regional power in the wake of this occurrence, it was necessary to find a political solution to the ongoing Palestinian *intifada* or uprising as well as achieve peace treaties with neighbouring Arab states. Such a dynamic received momentum after the election of the Israeli Labour party in 1992, with its less ideologically rigid stance about trading lands occupied in war. The new Israeli Prime Minister,

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[2]Ibid., 142.

Yitzhak Rabin, believed that the loss of superpower conflict by proxy and the removal of Iraq from the regional balance of power created grounds for his primary goal – a diplomatic compromise with the Arab states.

A resurgence of radical Islamist movements throughout the region brought about a re-evaluation of priorities by many Arab states. The leadership of these countries began to see the containment of such radicalism as a higher priority than continued opposition to Israel. At the same time, both Israel and the PLO grew increasingly wary of Islamic opponents. The Hamas movement, which provided the ideological and physical infrastructure of the continued Palestinian *intifada*, was unwilling to consider accommodation with Israel and, at the same time, was helping to diminish the position and power of the PLO as leader of the Palestinian national movement in the occupied territories.

Since 1991, the *intifada* had become increasingly radicalised. Israeli leaders predicted that if the uprising were not confronted politically, it would move from an outpouring of frustration and anger within the confines of civil disobedience to a more extreme form involving armed confrontation and suicide bombings. 'For all the talk of rising Islamic fundamentalism sweeping across the Middle East and North Africa and influencing Palestinian fundamentalism in the occupied territories, the inescapable truth was that the appalling poverty, hopelessness, anger and discontent that was spreading like a malignant cancer through Gaza only highlighted that Israeli policy in Gaza provided sustenance to Islamist radicalism'.[3]

The support given by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq during the Persian Gulf War had caused him to lose

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[3]Ibid., 156.

crucial support payments from Saudi and Gulf state patrons. The loss of funding, coupled with the challenge from Hamas in the Gaza strip as well as an independent West Bank PLO leadership that had emerged in the *intifada*, increasing isolated Arafat and prompted him to seek lines of communication with Israel. Indeed, the financial and political weakness of the PLO made the Israelis begin to see the organisation as a potential negotiating partner who would be more flexible and willing to moderate past positions. This was especially so in regard to the PLO's continuation of violent actions and its strength to negotiate over highly contentious issues such as Palestinian statehood, refugees, and Jerusalem. Moreover, in Israeli eyes, the Palestinian issue could not be left unresolved – even though Palestinian violence was decidedly low-intensity and non-threatening in existential terms. It would be impossible to achieve peace treaties and construct a new, co-operative regional order without a remedy to the Palestinian question: hostile actors such as Iraq and Iran would continue to manipulate the issue as a way to counter the political integration of Israel into the region. Furthermore, an accord with the PLO would entail much less of a political risk than, say, an agreement with Syria which would involve major territorial concessions and severely antagonise Israeli public opinion. It was better for Israel to start by giving as little as possible, to begin peace negotiations with the party that would have little choice but to accept the bare minimum – the PLO.

For Buchanan, the overlapping strategic assessments toward changing global and regional political dynamics of the Labour government in Israel and the PLO produced the impetus so that, when contacts of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry offered a channel for secret negotiations between the two

foes, an accord was reached. He believes that pragmatic and rational decision-making on the part of the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships signalled a dual intention for a benign resolution to their conflict. But while Buchanan lauds the breakthrough of Israeli-PLO mutual recognition, he relays, at the same time, how its institutionalisation through the Oslo Accords did not create an equal status for Israel and the Palestinians:

> The DoP [the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, the document signed between the State of Israel and the PLO, in Washington DC on 13 September 1993] is not a symmetrical agreement outlining mutual obligations on a *quid pro quo* basis, rather it is an agreement to further the basic interests of both sides. For the Israelis, the DoP provides a reliable, legitimate interlocutor and the ability to transfer responsibility for a large proportion of the Palestinian population, if not the territory they inhabit. For the Palestinians, the DoP provides for the establishment of a legitimate political and moral authority with the mandate to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinian people to pursue Palestinian national interests.[4]

The structure of the Accords aims to give basic satisfiers for the Palestinians, but it provides no institutional mechanisms, such as third party mediation, by which they can advance their positions on an equal footing with Israel. As a consequence, the Accords will ultimately favour, or prioritise the interests of, Israel:

> [T]he inherent structural asymmetrical power imbalance robs the agreement of balance, and the nature of the state-non-state bilateral agreement ensures that the DoP's international and legal foundations remain dubious, or at least open to wide interpretation. The DoP does not provide sufficiently for an enforceable conflict prevention regime in that such a regime is not defined and enforcement of what constitutes a conflict prevention regime is left open to the interpretation of the parties, which, in an asymmetrical structure, in practical terms means the higher party. The DoP as a bilateral agreement does not incorporate third party mediation to offset the inherent structural asymmetrical power imbalance, nor does it allow for international assistance which enables peaceful change, including procedural mechanisms which allow for the review of settlement terms, the raising of grievances, and adjustment to the settlement as

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[4]Emphasis added, Ibid., 160.

new realities are created, and which anticipate and monitor potential areas of future conflict .[5]

Buchanan locates the source of the asymmetrical power structure of the Accords in Israeli security considerations. But he does not explicitly say if the security-based explanation for the inherent structural power imbalance is epiphenomenal in nature, if there are deeper, endgame intentions behind its design.[6] Indeed, there is a tension in his account. Buchanan argues that the Israeli security considerations within the Accords act to undermine Palestinian political and national rights. Similarly, he recounts views that maintain that the mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO was essentially hollow in nature. But at the same time he suggests that, despite the asymmetrical structure of Oslo, the Israeli recognition of the PLO meant that Palestinian statehood was inevitable.

Israeli security considerations overrode Palestinian political rights. 'It must be noted that the entire peace process was not geared specifically to enshrining the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Palestinian people, rather the primary consideration of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process was to end the bloodshed between the two parties and to establish a mutually agreed

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[5] Ibid., 219.

[6] Based on the text of the Israeli-Palestinian DoP of 13 September 1993, Buchanan infers two guiding assumptions:
1. The principal objective of the DoP is to achieve a 'just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement' leading to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict via 'historic reconciliation through the agreed political process'.
2. The foundation of the agreed political process, the DoP, rests on basing the permanent settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 [which embody the principle of trading land for peace] and on the premise that negotiations on the permanent status will lead to the 'implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338' (Buchanan, 2).

Thus, Buchanan seeks only to evaluate the efficacy of the framework of the DoP *in terms of the above assumptions*, by its capacity for: a) resolution; b) institutionalisation; c) confidence-building; d) empowerment; e) mediation; f) administration; and g) negotiation (Buchanan, 2).

modus vivendi.[7] Focusing on the asymmetrical quality of this new operative relationship, Buchanan comments that, '[t]he importance of [Israeli] security considerations greatly constrains independent Palestinian political development, particularly the freedoms of assembly, association, and Palestinian independent control within the spheres transferred'.[8] Buchanan systematically details how Israel was unyielding in this regard, even to a point of 'diminishing returns'. He notes disapprovingly that '[w]hen Israeli security considerations subordinate all the transferred competencies without exception, the letter of the agreements becomes more important than the spirit, in fact the importance stressed by Israeli security considerations gives the transfer of power and responsibilities a hollow ring'.[9]

Buchanan leaves the impression that the mutual recognition-based co-operative relationships born of Oslo have allowed Israel to manipulate consensus with its own, non-normative end in mind. In this regard, he devotes considerable attention to the objections of Palestinians such as Haider 'Abd Al-Shafi, Hanan Ashrawi and Edward Said who saw the act of recognition as being distorted and deceptive.[10]

'Abd Al-Shafi discusses that the Oslo Accords fail to address Israel's illegal claim to the occupied territories, in effect validating Israel's claim that it was not an 'occupier' but that it was in the West Bank and Gaza strip by right. There are also no provisions in the Accords where, for example, Israel renounces any of it claims that the West Bank and Gaza strip are Israeli territory or that state that Jewish settlement activity will stop at the onset

[7]Ibid., 235.
[8]Ibid., 265.
[9]Ibid., 268.
[10]Ibid., 124-125, 213-215, 217.

Palestinian autonomy. By not challenging or objecting to such claims and activities, the Palestinians had essentially condoned what was illegally established and allowed Israel to spuriously claim that this acquiescence is an abandonment of their right to an independent state over the entirety of the occupied territories. 'Abd Al-Shafi further objects that, through the Accords, the status of the West Bank and Gaza strip was being blurred from being recognizably 'occupied' to only being 'disputed'. In his view the Accords' institution of two separate entities in the West Bank and Gaza strip − two separate administrations and judicial systems − indirectly created a kind of apartheid. He notes that even though the Accords enumerate a number of contentious issues to be deferred to a later date, and make reference to UN Security Council Resolution 242 − which relates to withdrawal of territories, there could be no reliance on ideas merely implied but not clearly stated, especially since there were no provisions for a complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, even as a final status issue.

Ashrawi and Said very much concur with 'Abd Al-Shafi's admonition against the reliance of implied ideas versus realities on the ground. Ashrawi was certain that the Israelis would exploit their powers as occupiers 'to the hilt', so that by the time final status negotiations discussing Palestinian statehood began, Israel would be 'left' with great sections of Palestinian territory.[11] Said was even harsher in his criticisms, lambasting the Accords as a Palestinian Versailles treaty − with the Palestinians given the role as the Germans. He was not only certain that final status talks would be grossly prejudiced by the conditions created by Israel during the Oslo interim period,

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[11]Hanan Ashrawi, *This Side of Peace* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995): 261, cited in Buchanan, 125.

but he also feared that by agreeing to prioritise Israeli security concerns, the PLO-led autonomy regime would become a mere stooge to enforce Israeli dictates.

Buchanan takes a somewhat contradictory position in other sections of his analysis. In spite of his great emphasis on the structural asymmetries of the Accords and his citing of views dubious of Israeli end-game intentions, he takes a far less plausible position that suggests that the Rabin government would have acceded to a contrasting final outcome. An example can be seen when Buchanan explains that the PLO made the sweeping concessions to Israel that were decried by its critics because of a belief that a Palestinian state would be the implicit and inevitable outcome of the process of mutual recognition:

> Mutual recognition was 'something that Arafat...longed for. By accepting the PLO's right to represent the Palestinian people, [Arafat and his advisors reasoned that] Israel would also be implicitly accepting the PLO's political agenda – the Palestinians' right to self-determination and their own state.'[12]

In contrast to the evidence of his own account, Buchanan seems to concur with the logic that guided the PLO leadership.[13] In this vein, Buchanan argues that Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister who had made the ultimate decision to implement the Accords, was a pragmatic and practical man who, despite declaring that Palestinian autonomy would not necessarily translate into statehood, 'knew otherwise':

> The ceremony at the White House lawn was made possible, according to former [US] Secretary of State Kissinger, by exhaustion, material exhaustion on the part of the PLO and psychological exhaustion on the part of Israel. Kissinger argued this was why all truly contentious issues were set aside – borders, settlements, refugees and Jerusalem,

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[12]Ibid., 200.
[13]Ibid., 127.

and that even the mutual recognition on which the agreement was based was ambiguous. This gave rise to the illusion that Israel had recognised the PLO but believed it had not recognized [the certainty of] a Palestinian state and that it could continue to choose the representatives with whom it was prepared to deal.[14]

For Buchanan, the Israeli recognition of the PLO made Palestinian statehood inevitable. He further notes that

> Whilst Israel remains the occupying power, the DoP's enshrinement in Article I of UNSCRs 242 and 338, which explicitly preclude the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and serves as the basis of the permanent status settlement, means that the entire process could be construed as being about the detail of establishing a sovereign [Palestinian] entity which can serve mutually inclusive Palestinian interests, and not whether or not there will be an independent Palestine as this is already implied. In this sense, the signing of the DoP does not imply a Palestinian acceptance of the Israeli occupation but an Israeli acceptance of Palestinian sovereignty.[15]

Thus a sovereign Palestinian state will emerge regardless of the fact '[f]or the Israelis, the DoP represented a Palestinian practical policy that allowed them to publicly embrace the PLO without having to accept the PLO's agenda'.[16]

Buchanan's analysis is Janus-faced. While his study does convincingly illustrate how the broad strategic calculations of the Rabin government and the PLO led to the decision to begin secret negotiations with each other in Oslo, his contradictory stances on the presence of structural asymmetries and the issue of mutual recognition suggests that two separate possibilities could have motivated Israeli intentions and shaped the dynamic of the Accords. The first possibility would posit that the Oslo Accords were a genuine breakthrough between Israel and the Palestinians – a territorial compromise-based construct rooted in the idea of mutual recognition, and since the structure of the Accords were built on established traditions of diplomacy, any destabilising

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[14]Ibid., 205.
[15]Ibid., 347.
[16]Ibid., 349.

asymmetries that occurred were likely due to the oversight, or lack of innovation, of the parties or the international sponsors of the agreements. The second likelihood would maintain that the Oslo Accords were not the basis of a normatively oriented Israeli-Palestinian conflict resolution effort, and were instead a roundabout strategic endeavour on the part of Israel. The utility of these two explanations will now be addressed.

Sloppy Diplomacy?

Aharon Klieman, a professor of International Relations, offers a sophisticated understanding of the Oslo Accords. Although he accepts the 1993 Israel-PLO act of mutual recognition as a positive breakthrough, Klieman also argues that the Oslo Accords are inherently flawed because the principles of territorial compromise embodied within them cannot, in the long run, be given an effective means of implementation. He does believe that the Accords represent the prospects of a genuine Israeli-Palestinian peace:

> By solemnly signing the Oslo declaration of principles, these two historic protagonists turned interlocutors, Israelis and Palestinians, have undertaken a profound change in the basic pattern of their relationship. In one fell swoop, they have gone from delegitimizing each other to extending mutual recognition. Opting for peace over enmity, they have shifted from uncompromising, all-or-nothing positions to political and territorial compromise. And, in choosing to move forward instead of temporizing and remaining locked in place, they have forced us to look beyond making peace to peace building.[17]

But at the same time, he maintains that the framework of the agreements is not innovative enough and has backfired because of an over-reliance on cheap and

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[17]Idem Aharon Klieman, *Compromising Palestine: A Guide to Final Status Negotiations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000): 2.

imperfect diplomacy.[18] For Klieman, it is the very the structure of the Oslo Accords that counters crucial prerequisites to peace from taking hold.

Klieman is at odds with the interim nature and deliberately vague structure of the Accords. It should be noted that recent peace processes have been generated by focusing on interim agreements that aim to build confidence measures for a settlement to be reached at a later date. In order to bring diametrically opposed, deeply reluctant parties to the negotiating table, it is believed to be necessary to situate agreements on nebulous ground, in which multiple outcomes to a final accord seem available. To account for differences in interpretation that begin inevitably to emerge, it is often possible to sustain momentum in the negotiations through what has been labelled 'constructive ambiguity'.[19] Such an approach to peace building operates in a two-fold manner. First, it enshrines the principle of mutual recognition between parties who had hitherto not recognised each other's legitimacy. Secondly, it establishes objectives of a peace process as a whole, to work toward stabilising mutual recognition in an ongoing, new political relationship. But constructive ambiguity does not circumscribe a concrete plan of implementation. It is an anchored in an approach that combines self-interest with *voluntary commitments* to a peace process. Even in a legal sense, it does not actually require parties, through guarantees or threat of sanctions, to

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[18]Idem Aharon Klieman, *Constructive Ambiguity in Middle East Peace-Making*, Research Report Series no. 10 (Tel Aviv, Israel: The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research, Tel Aviv University, 1999). Klieman's account is unequalled. For other analyses that address the destabilising role played by constructive ambiguity in the Oslo Accords, see PLO Negotiation Affairs Department, 'An Assessment of US Involvement in the Palestinian-Israeli Peace Process Over the Last Seven Years', 20 January 2001, at internet site http://www.nad-plo.org/eye/news19.html and Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, 'Ending the Ongoing *Nakba*, A Real Alternative to Oslo' *al Majdal* Newsletter, Issue no. 11 September 2001, 3-5.

[19]Jonathan Stevenson, 'Irreversible Peace in Northern Ireland?' *Survival*, Volume 42, No. 3, Autumn 2000, 9.

undertake actions related to the objectives of the peace process that they have made.

Constructive ambiguity approaches to peace building are encouraged for many reasons. Absolutely clarity of goals may not be possible early on in an accord as it can easily produce a political stalemate and hinder implementation of an agreement altogether. Ambiguity provides enough of an incentive for parties to an agreement to try an alternative to a situation of conflict. More importantly, constructive ambiguity can bring about relative peace.[20] In this situation, 'the maintenance of peace does not depend on any written agreement or visions of permanence (for these diverge), but on the political process engendered by...[a] peace process itself'.[21] By extending peace processes, constructive ambiguity can allow forbearance from violence to become habitual among parties to a conflict. So even if an original agreement does not achieve its full objectives, a peace process still may have positive, long-term effects. A new improved agreement may likely emerge out of the ruins of a failed predecessor that nonetheless had a beneficial impact. By conditioning former combatants to behave non-violently, and by diminishing old enmities by creating new, cooperative institutions based on 'win-win' principles, an overall national mood favouring, and conductive toward, a continuing peace process may take hold. Thus it is argued that constituents of the parties to the original, unsuccessful agreement, enjoying the stability and environment that it had nonetheless brought about, will tend not to favour a return to the old *status quo* and support new efforts to construct a more viable agreement instead.

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[20]Ibid., 19.
[21]Ibid.

Klieman sees constructive ambiguity as having major limitations –
even great *destructive* potential – when misapplied to international negotiation
or peace making. He argues that the post-Oslo DoP deadlock occurred
precisely because of the Accords' inordinately strong component of
constructive ambiguity. While constructive ambiguity can help to catalyse
initial agreements, it is not satisfactory to properly resolve the major, complex
issues making up the Israeli-Palestinian final status peace agenda. Klieman
looks more favourably on traditional forms of diplomacy:

> This insistence upon the proper construction of agreements and the
> careful, precise wording of declarations, protocols, or binding treaty
> accords has its own cogency. First, in assuring one's own interests.
> Second, minimizing the likelihood of misinterpretation. Third,
> avoiding charges of bad faith. Fourth, to minimize contravention and
> protect against unilateral infractions.[22]

Contemporary statecraft increasingly eschews these traits, in favour of
situations of vagueness where images of accord – 'artful compromise' – are
prioritised over long-term guarantees. Klieman states disapprovingly, 'When
international negotiation sacrifices substance to appearance, puts non-
confrontation above tough yet exhaustive bargaining, and often times prizes
soft commitments over hard ones, then you know something is either
fundamentally wrong, or else significantly different about contemporary
statecraft'.[23] He decries how regional and international conflict resolution has
become less of a specialized diplomatic field and more like half-finished
commercial transactions. Peacemaking efforts are geared more toward 'getting
to the table' than sustaining momentum and looking toward long-term aims.
'Just as the potential contracting parties themselves are encouraged to move

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[22]Klieman, *Constructive Ambiguity in Middle East Peace-Making*, 12.
[23]Ibid., 12.

beyond merely forming, or, transmitting images and perceptions, we, too need to go beyond (a) prenegotiation and (b) pre-contractual negotiations to the later *final* stages of peace talks and to the *product* rather than the environment or procedures of diplomatic bargaining'.[24]

Ambiguity can be a valid, constructive force in initial diplomatic exchanges, but it is dangerously unstable in formal agreements. Durable agreements should aim precisely to eliminate grey areas that can imperil future peace prospects. The utility of 'loose ends' is exhausted once initial exchanges have commenced:

> Unless ambiguities are identified as such, documents do not necessarily mean what they say, mean much more (or much less) than they say, or can mean anything one wishes them to say. All these influences render the document non-binding, whereas the entire aim of ending conflict and institutionalizing peace is assumed to be reaching higher plateaus of commitment.[25]

In circumstances where ambiguities continue to persist, each party will revert to self-maximising, autonomous behaviour, seeking gains by insisting on its reading of nebulous aspects of an agreement and by exploiting weaknesses of its interlocutor's interpretation. Thus, antagonism and distrust will actually grow the closer the negotiation and the negotiating parties come to endgame conflict termination and contractual peace. Ambiguity helps to generate dialogues, but it soon becomes counterproductive. It neither retains its effectiveness nor helps to secure permanent peace structures. 'Constructive ambiguity offers the pretence of peace-making and peace, without the substance'.[26]

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[24]Ibid., 15.
[25]Ibid., 18.
[26]Ibid., 20.

Constructive ambiguity has dominated diplomacy in the media age. Under constant scrutiny and pressure to deliver results to constituencies, politicians and statesmen now tout initialled memoranda of understanding and declarations of principles as 'peace accords'. Klieman asserts that this use of constructive ambiguity as a guiding diplomatic compass, especially in efforts to resolve conflicts in the Middle East, is due largely to the contribution of the US National Security Adviser and later Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger. In this school of thought, negotiation emphasises finessing, and not necessarily finalising, the structure of diplomatic relationships.[27]

Klieman sees ambiguity as the servicing agent of four related themes of contemporary world politics that emerged from Kissinger's influence. First among these themes is 'constructive engagement', which assigns highest priority toward easing international tensions between bitter opponents. Talking assumes an extremely high importance; 'the value of dialogue becomes the dialogue itself, irrespective of any actual or final outcome'.[28] Secondly, there is the phenomenon of 'backchanneling', in which 'constructive engagement' is pursued through lines of discreet, unofficial communication that offers parties plausible denial.[29] Thirdly is 'surprise diplomacy', which 'aims at nothing less than forcing an abrupt, radical change in well-established policies, entrenched positions and political power balances that otherwise might take decades to achieve-if ever'.[30] Lastly, is a method of gradualism, an incremental approach to peacemaking where, after initial pressure has been applied, a gradual

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[27]Ibid., 35.
[28]Ibid., 26.
[29]Ibid.
[30]Ibid., 27.

process of conciliation, pacific settlement, and normalization can occur.[31] 'Constructive relationships and constructive engagement represent the goals; backchanneling, the avenue; surprise diplomacy, the stunning effect; and gradualism the format for following up on the initial bold initiative'.[32] Constructive ambiguity is the bond linking this broad approach to peacemaking. But the approach is flawed. Taken as a whole, it propagates 'the lulling belief that once warring sides cross their Rubicon and commit themselves to a process of reconciliation, negotiation, and compromise, given time and a modicum of goodwill all that remains is to work on, and work out final, technical details'.[33]

Klieman identifies a tradition of unarticulated, diplomatic episodes of constructive ambiguity with regard to the Palestine question predating the Oslo Accords. 'Early practitioners were engaging in studied obfuscation long before the term was coined and the idea gained currency.'[34] Constructive ambiguity finds its origins in the contradictory pledges of support made by Great Britain, the chief colonial power in the Middle East after the First World War, to both Jewish and Arab nationalist movements. Even the oft-cited United Nations Resolution 242, the basis for all Israel-Arab peace negotiations that was passed after the June 1967 war, is sufficiently vague and open to multiple interpretations. But the most successful and deliberate application of constructive ambiguity can be seen in the Camp David Accords, which finalised a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt.[35] Camp David set some

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[31]Ibid.
[32]Ibid.
[33]Ibid.
[34]Ibid., 37.
[35]See Ibid., 49-54.

important precedents that were to be reformulated, and reproduced, within the structure of the Oslo Accords. As a result, constructive ambiguity became both the 'solution' and 'problem' for peacemaking:

> At any given moment in the process it can be instrumental at overcoming stalemate, and in reaching a consensus without having to give words full meaning. But by leaving core values, issues or interests vague and unsettled, it is guaranteed to be the source for later difficulties.[36]

Camp David did not assure peace; it only represented the possibility of peace between Israel and her Arab neighbours. But this agreement was achieved precisely because it left issues of Palestinian autonomy and national rights undeveloped, to be addressed at a later date!

The Oslo agreements build on the discussions of Palestinian autonomy discussed first at Camp David. Since Oslo attempts to build on an already nebulous foundation, it provides an unstable framework for future peace. 'Owing to the accretion of layers of ambiguity, the deferred or unfinished business of previous episodes compounds each successive agenda, and therefore the work of the next peacemaker'.[37] Rather than discarding the clouded phraseology of past agreements, the architects of Oslo relied on the diplomatic and legal frameworks of past treaties. Thus, Oslo follows a long-standing pattern of deferred confrontation. The agreements are genuinely innovative in the sense that they clarify the national and political standing of the Palestinian people and make recognition of the Israel by the PLO explicit and unconditional. But it is an interim agreement that continues to defer the most contentious issues of Israeli-Palestinian confrontation, such as the status of Jerusalem, refugees, Jewish settlements, future borders and security

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[36]Ibid., 55.
[37]Ibid., 56.

arrangements. 'While it is understood that the permanent status negotiations would cover the remaining issues, there is not even the slightest clue as to what was understood *about* the issues themselves, or about the answers to them, leaving plenty of room for interpretation – and confrontation – in the future'.[38]

Oslo adds 'super ambiguities' to Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking efforts:

> First, what are true Israeli and Palestinian intentions? To coexist peacefully or to continue the struggle by possibly other means. Second, just how high is the degree of their willingness to compromise on behalf of co-existence and to make meaningful, doubtless painful ideological and territorial concessions?

For example, Israel pledged only to 'redeploy' its military forces *in* the West Bank and Gaza strip, but not *from* these territories. It is unclear whether this action marks Israel's permanent intention to retain control over these 'areas of redeployment'. Klieman also notes how the PLO's renunciation of the 'use of terrorism and other acts of violence' and its pledges to assure compliance to these actions by 'PLO elements and personnel' allows the Palestinian leadership to passively condone, or not curtail, the activities of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) as a further bargaining tactic to pressure the Israelis.

Ambiguities evolve easily into deadlock. Ambiguity may initially help moderate peace promoters, but ironically aids extremists opposed to compromise as well. Extremists can easily exploit these ambiguities, entrench their own side's positions and then still place the blame for misrepresentation or misinterpretation squarely upon the other side. Klieman cites the Middle

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[38]Ibid., 60.

East analyst Ian Lustick, who sees the accords 'as an array of legalistic and definitive limits for the opposing side versus an array of loopholes and opportunities for the aggressive, adversarial exploitation for one's own side'.[39] Klieman sees an element of Israeli-Palestinian mutual strategic manipulation and abuse. In his opinion, the Palestinian Authority leader, Yasser Arafat, has proved just as wily as his Israeli partners in using ambiguity for strategic purposes. But Klieman also mentions the numerous Arab criticisms of Arafat and the PLO for being out-witted and out-manoeuvred in the negotiations.[40] Arab critiques fault Arafat for not

> forcing Israeli official leaders at the outset to renounce their occupation of Palestinian land, and in effect allowing them to prejudice or possibly even predetermine the final outcome through unilateral action during the interim phase. This shortcoming is compounded in Arab eyes by Arafat's not extracting ironclad assurances of: the right of national self-determination, the right to establish an independent state on Palestinian soil with Jerusalem as its capital or the right of return by the Palestinian refugees.[41]

Nonetheless Klieman adds his view that the PLO acceptance of the ambiguity formula may not have been due solely to short sightedness, and in fact may have represented their own uncertainty if they were ready to truly divide and share land with the Israelis.

Klieman tends to stress gross oversight over pure strategy as a more explanatory factor to explain the deep flaws of the Oslo agreement. He therefore urges an end to what he sees as the sloppy diplomacy that invites abuse and deadlock. Substantive differences lie at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, not simply secondary phenomena such as the procedural, situational, or personality variables that have been assuaged by 'constructive

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[39]Ibid., 67.
[40]See Ibid., 70-71.
[41]Ibid., 73.

ambiguity' in traditional diplomacy. Klieman believes Oslo to be an unexpressed commitment to the principle of partition of geographic Palestine into Israeli and Palestinian sovereign states: 'No matter how much .either side wishes to think otherwise, either the Oslo agreement is at heart a territorial compromise-based construct and, as such, makes redrawing borders obligatory, or it is one of the great diplomatic deceptions of all time'.[42] The structure of Oslo has within it a fundamental, distorting flaw – if the intent of Israeli-Palestinian conflict resolution is indeed a partition-based, territorial compromise.

> In sum, what can possibly be gained by continuing to live on borrowed diplomatic time and by continuing to defer grappling with the core issues, however contentious? If Jerusalem or West Bank territorial compromise are truly non-starters, and non-negotiable, then why have we been deluding ourselves about overall peace prospects? But conversely, if we genuinely believe that peace and compromise are possible, and that Jerusalem can be negotiated successfully, then what have we been waiting for?[43]

Constructive ambiguity may have helped to bring about a new *modus vivendi*, but this interim situation will not suffice to ensure long-term stability and peace. The Oslo agreements have explosive, destabilising potential. It is crucial to understand that merely separating two peoples residing on a land is not the same as agreeing to divide the land between them.

Klieman's observations indicate a pattern by which diplomacy and negotiations in the Arab-Israeli conflict have taken place in the past. His observation that the constructive ambiguity of past Middle East peacemaking reached its apex in the Oslo accords is of great importance. But Klieman fails to seriously address the possibility if the Israeli preference for constructive

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[42]Ibid., 114.
[43]Ibid., 136.

ambiguity was deliberate, and served a complex tactical objective. Moreover, Klieman does not even attempt to discern, at a deeper level, why Israel recognised the PLO in 1993. Mirroring Andrew Buchanan, he simply accepts that the Israel-Palestinian conflict, a fully 'zero-sum', existential conflict – one of the most protracted in history – was 'ripe' for resolution and so the national leadership of both peoples rationally decided to recognise their past foes. He notes that the agreements acknowledge the national and political standing of the Palestinian people and make recognition of the Israel by the PLO explicit and unconditional, but he does not delve into the nature of this process, if it served another purpose.

Klieman assumes uncritically that normative intentions underlay the Oslo Accords.[44] Without recourse to other explanations, he is forced to decry Israeli leaders in particular for failing to tackle the most complex issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at the inception of the peace process in 1993, for not demonstrating their irrevocable resolve to achieve true peace.[45] Indeed it is problematic to claim that the dominant actors in the Accords acted with extreme negligence by allowing a vague and open-ended agreement to serve as the basis of the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If such an argument were true, than it would not only be necessary to accept that the primary architects of the Oslo Accords, Israeli academics and jurists, failed to understand that by prioritising Israeli security and nationalist claims to the occupied territories in their concessions to the PLO, they might act to

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[44]See Klieman, *Compromising Palestine: A Guide to Final Status Negotiations*, 24: 'Let us assume two conditions. Agreement by nationalist adversaries to negotiate their conflict and bargain together over specific terms of settlement is one necessary given. The second is their willingness to do so on the basis of compromise'.

[45]Klieman, *Constructive Ambiguity in Middle East Peace-Making*, especially 132-136.

obfuscate full Palestinian sovereignty from ever taking hold, but also when their Palestinian interlocutors raised the possibility of this scenario in ongoing negotiations, these Israelis remained aloof, continuing with a framework that in principle they opposed.

Although Klieman identifies constructive ambiguity as the operative mechanism by which Israel sustained its domination over the Palestinians in the Accords, it is necessary to discount his explanation that the fundamental problem of the agreements lays in a kind of sloppy statecraft. Klieman downplayed the likelihood that Oslo was a great diplomatic deception, but a closer scrutiny of his arguments suggests otherwise. It is now necessary to address if, and how, the structural asymmetries of the Accords could be the manifestation of an Israeli strategic endeavour.

The Issue of Mediation

The political theorist Deiniol Jones addresses the possibility of a premeditated Israeli design to undercut Palestinian aspirations to statehood through the structure of the Oslo Accords.[46] Jones critiques the political environment of what might be called the 'flawed normative perspective' that shaped the Norwegian mediation of the Oslo Accords. While the Norwegian facilitators acted within the boundaries of facilitation theory, as it has come to evolve in the field of international conflict resolution, they helped unwittingly

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[46]Deiniol Jones, *Cosmopolitan Mediation? Conflict Resolution and the Oslo Accords* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999). Jones is by no means the only person to have speculated that Israel was undermining Palestinian aspirations to statehood through the structure of the Oslo Accords. His study is, however, more theoretically developed than the other, largely empirical and journalistic accounts that develop this theme. For examples of these other works, see Edward W. Said, *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969-1994* (London: Chatto, 1994), Edward W. Said, *Peace and its Discontents: Gaza-Jericho, 1993-1995* (London: Vintage, 1995), Noam Chomsky, 'A Painful Peace' *Z Mag* January 1996, at internet site, http://www.zmag.org/chomsky/articles/z9601-painful-peace.html, and Nicholas Guyatt, *The Absence of Peace: Understanding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (London: Zed Books, 1998).

to legitimate an unjust, 'neo-colonial' arrangement. In essence, Jones claims, the Norwegian facilitators misconstrued recognition and dialogue, that is to say the onset of negotiations between two sides in a protracted international conflict, as constituting enough of a foundation to implement a viable peace agreement suited to the needs of both sides. But the huge imbalance of power in favour of Israel was not undone in the agreements; it was preserved and reproduced – at the expense of the Palestinians. As a result, the very structure of the agreement is open to an interpretation/manipulation that gives legal justification to Israeli actions (such as continued construction of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza strip), which subsequently antagonise Palestinian sensibilities and can be used to deny their aspirations to statehood. In short, Jones believes that the accords use language and symbols of conflict resolution to disguise 'naked strategic action' by Israel, allowing the PLO to police a 'hostile' population on its behalf, while it continues to hold on to occupied territory for security reasons.

Jones favours a new form of mediation, one rooted in cosmopolitan political theory. In this proposed alternative, the mediating party moves beyond merely bringing disputing parties together and facilitating dialogue. He believes that mediators should instead act to ensure the genuine well-being and justice of all parties concerned: 'enlarging the boundaries of political community, overcoming sectional and factional differences, expanding the domain of moral responsibility which ought to exist between international actors, and promoting relations which conform to certain ideals of international order – in particular, respect for a democratically constituted

international law'.[47] For Jones, the Oslo Accords represent the farthest departure from the ideal that he is advocating. By critiquing the conceptual underpinning of the framework of the Oslo Accords and illustrating the fault-laden environment that they have produced, he hopes to demonstrate the ultimate futility of such approaches and the need for remedies based on his suggestions.

Jones argues that mediation is a potential avenue to pursue new means to a virtuous end. 'In the absence of any clear form of global government, mediations, sanctioned by the norms of an international order, could represent an informal, diplomatic tool capable of pursuing just and workable political settlements to contemporary international conflicts'.[48] In order to outline the broad contours of 'cosmopolitan mediation', Jones fleshes out what he sees as problematic aspects of mediation as it exists in two main subgroups: a power-political/geostrategic paradigm and a facilitative/problem-solving paradigm. When rooted in power politics, mediation is marked by an approach of strategic rationality. Competing parties are brought together to maximise self-interest, irrespective of social or value-oriented norms. Furthermore, the intermediaries in the conflict intervene and mediate because they expect a reward for doing so. Facilitative approaches function in a domain of contextual rationality, in which mediators deal within the realm of symbolic reality and meaning in order to make divergent perceptions understood and thus reconcilable.

Geostrategic mediation is linked intimately with the international activities of the United States in the world order since 1945.

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[47]Ibid., 2.
[48]Ibid., 10.

> Mediation here is not necessarily an impartial attempt at resolving conflict, although it may have a variety of effects – both negative and positive. Primarily geostrategic mediation pursues the perceived interest of a global structure of power.[49]

Bound to the notion that the global arena is wrought with a struggle for domination and power, the geostrategic view of mediation reflects an intellectual construction that deems normative theorising to be irrelevant, of no importance. All normative practice is relative and can only be significant if existing in the context of the world power structure. Associated especially with the neo-realist theory of Kenneth Waltz, such reasoning is at worst, a sort of apologetics for the *status quo*. Deiniol Jones thus believes that geostrategic thinking – including mediation – often lapses into an oversimplified typology of analysis that is not prone to genuinely factual knowledge about the particular conflicts under investigation. Such an instrumental approach to the social world, whose counterparts can be seen in utilitarian philosophy, micro-economic analysis, and game theory, reifies 'the facts of existing international theory'[50], providing too much emphasis on state actors and marginalizing other (non-state) elements who may be central to a conflict.

American mediation in the Middle East was shaped by commitments to Israel as a proxy ally against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Thus, in US led conflict settlement efforts, the initial causes of conflict between Israel, the Palestinians and her other Arab neighbours were abstracted and viewed from the perspective of American national interest: strengthening regional allies at the expense of Soviet client regimes. After the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war and especially following the October 1973 war, US

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[49]Ibid., 34.
[50]Ibid., 43.

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mediation efforts set the broad pattern for the negotiated settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Like Aharon Klieman, Jones sees US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger as a pivotal influence on conflict settlement efforts in the Middle East: 'By elevating Israel to the position of strategic asset, and by removing Egypt from the balance of power in the wider Arab-Israeli conflict, Kissinger's geostrategic foreign policy encouraged those forces in the region that were opposed to national rights for the Palestinian people'.[51] Autonomy, or secondary, non-state solutions to the 'Palestinian question' became the accepted 'norm' in this approach to mediation. Relatively weak regional actors such as the PLO were never perceived to be equal partners in the network of interests who supported American global security perspectives. There was no overriding need to hear their voice or designate a place for them in regional mediation efforts.

Third-party intervention or 'problem-solving mediation' is intended to have a more just and normative orientation than the geostrategic approach. Nonetheless, many unwitting flaws mark this approach as well. In this method, '[f]acilitation rests upon a belief that international politics can be made to resemble the politics of normal democratic states, or the political relations between normal democratic states'.[52] Its guidelines, rooted in social-psychological approaches to conflict resolution – especially the idea of 'needs' fulfilment, provide an illusory panacea with distorting results. Jones argues that this broad style of mediation never quite bridges the gap between its theoretical, or hermeneutic, emancipatory strategies and its practical means of implementation.

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[51]Ibid., 51.
[52]Ibid., 58.

Contextual dynamics to conflict (which are ignored in geostrategic approaches) are central in facilitation and problem-solving forms of mediation. Such methods reflect an understanding that 'conflict exists in the realm of intersubjective meaning and understanding, so conflict resolution must also exist in this realm'.[53] It is thus necessary to promote amiable relations and mutual understanding, so as to create new relationships amenable to conflict resolution. Jones' central cause of concern is in the relatively detached role of the facilitator who is mediating this important process of reformulation of a conflict dynamic. Advocates of this method, such as Michael Banks and Christopher Mitchell, recommend that social scientists make more effective mediators than area or regional specialists. For them, social scientists are more dispassionate and work to encourage dialogue and compromise while area specialists may cause a dialogue to become overly mired in political issues. Jones fears that this *de facto* detachment – avoiding making substantive critiques or moral judgements – will undermine the normative value of the mediation effort. 'Without normative political theory guiding and restructuring an intervention, how can the goal of substantial political reconstructions become a reality?'[54]

The work of the social theorist John Burton lies at the core of problem-solving mediation efforts.

> The belief is that human nature, needs and purposes are somehow thwarted by the international system and that the process of conflict resolution is merely, or mainly, one of adjusting the surface superstructure of the system to ease and facilitate into the system what is, basically an underlying harmony of human purposes and needs. We might call this the 'volcano' model of social change.[55]

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[53]Ibid., 60.
[54]Ibid., 63.
[55]Ibid.

Through dialogue, facilitation acts as an instrument of social engineering, an attempt to bring about an international order that fulfils human needs for security – in both a physical and existential sense.[56] Larger structures or systems can be adjusted or modified to address the underlying needs of elements that constitute their cores. Interaction between the parties is intended to serve as a productive catharsis that will prompt the parties to generate egalitarian solutions amongst themselves. Jones sees several problems with the view that conflict is the expression of a frustrated dynamic of human need. Specifically, the association of needs with innate forces, such as biological drives, can cause expressions of political dissatisfaction to be interpreted as senseless outbursts of violence – irrational 'rioting' – and not as acts with political motivations and end goals. 'The socio-biological view of needs as drives underlying this aspect of facilitation theory is problematic in that it divorces the concept of need and any resulting political action from the concept of normative justification'.[57] Indeed, human actors are not mindless drones bereft of moral agency. Jones notes that '[g]iven a strict identification of needs with drives, facilitation theory becomes just another form of social science oriented toward prediction and control'.[58] In this circumstance, dialogue can be used to change the dynamic of a conflict for strategic reasons. The intensity of a conflict is transformed from a protracted, deep-rooted state to one that has manageable ends, but it does not take place in an environment in which it is possible to 'discharge our moral responsibility to evaluate

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[56]Ibid., 64.
[57]Ibid., 65.
[58]Ibid., 66.

critically claims made by particular parties that a particular state of affairs is a normatively legitimate one'.[59]

Jones sees the problem-solving workshop as an endeavour that attempts, unsuccessfully, to apply ideas developed by the social theorist Jürgen Habermas. Habermas's work in particular is a call for 'communicative politics'. It is not a plea for a mere dialogue, but a theory of justice in which an ideal or open exchange can take place between individuals and peoples free from external constraints or an overriding, determining agenda. 'It is a central component of the concept of 'communicative action' that the claim or claims to 'comprehensibility', 'truth', 'rightfulness', or 'truthfulness' can be validated only on the basis of reason or argumentation'.[60] In this ideal, politics assumes peaceful ideals in a practical, operational form: 'Habermas insists on a number of points: communicative action should be free from deception, self-deception and the exercise of power and domination; all participants should be allowed to express their views, opinions, interests and needs, and any actor who wishes to introduce a political proposal defensible on the basis of universalisation may do so'.[61] In theory, such an operation can find its avenue in the facilitation of the problem-solving workshop since it brings disputing parties into a position in which they engage in discourse. By overcoming the intransigence of parties to recognise each other as interlocutors, an attempt can be made to implement a Habermasean programme. Jones suggests that the ideal will never be able to leapfrog from the narrow environs of the problem-solving workshop to wider society as a whole. This inability is due to inherent structural constraints of the facilitation process, specifically its focus on

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[59]Ibid.
[60]Ibid., 86.
[61]Ibid.

interim solutions, in which the reformulation of conflicting relationships on the basis of dialogue *predates* the final status discussions of disputes. Leaving core issues unresolved creates opportunity spaces for shrewd statecraft to obfuscate conflict resolution efforts that are based on egalitarian ideals:

> It is important to realise that facilitative and critical approaches may move in separate political directions. And that, from the point of view of the latter, there may be no moral distinction between facilitation and practice of power politics.[62]

Failing to negate power asymmetries in facilitation creates a 'false dialogue' that gives a misleading impression that a conflict is being resolved and thus fosters a bogus conception of justice.

Jones seeks to debunk the conceptual underpinnings of the Oslo Accords by offering an alternative model that is embedded in a cosmopolitan theory of international relations. At the heart of this new approach to mediation is a call for contextual specificity, or a comprehensive familiarity with the history of the disputed conflict, and not a preference for a detached, general means of facilitation. Secondly, Jones desires a commitment to a 'democratic public law' at the international level.[63] His proposal entails an innovative legal and political structure that differs from the Westphalian model of state sovereignty that is the dominant norm in the current international system: '[t]he state is only one form of legitimate institution among many, where decision-making power is granted by a pragmatic principle of appropriateness rather than a metaphysical neo-realism'.[64] In other words, Jones sees benefit in modifying international legal boundaries to make them more permeable, to prevent overriding questions of human justice from

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[62]Ibid., 69.
[63]Ibid., 81.
[64]Ibid., 90.

being submerged under the rubric of 'state sovereignty'. He contends that only in such a system can sub-nationals, such as the Palestinians and other 'systemically excluded' peoples, be included in a 'higher level of universality and difference'.[65] In harmony with these goals, Jones advocates forms of mediation that address the intransigence of a stronger party and intervenes actively and forcefully to strengthen weaker parties, to treat them democratically and equitably. Jones does not list an actual mechanism of diffusion to implement this 'moral' reconfiguration of the world order, but by offering forth the a-normative example of conflict resolution embodied in the Oslo accords, he hopes to demonstrate the inefficacy of mediation models that lack cosmopolitan ideals.

The Norwegian facilitation of the Oslo accords followed the core assumptions of facilitation and the problem-solving mediation. The Norwegians saw themselves as suitable agents to promote conflict resolution because of Norway's international status as a small, impartial actor uninvolved in global power politics, and because of its strong links of support for both Israel and the PLO. But the resources of this 'small state' could not account for, or offset, the asymmetry of power that existed between the regional superpower Israel and the relatively weak Palestinians. 'The Norwegian facilitators wre [sic] the right people to deliver the secure environment for negotiations, an environment that would place no international pressure on Israel'.[66] However, Norway's 'detached' facilitating status acted in a way to prevent the PLO from raising validity claims pertaining to Palestinian statehood demands during the entire Oslo process. The Norwegians believed

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[65]Ibid. See 80-90, for a full discussion.
[66]Ibid., 123.

very much in the need to bring about a breakthrough in Israeli-PLO mutual recognition. They endeavoured greatly to build connections between the representatives of the two sides on a human, everyday level, but they did not act to ensure equality of rights for the Palestinians.

The structure of the Oslo agreements left the Israeli military government as the dominant legal force in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, with the Palestinian autonomy regime assenting its subservience to Israel's authority. Jones states bluntly, 'it is hard to see the Oslo Accords as anything but abject Palestinian surrender to the core demand of Israeli nationalism – security in an expanded state'.[67] While it can be argued that it was not possible to move directly from the state of affairs in the occupied territories that existed in 1993 directly to a final settlement creating a Palestinian state, the Oslo Accords nonetheless created an interim period which was too ill-defined, and rife with flaws. The interim status of Oslo allowed Israel to maximise its self-interest at the expense of the Palestinians, to implement what Jones describes as a 'neo-colonial arrangement':

> Historically, Palestinians are neither citizens of Israel, nor citizens of an independent Palestine. To institutionalise this state of affairs, Israel needed to sign an agreement with the PLO, but the agreement and the process of agreement had to exist in a space between the international and the domestic. Israel could not sign an international agreement, as this would grant an implied recognition of Palestinian claims to statehood. At the same time, Israel could not deal with the Palestinians as if they were citizens of Israel. This strategy confronts what is called, in Israeli political discourse, the demographic problem [i.e. Arabs would come to outnumber Jews in the 'Jewish state']. The small-state facilitative mediation offered the perfect solution to this dilemma. The Oslo process and the Accords are not part of Israeli domestic politics. But...neither are they part of a full-blooded international politics. The Oslo Accords and process offered the appearance of international politics, without creating any international politics.[68]

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[67]Ibid., 138.
[68]Ibid., 143.

Reflecting on the net effect of Oslo, Jones concludes that effective mediation should neither be left to the power-political role of the United States, whose arbitrary, strategic interests — and not normative obligations — shape its involvement in such efforts, but neither to small states like Norway that lack the power to *reshape* the dynamics of a conflict in a democratic way. He sees an ideal mediation likely to come to fruition in the form a coalition of states (or an international organisation representing a coalition of states) that is guided by a normative ideological — cosmopolitan — commitment. (Jones specifically proposes that the involvement of the European Union in the Middle East peace process be considered.) Only such a framework can ensure that interim status agreements move toward egalitarian resolution of conflicts and not be used by intransigent parties to backtrack on, or undermine, peace commitments that have previously been made.

Deiniol Jones's investigation of the Oslo accords is a sophisticated appraisal of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. His critique of the Norwegian facilitation and mediation at Oslo offers a convincing account of why the international community and the sponsors of the Middle East peace process allowed such a flaw-laden peace process to take hold. He identifies how the Norwegian mediation gave Israel the initial means to impose its strategic goals onto an acquiescent PLO. But by emphasising that it was the flawed mediation process which generated the Israeli strategic endeavour lying at the heart of the Accords, and by overlooking how this power dynamic could have begun to develop independently beforehand — and also how it might have assumed tangible substance only later in Oslo, Jones stops short of

compellingly explaining Israel's end goals with regard to its recognition of the PLO.

Jones's claim that Israel undertook a 'naked strategic action' by recognising the PLO is an important insight, but his account of precisely why and to what end this situation came about is not entirely convincing. He rightly understands that the Israeli recognition of the PLO was a departure from past behaviour. Although his insights are more developed than Andrew Buchanan or Aharon Klieman, Jones too does not grasp the full scope of this reversal of past behaviour. He mentions that the Israelis were interested in the Accords because they wished to vacate Palestinian cities in the Gaza strip and because the bankrupt, weakened PLO posed no threat to them. But as Buchanan discussed, Israel's desire to solve the 'Palestinian question' on its own terms was but one component, a bridgehead of a much larger agenda to consolidate regional power and reach peace treaties with neighbouring Arab states (pp. 17-19). The inconvenience caused by the occupation of the Gaza strip was an important factor, but not the only strategic consideration, for the Israeli decision to recognise the PLO in 1993. But since Jones does not address the entirety of intentions of the Rabin government, it is plausible that he fails to construe the sum of Israeli objectives in the Oslo Accords. For example, Jones describes Oslo as a 'neo-colonial arrangement'. It is true that the Palestinian autonomy initiated in the Accords does bear some structural resemblances to what is understood as neo-colonialism, but in a political sense it does not fit such a characterisation. For such a classification to hold, there would have had to be nominal Palestinian independence and Israel, the occupying or 'colonial' power, would have had to completely withdrawn its armed forces from, and

evacuated its settlements located in, the West Bank and Gaza strip. By not qualifying what he means by neo-colonialism, Jones's explanation of Israeli end goals becomes at best over-generalised and at worst conceptually inaccurate and askance. Since he seeks to discern the ultimate aim of Oslo primarily from the mediation process and at the expense of other phenomena, Jones may have been unable to infer the equal possibility that the mediation at Oslo may have only been the avenue, *and not the prime cause*, of a more complex end goal on the part of Israel. Instead of extrapolating the primary dynamic of Oslo solely from the flawed mediation effort, it may prove more fruitful to locate it beforehand, to examine how deeply entrenched, non-normative beliefs could have specifically motivated the Israeli leadership to inaugurate the Accords in 1993.

Reliving Myths Through Oslo

The historian Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin explains the Oslo Accords through an understanding of Israeli national consciousness. Raz-Krakotzkin is influenced heavily by discussions of colonialism by the literature Professor Edward Said, the work of the cultural critic Walter Benjamin, as well as of the 'critical historians' Michel Foucault and Hayden White.[69] He does not accept the positivist premise that the past is fixed or shut and so is susceptible to an objective representation. He seeks instead to discover how images of the national past remain anchored in the present (especially through discursive processes), how these images continue to shape a state's current actions.[70] In addition, he sees the role of the historian to recover and restore the voices of

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[69]Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, 'Exile in the Midst of Sovereignty: A Critique of 'Negation of the Diaspora' in Israeli Culture' (Hebrew) *Theory and Criticism* 4 (Autumn) 1993: 49. For a similar, but less cogent effort, see Gabriel Piterberg, 'Erasures' *New Left Review* July-August 2001: 31-46.

[70]Ibid.

oppressed minorities, and because he writes about Israel, he seeks to bring what he sees as the denied perspective of the Palestinians into a discussion of current political realities. He calls for critique of the discourse and of the related forms of Israeli political culture that allow Israelis to systematically deny and forget events of the past, such as how the history of modern Jewish settlement in Palestine and the establishment of the state of Israel relates to the dispossession of the Palestinians.

Raz-Krakotzkin examines traditional Israeli historiography as the basis of a critique of Israeli management strategies vis-à-vis the Palestinians. For him, the core concepts of this critique has its roots in the historical circumstances surrounding the emergence of European Jewish settlement in Palestine in the late nineteenth century, and the reformulation of Jewish identity in a form of territorial nationalism, as 'new Hebrews'.[71] In the discourse that was formulated in tandem with these events, the existential status of the world's Jews was seen as an 'exile' to be ended through a return to their historical homeland in Palestine. As a result of this shaping perspective, the conflict between the indigenous population and the Jewish settlers became situated within a teleological reading of Jewish history. Since Israeli historical discourse framed the Jewish return to the land and the conflict that it precipitated with the Palestinians only in terms of European Jewish history, it de-contexualised the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from its Middle

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[71]This belief argued that the Jews had originally been a secular national people. It maintained that Jewish identity had formerly been independent from religious discourse, and the Jewish religion had evolved to preserve a *national* culture that was threatened with loss when the Romans exiled the Jews from Palestine in 35 CE. Since Palestine was the place where the Jews had emerged as a secular national people, it was argued that the country continued to be the focal point of Jewish identity. As such, religious themes within Judaism were innovatively explained as constituting a 1) trans-historical, 2) inalienable, and 3) exclusive national claim to Palestine. By this logic of this thought, it was then natural for Jews to want to immigrate, or 'return', to Palestine.

Eastern setting. This notion of 'exile and return' thus fails to consider the role

of Jewish settlement as a major hastening role in the conflict and has the added

effect of excluding Palestinians from Israeli public discourse.[72]

The Israeli notion of 'the return of the nation to the homeland' (*shivat*

ha'am):

> prevented relating to the collective yearnings of the local Arab
> population and its perspective. It [also] undoubtedly made it
> impossible to turn the fact of this collective's existence into an
> essential foundation for establishing a new Jewish identity. The
> historical conception of the 'negation of the diaspora', the emptiness of
> Jewish time that separates the loss of the sovereignty over the land and
> its renewed settlement, is completed in a direct way through the image
> of the land–the place for the realization and resolution of history–as an
> "empty land."[73]

The idea of 'empty land' acts to erase the Palestinian perspective from Israeli

interpretations of history. The Palestinians' opposition to Jewish settlement,

their dispossession and subsequent refugee problem are not seriously engaged

in mainstream, Israeli historical narratives. This is a point that must be

underscored. For Raz-Krakotzkin, the discourse of the 'negation of the

diaspora' (*shelilat ha'galut*) and 'the return of the nation to the homeland'

continues to define the consciousness of Israeli Jews, determining their

conception of history, their collective memory, and the collective identity that

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[72]The Jewish settlers who began to arrive in late 19th century and would lay the foundations of the Israeli state maintained that Palestine was the homeland of the Jews alone. They regarded the native Palestinians as mere inhabitants, people whose collective identity was not shaped by national attachment to the territory on which they lived, but only by a connection to the Arab nation of which they belonged. As such, Jewish settlement was marked by a desire for separation from, rather than integration with, the indigenous Palestinian population. Moreover, settlement came to be guided by a security doctrine that utilised armed force to safeguard exclusively Jewish, separate communities. The fearful response and resistance of the local Palestinians toward the settlers – as foreigners who threatened local life and culture – was not addressed in a holistic way. For the most part, the Jewish settlers were not willing to come to terms with the native Palestinians with the understanding that both peoples had an equal right to the same land. Security focused on protecting against or minimising violent responses to settlement and was not concerned with gauging and transforming the underlying causes of this opposition in an accommodating manner.

[73]Raz-Krakotzkin 1993, 44, English translation cited from Laurence J. Silberstein, *The Postzionism Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture* (London: Routledge 1999): 179-180. This theme will be revisited in the Conclusion.

finds its source within them.[74] It is the prime matrix that forms the cultural and political boundaries of Israeli political consensus. By focusing the history of the 'land' around a notion of 'Jewish time', the discourse 'naturally' denies the existence of the Palestinian 'Other'. It does not centre on all the people who have dwelled in Palestine throughout history, but only on the area's association with Jews. The Israeli concept of Jewish identity is not based on recognition of the bi-nationality of the land. By extension, an Israeli conception of peace will be less apt for territorial compromise rooted in an acceptance of bi-national claims and will seek instead to consolidate the predominance of the Jewish association with the land.

Raz-Krakotzkin sees the 1993 Israeli decision to recognise the PLO as a new means to achieve its traditional ends.[75] He believes that the Israeli national myth of 'a new Jewish community in an empty land' remains at the core of the Oslo agreement. The Accords do not at all reflect a change in how Israel perceived its interaction, or conflict, with the Palestinians. Although Israel's shift in attitude toward the PLO was unexpected, it was neither a true compromise nor the result of a decision to recognise the Palestinians as equals, but merely a new method to safeguard Israel's strategic interests. The Israeli Prime Minister who signed the Accords, Yitzhak Rabin, saw in Oslo the path to achieve a particular settlement that he had long believed in, one first articulated by the Israeli defence strategist Yigal Allon shortly after the June 1967 war. In the plan, large portions of the occupied territories would be annexed to Israel while the remaining areas would become autonomous

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[74]Raz-Krakotzkin 1993, 23.

[75]Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, 'A Peace Without Arabs: The Discourse of Peace and the Limits of Israeli Consciousness' in George Giacaman and Dag Jørund Lønning ed., *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems* (London: Pluto Press, 1998): 59-76.

Palestinian enclaves, with an administrative link to Jordan. The Oslo Accords merely substituted the PLO for the policing role originally designed for Jordan.

The vision of peace in the Israeli national consciousness is a peace without Arabs. The Oslo initiative was an extension of this defining feature of Israeli national consciousness:

> The enthusiasm with which the peace process was received by liberal circles in Israel was not because of a belief that it signified a compromise between Israel and the Palestinians, but rather because it seemed to signify an opportunity to get rid of them and consequently to recreate the concept of 'vacant land'.[76]

The Oslo Accords allowed Israelis to return to their self-image that had prevailed until the June 1967 war and, to a certain extent, up to the Palestinian uprising that began in 1987. The brutality that Israel had employed to quell the uprising had undermined Israelis' original notions of themselves, both as brave pioneers who had revived a culture and built up a new country, and as victims of the animus of the Arab world. The uprising forced Israelis to alter their 'habitual disregard' for the Palestinians and to consider the direct link between their nationalist practices and the issue of Palestinian rights. But through the Oslo Accords, Israelis could return to their vision of innocence. 'Peace was considered the end of a long nightmare, not for the Palestinians but for Israeli Jews'.[77] The Oslo peace process brought about an end to the occupation, and although many Israelis believed genuinely that the agreement would be of benefit to the Palestinians, it was favoured precisely because it allowed them to skirt fundamental issues surrounding the Palestinian question.

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[76]Ibid., 62.
[77]Ibid., 65.

For Raz-Krakotzkin, the accords are a kind of management strategy *par excellence*. The vision of Palestinian autonomy that shaped the design of the Accords is rooted in a mutual, but *unequal* recognition between Israelis and Palestinians. 'The growing increase in support of a Palestinian state was thus not the consequence of the realisation of the Palestinian right to self-determination, but of the will to ignore Palestinian existence'.[78] The fundamental principle guiding the Israeli support for the Accords was the concept of separation. It was not a separation in the sense of disengagement as preparation for Palestinian independence. It was a separation to free Israel from policing Palestinian population centres, but that allowed it to maintain its settlements in the West Bank and Gaza strip, to consolidate its occupation in a different way.

Israeli strategic goals are achieved in the peace process through rhetoric of peace and by the interim status nature of the accords. Raz-Krakotzkin maintains that Israeli political approaches to the Palestinian question differ only in semantics: two similar versions of non-sovereign autonomy exist, but one approach refers misleadingly to its design as 'statehood':

> [T]he acceptance of the concept of a Palestinian state involved, for Israeli society, removing from that concept any notion of Palestinian national rights. The idea of a state, which once expressed the desire for emancipation, became a repressive concept, which would now serve to fulfil Israeli political goals. The idea of a state became the end result of separation. The word 'state' in Israeli discourse has become a euphemism for the kind of autonomy whose function is to separate the Palestinians from the Jews. The only real disagreement is on the degree of autonomy to be given to the Palestinians.[79]

In Raz-Krakotzkin's view, the strategic enterprise within Oslo is consolidated by the interim status of the Accords. Instead of concentrating on the

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[78]Ibid.
[79]Ibid., 66.

fundamental issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Oslo Accords concentrate on developing a subservient autonomy regime. The interim status arrangement nature serves to freeze Israel's post 1967 *status quo*, its occupation and settlements – to establish them as defining norms. The PLO assented to this position in 1993 because of a strategic gamble; it believed that by creating a new relationship with Israel, it could win later concessions and assure the complete dismantlement of the Israeli occupation. Raz-Krakotzkin intimates that such a possibility would be unlikely as the reason the Accords were acceptable to Israel in the first place was precisely because they did not gauge final status issues such as the status of Jerusalem, the right of return or compensation for Palestinian refugees, and the future of Jewish settlements. Indeed, the Accords are based entirely on the Israeli view of history and essentially oblige the Palestinians to abandon their former positions! For Raz-Krakotzkin, the underlying goal of the interim status of the Accords was to allow Israel to entrench its hegemony in the West Bank and Gaza strip, and not to create a prelude to a genuinely sovereign Palestinian independence.

Raz-Krakotzkin's argument that the Oslo Accords serve as a kind of bizarre re-manifestation of past Israeli nationalist beliefs is an extremely valuable insight. It delves into the nature of the Israeli strategic endeavour that took hold at Oslo, conveying a phenomenon that has significant correlates *at a deeper level* and that cannot be wholly understood as a rational design of cunning statesmen. Unfortunately, Raz-Krakotzkin does not fully explore the consequences and implications of this understanding. Since he is primarily concerned with identifying how the Israeli government continues to deny the validity of Palestinian historical perspectives within current political realities,

his analysis tends to focus only on generalities and, as a result, leaves many crucial issues undeveloped and unexplained. In this sense, Raz-Krakotzkin echoes Deiniol Jones and the Palestinian critics recounted by Buchanan, merely stressing that the interim nature of the Accords will allow Israel to entrench its hegemony in the West Bank and Gaza strip. He only roughly develops what the Israeli end-goals of Oslo were supposed to be and does not at all describe what might have been the operative logic that was used to achieve this objective. Although he asserts that there was a deep element underlying the Israeli decision-making process at Oslo, one which had strong continuities with past ideas despite a surface transformation of its identifiable attributes, Raz-Krakotzkin does not attempt to uncover if there were equally profound linkages between the transmuted Israeli notion of 'empty land' and the interim nature of the Accords by which the non-normative end-goal of Oslo was supposed to take hold.

Further Questions

It is problematic to maintain that Israeli attitudes and management strategies toward the Palestinians were being reinvented in a manner that did not follow logically from previously held patterns – yet were somehow preserving their defining essence, and, that the means of this complex process, although undefined, can loosely be construed as having occurred through the interim structure of the Accords. It is therefore necessary to provide a supplementary theoretical account that can better explicate the principles of this unusual transformation. Such an account should not only resonate with Raz-Krakotzkin's preference for critical history but also allow for a more

precise reconstruction of the intentions and the practical assumptions of the

Rabin government during this period of time.

Chapter Two
A Changing Economy of Power

This chapter addresses how a seemingly incontrovertible reversal of past behaviour can in actuality not be the case. In this regard, it presents ideas of theorists who described new techniques of ordering and philosophies of governance that were largely visible by the early 1990s (the period coinciding with the emergence of the Oslo Accords). It provides the theoretical framework of the study, the conceptual basis for the argument that the 1993 Rabin government structured the Oslo Accords in order to co-opt the PLO as a proxy, autonomous authority that would permanently remain under Israeli overlordship.

New Forms of Order

In 1990 the philosopher Gilles Deleuze described a newly emerging system of order, one marked by the 'breakdown' of past institutions and dominant influences. He asserted, 'We're in the midst of a general breakdown of all sites of confinement – prisons, hospitals, factories, schools, the family'.[1] Deleuze did not mean to convey that this 'breakdown' was an abandonment of the social functions that these institutions had formerly embodied. He was certain that their social functions would be preserved, but he also believed that they were assuming new forms. Deleuze saw the 'breakdown' as evidence that a transformation process was taking place – that forms of order were becoming fundamentally altered. Deleuze could not pinpoint what the end result of all

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[1]See 'Postscript on Control Societies' in Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972-1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995): 178.

these transformations would be, but he did see in them 'the widespread progressive introduction of a new system of domination'.[2]

Deleuze entitled his discussion of the new form of domination, 'Postscript on Control Societies'. The postscript, the afterthought or additional matter that Deleuze is referring to, is the work of the 'historian of ideas' Michel Foucault:

> A thinker such as Michel Foucault has analyzed two types of societies that are rather close to us. He calls the former sovereign and the latter disciplinary societies. He locates the typical passage of a sovereign society to a disciplinary society with Napoleon. Disciplinary society is defined–and here Foucault's analysis is rightly famous– by the accumulation of structures of confinement: prisons, schools, workshops, hospitals. Disciplinary societies require this. This analysis engendered ambiguities in certain of Foucault's readers because it was believed that this was his last thought. This was certainly not the case. Foucault never believed and indeed said very precisely that disciplinary societies were not eternal. Moreover, he clearly thought we were entering a new type of society.[3]

The disciplinary society is not characterised solely by structures of confinement; it is a kind of philosophy of rule. ' 'Discipline' may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a 'physics' or an 'anatomy' of power, a technology'.[4] This type of power occurred over time as part of a changing economy, or management, of power by ruling groups. It was shaped by the kinds of ordering of its predecessor, the sovereign society, feudal type

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[2]Ibid., 182.

[3]Gilles Deleuze, 'Having an Idea in Cinema (On the Cinema of Straub-Huillet)' in Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller ed., *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998): 17.

[4]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. Alan Sheridan. (New York: Vintage Books, 1977): 215.

states that existed in Europe from the Middle Ages to the sixteenth century. In the sovereign type of power, the monarch and nobility exercised absolute forms of rule. Indeed, the public displays of torture and gruesome forms of execution that were carried out on transgressors of the law during this period served as a pedagogical spectacle to demonstrate the absolute power over life that the sovereign exercised. This exercise of authority was seen by Foucault as a kind of social coding to instil that the sovereign occupied a position of externality and transcendence with respect to his subjects.[5] The ability to torture demonstrated publicly that the king *was* the state, its ultimate embodiment, and that his overarching rule was direct and immediate. Over time, these types of authority and forms of punishment diminished.

Foucault argues that the diminishment of sovereign forms of power was not due to the enlightened nature of later rulers or revolutions. Rather, these rulers sought more efficient ways of ordering, of social control. For example, the public spectacle of torture frequently created a grey area, or potential space to defy the will of the sovereign, because criminals who displayed defiance in the face of torture served as roundabout symbols of resistance to onlookers and the population at large. Later rulers instituted punishment reform, including the present norms of isolation and imprisonment, precisely to better order populations as a whole, to prevent the kind of symbolic empowerment that emerged in past, public displays of torture from undermining the authority of the state. This 'changing economy of power' was an indirect occurrence, not

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[5]Michel Foucault, 'Governmentality' in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller ed., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991): 91.

planned *per se*, and came about around the time that populations under state jurisdiction grew and required greater intervention for their management and control.

The philosophy of government changed simply because past notions of rule were ineffective and inefficient. In the eighteenth century, there was a massive increase in population in Western Europe:

> All of a sudden schools and hospitals, to take two of Foucault's examples, were flooded with unprecedented numbers of people seeking education and health care and there were no established procedures for handling them. At the same time, some of the newer creations of the period, such as the modern army and the factories, required the efficient management of large numbers of soldiers and workers. New economies of scale and quite different uses for the human body created the condition in which a new type of power could come into being.[6]

Foucault introduced a term, 'governmentality', to describe the changing nature of the administrative state that emerged alongside the disciplinary society. Governmentality is linked with, and reinforces, disciplinary-type power. The term relates to the management of populations, where power is devolved to administrators through corporate mechanisms. The administrators manage the population at large to ensure the welfare of the state. With the move away from the total power of the sovereign, an art of government began to emerge. The view of the sovereign, exemplified in Nicolo Machiavelli's *The Prince*, saw the state as an object; the territory and the subjects within it belonged simply to the sovereign. But the art of government was not about establishing distance, as in the old relationship between the sovereign and his subjects, but about establishing direct and immediate linkages between rulers and ruled.

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[6]John S. Ransom, *Foucault's Discipline: The Politics of Subjectivity* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1997): 41.

'Thus we find at once a plurality of forms of government and their immanence to the state: the multiplicity and immanence of these activities distinguishes them radically from the transcendent singularity of Machiavelli's Prince'.[7] Government is marked by active involvement. 'The art of government...is essentially concerned with answering the question of how to introduce economy – that is to say, the correct manner of managing individuals, goods and wealth within the family (which a good father is expected to do in relation to his wife, children, and servants) and of making the family fortunes prosper – how to introduce this meticulous attention of the father towards his family into the management of the state'.[8]

Government is not only about the imposition of laws, but involves the use of tactics to achieve a certain number of ends. Taken as a simple collective mass, the 'people' were unpredictable and dangerous, but with the development of statistics and demography, it became possible to view rising populations as a singular object, in a quantified and abstract way. 'The population now represents more the end of government than the power of the sovereign; the population is the subject of needs, of aspirations, but it is also the object in the hands of the government, aware, *vis-à-vis* the government, of what it wants, but ignorant of what is being done to it'.[9] In a sense, the new art of governance has not eclipsed the old sovereignty, but has instead perfected it, filling in the grey areas within the sovereign's raw power with its sophisticated

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[7]Foucault, 'Governmentality', 91.
[8]Ibid., 92.
[9]Ibid., 100.

techniques of managing populations.[10] For Foucault, the term 'governmentality' encapsulates the evolution and spread of this understanding of government as population management, as well as its traits and characteristics, both within apparatuses and forms of knowledge. It is important to note that that he sees the state as a 'composite reality and mythicized abstraction'.[11] It is governmentality that defines the state and not *vice versa*. It is the tactics, the operational component that defines a certain philosophy of governance over the population within the territory of a state, that is more important than the existence of the state itself.

Foucault noted governmentality had corollaries or 'disciplines', tactics that operated in parallel fashion in different areas of society. Disciplines describe the programmes of action that were used for population management: 'Generally speaking, it might be said that the disciplines are techniques for assuring the ordering of human multiplicities'.[12] The techniques of discipline were initially ideas that emerged from numerous thinkers, administrators, and practitioners in various fields that were designed to manage the 'problems and opportunities associated with a demographic, industrial, and military environment in a state of flux'.[13] For example, many of the originators of disciplines saw societal benefit if the newly organised population was integrated into 'a complex production apparatus as part of the industrial revolution'.[14] Foucault does *not* suggest that the emergence of disciplines was

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[10]Ibid, 102.

[11]Ibid., 103.

[12]Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 219.

[13]Ransom, 41.

[14]Ibid., 39.

part of a capitalist 'master plan'. He only implies that as population management techniques proliferated and as people were increasingly placed into environments of supervision, the process of capitalist production was aided: 'the techniques that made the cumulative multiplicity of men useful accelerated the accumulation of capital'.[15] Training people to be labourers (and the material means of production in general) were utilised as part of a greater strategy of organisation and management in the disciplinary society as a whole. Indeed, Foucault does not consider all forms of discipline bad. Disciplines provide necessary order in growing societies and do not shape individuals into mindless drones. Foucault does suggest, however, that disciplines came over time to proliferate in excess, developing into a kind of informal hyper-management of daily life that can be viewed as limiting and objectionable.

Disciplines can be understood as influential cognitive templates that mould individuals to serve the needs of power. In a figurative sense, disciplines 'produce' individuals, training them without the use of violence. (It is by no means a complete or finalised production; both disciplines and the individuals they shape vary in dimension.) But, it is important to understand that the individual identities 'shaped' by disciplines do not emerge in neutral or power-free environments. 'By organising masses of individuals in particular ways, new truths emerge: truths that were not there before that disposition of forces'.[16] Disciplines determine the social constructions of a society. As the corollaries of governmentality, disciplines establish what is 'natural' and

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[15]Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 221.
[16]Ransom, 50.

measure individuals to see if they fit these criteria, if they are 'normal'. 'The development of the disciplines marks the appearance of elementary techniques belonging to a quite different economy: mechanisms of power which instead of proceeding by deduction, are integrated into the productive efficiency of apparatuses from within, into the growth of this efficiency and into the use of what it produces'.[17]

Michel Foucault saw the metaphorical mark of disciplinary power as best exemplified in the panopticon, a prison designed by the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham. The prison design allowed observation and surveillance techniques to replace pure force in the management of the prison population. A prisoner 'watched' himself and was normalised to the rules of imprisonment; he would became socialised to rules of order and would thus be prepared to 'rejoin' society at large. Bentham had believed that the self-regulating principles that were imbued by the architectural design of the panopticon could be pertinent for many other institutions of society, such as schools, the work place, etc. Foucault saw this applicability of panopticon principles to the broader social world as a new strategy of governance, a general model in which 'obedient subjects'[18] were shaped in enclosures such as prisons, schools and universities, the military, the factory, asylums and hospitals.

For Foucault, prisons have both a practical as well as a symbolic-representative function. (He 'is not attempting to show that all society is a

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[17]Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 219.
[18]Ibid., 129.

prison...thoroughly penetrated by bureaucratic surveillance'.[19]) As part of a changing economy of power, imprisonment was used to replace the potentially destabilising spectacle of public execution as a common punishment for crimes. But prisons also reflect a new type of power relations, that a calculated management of daily life could best be undertaken in institutional forms. In other words, disciplines came to determine societal norms within *sites of confinement*. It must be noted, however, that these institutions or sites of confinement are *not* the locus of a centralised power structure. They are only the terminal forms, the most visible manifestations of an understanding of 'power' that has no centre and functions instead as a kind of strategic ordering of life itself: 'power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society'.[20] Foucault means to draw attention away from a conventional notion that conceives of power as being centred solely within government or political organisation: 'The panoptic modality of power – at the elementary, technical, merely physical level at which it is sustained – is not under the immediate dependence or a direct extension of the great juridico-political structures of society; it is nonetheless not absolutely independent'.[21] For Foucault, power operates as a deployment, 'a mechanism or apparatus which has both material and immaterial elements

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[19]Ransom, 45.

[20]Michael Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality Volume 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1976): 93.

[21]Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 221-2.

working in concert'.[22] This is not to say that the sovereignty of the state and the form of law are not important. The institutional crystallisation of force relations of power is embodied in the state apparatus and its laws, but this is only one link in a chain of power that is 'everywhere', or has a directly productive role in everyday life.[23] (Foucault uses the term 'bio-power' to encapsulate this notion of a strategic ordering of life.[24])

Foucault's discussion of the disciplinary society and governmentality provides a perspective of how to view the nation-state, and its corollary, statecraft, the art of conducting state affairs or state management. The immediate decision-making capabilities of the leadership of a state are important areas of analysis, but provide an incomplete tool to assess the entire power dynamic at play within political relationships. It is also necessary to gauge the immaterial elements of power, its embodiment in 'disciplines' and forms of knowledge. This means that past ideas and guiding beliefs that shaped governmentality or population management practices, and that were once deployed as discipline-type ordering techniques, cannot be discounted as active influential phenomena in an analysis of the state. However, such an understanding can be fruitful only by positing, as Foucault did, that ordering is not a static phenomenon, that a changing economy of power should be accounted for in ongoing political relationships. It is in this light that it is

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[22]Michael Hardt, *The Art of Organization: Foundations of Political Ontology in Gilles Deleuze and Antonio Negri* PhD Thesis, (Seattle: University of Washington, 1991): 217.

[23]See Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality Volume 1*, 92-102, for a comprehensive discussion.

[24]Ibid., 140-1, 143-4.

necessary to return to Gilles Deleuze's discussion, 'Postscript on Control Societies'.

Control Societies: Breakdown and Transformation

Deleuze believed that ordering should no longer be emblematised with disciplinary-type structures of confinement in highly advanced or developed states. Building on the observations of the political theorist Paul Virilio, Deleuze saw ultra-rapid forms of technology, and the cybernetic principles underlying them – immediate, instantaneous control, as the shape of new forms of social order.[25] Technology, the practice of any or all of the applied sciences that have practical value, represents a way of acting into the world. It is not only the widespread application of advanced technology that marks the transformation, or 'breakdown' of past forms of disciplinary sites of confinement. The onset of a new system of ordering is also characterised by the application of cybernetic principles that figure within advanced technology to forms of governmentality or population management.

Deleuze speculated about the logic and programme of this new system of order, which he called a 'control society' (la société de contrôle). Deleuze called this type of power 'control', based on the fiction of the writer William S. Burroughs. In his work, Burroughs discusses nightmarish scenarios of social

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[25]Cybernetics is the science of communication and control theory that is concerned with organisation, communication and control in complex systems. It studies organisation by focusing on circular mechanisms that allow complex systems to maintain, adapt and self-organise. Self-organisation is a process where the organisation of a system increases spontaneously, without this increase being controlled by the environment or an encompassing or otherwise external system.

ordering, where forms of control are elusive and always changing.[26] Deleuze's deliberate use of the term 'control societies' is meant to have a negative connotation. Read within the historical classifications established by Michel Foucault, it implies that a form of *servitude* with some conceptual parallels to the role of subjects within the old sovereign societies characterises the new condition of rule. Hence the use of the name 'control'. It is not a control similar in methods to the authority that was used to dominate the peasants and serfs of the past, but a form of power that is analogous by its absolute nature.

'Control' is not a marked departure from disciplinary-type power. Like the deep historical link that disciplines had to their sovereign predecessor, control is part of a changing economy of power rooted in the past. Deleuze sees the identifiable move toward the control society in the 'breakdown' of the old institutions of the disciplinary society, a gradual process that began to pick up momentum after the Second World War.[27] Since the passage to control societies is a gradual one, disciplinary deployments or even traits of sovereignty do not disappear altogether. Elements common to the preceding systems continue to function, alongside emerging, more complex forms of order *that transform and enhance them.*

'Control' represents a kind of perfection of the techniques of ordering that were seen in disciplines:

> The various placements or sites of confinement through which individuals pass are independent variables: we're supposed to start all over again each time, and although these sites have a common

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[26]For a discussion of the works of William Burroughs, see Timothy S. Murphy, *Wising Up the Marks: The Amodern William Burroughs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[27]Deleuze, 'Postscript on Control Societies', 178-9.

language, it's *analogical*. The various forms of control, on the other hand, are inseparable variations, forming a system of varying geometry whose language is *digital* (though not necessarily binary). Confinements are *molds*, different moldings, while controls are a *modulation*, like a self-transmuting molding continually changing from one moment to the next, or like a sieve whose mesh varies from one point to another.[28]

The terms analogical and digital logic can be understood by their usage in the technology of clocks. A mechanical clock functions analogically. The rotation of its hands is a physically measurable quantity of duration that precisely relates to the movement of its inner gears. However, a digital clock operates on the basis of discrete elements; the surface display of time does not correspond to its inner structure in a direct or straightforward way. The same kind of movement away from fixity toward fluid forms of organisation can be seen in Deleuze's other examples. A mould is set pattern by which something is shaped. On the other hand, a modulation is not really bounded and can be seen in music, for example, in the act of attuning (voice, sounds, etc.) to a certain pitch or key. A modulation adjusts or adapts to many different patterns or forms. The mould of discipline was a specific, singular conception of population ensconced in governmentality that homogenised the individual. But the modulations of control accommodate heterogeneity, reformulating populations as both singular *and* multiple:

> We're no longer dealing with a duality of mass and individual. Individuals become "*dividuals*," and masses become samples, data, markets or "*banks*."[29]

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[28]Ibid., 178-9.

[29]Ibid., 180. The notion of the 'singular-multiple' reflects Deleuze's understanding of ontology. A discussion in this regard is far beyond the scope of this investigation. For a full account, see both Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale, edited by Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990) and Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995). Excellent analyses of the themes developed in these two works are found in James

This newfound acceptance of dissimilar or diverse elements is best seen in a 'digital' sense, as a 'display' that does not directly reflect or find immediate cognates in its structure of ordering.

The 'control society' is characterised by a flexible normalcy. Its perfected forms of ordering are well illustrated in Deleuze's note of the usage of electronic tagging devices as alternatives to imprisonment.[30] It is possible to be a 'prisoner' and yet live at home and go to the workplace. "Normal' is now free-standing, no longer the opposite and necessary complement of 'abnormal', 'deviant', or 'dysfunctional' as it was under disciplinary power, except in limited cases'.[31] Deleuze also sees this aspect of 'multiple-

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Brusseau, *Isolated Experiences: Gilles Deleuze and the Solitudes of Reversed Platonism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998) and Dorothea Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation* (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1999). There are differing interpretations of these ideas, perhaps best exemplified in Alain Badiou, *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being*, trans. Louise Burchill (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999). For a specific counter to this alternative perspective, see Nathan Widder, 'The rights of simulacra: Deleuze and the univocity of being' *Continental Philosophy Review* 34: 437-453, 2001.

[30]Deleuze, 'Postscript on Control Societies', 182. The electronic tagging device has several components: a transmitter, that is worn on a strap around the ankle; a receiver, that is attached to the telephone in the home of the criminal offender; and an automated monitoring system run by a computer. The ankle transmitter emits a constant signal to the receiver on the telephone. At various times during the day, the monitoring system dials the telephone of the person tagged (who does not hear a ring) to monitor if a signal is being sent to the transmitter – that is, to ensure that the person is in the house. The computer is programmed to know when the offender is scheduled to be at work or some other location outside the house. Offenders give their schedules to probation officers, who enter the information into the monitoring system. If no signal is being received when the system dials the offender's house, the system notes first if a person is permitted to be outside his home. In addition, probation officers can use a portable version of the home receiver to keep track of offenders when they are outside the house. For example, using the portable receiver, a probation officer can park outside an offender's workplace and receive a signal to certify if he has indeed gone to work. If an offender is supposed to be at home and the system gets no signal at the home phone, an alert is sent to probation officers, who begin a search. If an offender cuts the strap that holds the transmitter to the ankle, an alert is sent out immediately. See Roger Knights, 'Electronic tagging in practice', at Internet site http://www.globalideasbank.org/BI/BI-88.html.

[31]Brian Massumi, 'Requiem for Our Prospective Dead (Toward a Participatory Critique of Capitalist Power)', in Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller ed., *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998): 57.

singularity' as a new trend in capitalism, within a *changing* production

process:

> [N]ineteenth century capitalism was concentrative, directed toward production, and proprietorial. Thus it made the factory into a site of confinement, with the capitalist owning the means of production and perhaps owning similarly organized sites (worker's homes, schools). As for markets, they were won either through specialization, through colonization, or through reducing the costs of production. But capitalism in its present form is no longer directed toward production, which is often transferred to remote parts of the Third World, even in the case of complex operations like textile plants, steelworks, and oil refineries. It's directed toward *metaproduction*. It no longer buys raw materials and no longer sells finished products: it buys finished products or assembles them from parts. What it seeks to sell is services, and what it seeks to buy, activities. It's a capitalism no longer directed toward production but toward products, that is toward sales and markets. Thus it's essentially dispersive, with factories giving way to businesses.[32]

'Metaproduction' suggests that the circulation and exchange of products has

become more important than their production. Capital, once encapsulated in

the disciplinary site of the factory, no longer intervenes directly in the

production process. As is the case with electronic tagging devices, traditional

ends are increasingly achieved by new means of devolution.

The modulations of the 'control society', its principles of 'multiple-

singularity' or 'metaproduction', allow for far more power to configure

populations than is possible under the purview of the disciplinary society. The

disciplinary society is highly *orthoprax*. It shapes actions, daily practice to try

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[32]Emphasis added, Deleuze, 'Postscript on Control Societies', 180-1. The critical theorist Frederic Jameson has discussed Deleuze's understanding of capitalist metaproduction in a similar analysis. Jameson sees within late capitalism a near-total commodification of culture. An act of displacement has occurred, from production to circulation, and the market appears to be an autonomous force. Commodities seem to emerge and relate to each other autonomously so that the labour processes that went into their production appear as insignificant, or tertiary, factors. See Frederic Jameson, 'Postmodernism and the Market' in *Postmodernism or The cultural logic of late capitalism* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1991): 72.

to synchronise individual subjectivity with modes of behaviour conveyed through its institutions. It is not always successful. While 'confinement' is the norm, there remains a space for self-reflexivity and auto-critique remains possible. For example, the activist Malcolm X, despite being imprisoned in early life, was not socialised to the role of convict and was able to use his incarceration to assess radically the structure of power relations in the United States.[33] On the other hand, the 'control society' is *orthodox* in nature. Control is more successful in imbuing its intellectual template because it contrasts its flexible norms to the restricting, binary norms of disciplinary order. Control greatly enhances discipline because it no longer requires actual sites of confinement; it accommodates the techniques for the ordering of human multiplicities to a greater individual perception of emancipation. There is a transfiguration of past norms, a move toward new types of acceptance and co-operation, but these changes do constitute genuine social improvements. The 'control society' thus acknowledges difference, but its recognition is relative and asymmetrical.

Deleuze gave several noteworthy examples of the flexible and 'perfected' traits of 'control societies'. His observation of subcontracting and work at homes[34] as well as the use of 'open hospitals' – teams providing home health care[35] is meant to illustrate that as past sites of containment (such as factories and hospitals) 'break down' and are reconstituted, subjection to

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[33]See Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Random House, 1965).

[34]Deleuze, 'Having an Idea in Cinema (On the Cinema of Straub-Huillet)', 18.

[35]Deleuze, 'Postscript on Control Societies', 182.

dominant political and market forces increases. People have not achieved greater freedom because they are working or recuperating in the privacy of their own homes. It is no longer possible to leave the sites of confinement – they are everywhere. Such a phenomenon can be seen in another example, where Deleuze notes how the 'control society' requires special courses and 'continuing education' to serve as substitutes for fixed training and qualifications.[36] Education no longer empowers an individual, helping to guarantee a fixed position in society. 'Control' denies an individual's certitude of having enough 'knowledge', or steady professional skills, and thus permanent gainful employment. The ability to continually foment uncertainty thus brings individual pliability to its greatest level. '[I]n control societies you never finish anything–business, training, and military service being coexisting metastable states of a single modulation, a sort of universal transmutation'.[37] Whereas discipline was long-term and discontinuous, control is short-term and rapidly-shifting, continuous yet unbounded. In advanced capitalist states, this situation is exemplified in the occurrence of chronic consumer debt, facilitated by readily issued credit with high interest rates.[38] Gradually diminishing forms of empowerment are therefore characteristic of 'control societies'.

The 'control society' operates in a circuitous fashion. It functions specifically by *not* shaping identities in a definite manner, but by situating them in an infinitely manipulable, free floating condition. In another helpful comparison Deleuze says:

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[36]Ibid., 179.
[37]Ibid.
[38]Ibid., 181.

> In making highways, for example, you don't enclose people but instead multiply the means of control. I am not saying this is the highway's exclusive purpose, but people can drive infinitely and "freely" without being at all confined yet while still being perfectly controlled.[39]

The control society appears to be marked by free movement, but in fact it has selective boundaries that 'phase' between fixed and open states. Passage is never guaranteed and is determined by a criterion of inclusion, which is also liable to change.[40] For example, the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985, which led to the 'removal' of internal border controls within the European Community/Union, gave rise to a complex alteration of the physical barriers of the countries within the federation. The agreement was never implemented fully as it was designed and the total abolition of internal border controls has not come about because of concerns of member states about illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and terrorism.[41] A new arrangement is perceived to be in place, but past borders remain, or rematerialise selectively, in order to monitor profiled groups within the system. The terrain of control is thus inherently infused by ambiguity.

Deleuze concludes by proposing a continuing investigation of the 'control society':

> We ought to establish the basic sociotechnological principles of control mechanisms, and describe in these terms what is already taking the place of the disciplinary sites of containment that everyone says are breaking down. It may be that older means of control, borrowed from the old sovereign societies, will come back into play, adapted as necessary.[42]

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[39]Deleuze, 'Having an Idea in Cinema (On the Cinema of Straub-Huillet)', 18.

[40]Deleuze, 'Postscript on Control Societies', 180.

[41]Clive H. Church and David Phinnemore comp., *European Union and European Community: A Handbook and Commentary on the post-Maastricht Treaties* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994), 125-6.

[42]Deleuze, 'Postscript on Control Societies', 182.

Deleuze calls for an expanded conceptual 'map', an illustration of the newest

and most salient traits of the 'sociotechnological' power that was first

discerned by Foucault.[43]

Additional Principles of Control

The first person to undertake Deleuze's proposed investigation was the

literary theorist Michael Hardt. Hardt maps the 'control society' through a

reading of Foucault as an extension of Hegelian theory.[44]

Central in Hardt's analysis is the concept of 'labour'. It is used

differently than in its basic semantic sense, as a specific service rendered to

production by a worker or artisan. It encompasses this meaning, but it is also

understood as a value-creating practice.[45] Labour is understood as any activity

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[43]The 'sociotechnological map' of power has been described elsewhere by Gilles Deleuze as an 'abstract machine'. In his analysis of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, and later in his own work, Deleuze argued that there are basic 'diagrams' of power, informal representations of the types of social ordering that exist in a society, which can be extrapolated through genealogical investigation. In this vein, Foucault's understanding of panopticism can be seen as the 'diagram' of the disciplinary society. 'Deleuze points out that what Foucault calls a 'diagram' of panoptic power is the name of a pure function applied to an unspecified matter' (Paul Patton, *Deleuze and the Political* (London: Routledge, 2000): 7). This 'pure function', or abstract machine, is given to surface transformation of its identifiable attributes, but its defining essence always remains: 'We define the abstract machine as the aspect of or moment at which nothing but functions and matters remain' (Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987): 141). Hence an abstract machine is both a broad vision of how the social world should be, as well as the basis for an ever-adapting logic and techniques that seek to bring this view to fruition. 'Abstract machines are therefore endowed with a directive power which Deleuze...[is] careful to distinguish from other forms of causality' (Patton, 45). An abstract machine 'is neither an infrastructure that is determining to the last instance nor a transcendental Idea that is determining in the supreme instance. Rather it plays a piloting role' (Deleuze and Guattari, 142). Thus an abstract machine should not be understood as a detailed 'master plan', but rather as a kind of general compass underpinning the social construction of reality. 'It is both a condition of the effects realised in a given assemblage and an abstraction that exists only in those affects' (Patton, 57).

[44]See Michael Hardt, 'The Withering of Civil Society' in Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller ed., *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998): 23-39.

[45]Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Labor of Dionysus: A Critique of the State-Form* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994): 7.

that is recognised socially as being productive of value.[46] Hardt's analysis is rooted in the work of the philosopher Georg W.F. Hegel. Hegel formulated a complete philosophy that undertook to explain the universe and being, in the largest abstract concepts and in the minutest details. Within this grand theory are important ideas about the sovereign state. Hegel believes that the autonomous nation-state has objective reality – it exists apart from its citizens. The state's highest duty lies in its own preservation. For Hegel, the state serves as the concretisation of the absolute in history; the state has moral standards different from, and superior to, those of the individual. (It is thus denoted as the 'State', with the capital letter meant to convey its higher, transcendent status.)

Hardt concentrates primarily on Hegel's discussion of the relationship between civil society and the state. Civil society relates to an actual or potential harmony between individual interests and the political sphere, in which the sustenance of a healthy or 'civil' public life is derived from private efforts. He notes how, for Hegel, civil society has a decisive economic character, related to the development of capitalism:

> Hegel developed his conception of civil society on the basis of English economists of the time and the standard German translation of the English "civil society," which Hegel used, was *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* or "bourgeois society." This fact alone should lead us to focus on the relationship between Hegel's conception of civil society and the conceptions, which were widespread at the time, of the civilizing process contained in market exchange and capitalist relations of production.[47]

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[46]Ibid., 9.

[47]Hardt, 'The Withering of Civil Society', 24.

Hardt relays how Hegel built on the work of the political philosophers Thomas

Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The works of Hobbes contrasts the

unorganised 'state of nature' with the civil state, and argues for the need of the

rational authority of the civil state to control the chaos, or irrational disorder,

of natural society. Similarly, Rousseau stresses the occasional necessity to

curtail the rights of private interests in order to promote a common consensus,

a greater public good. In this vein, Hegel saw civil society as an extension, a

kind of evolutionary development or reconstitution, of natural society – a force

to be contrasted with, and that needs to be guided by, the rational order of the

political realm, the state.

Hegel built on this innovation. As an evolutionary development, civil

society is thus more advanced than the state of nature. Hardt tells how for

Hegel, this development encompasses a specific educative aspect:

> [C]ivil society takes the natural human systems of needs and
> particular self-interests, puts them in relation with each other through
> the capitalist social institutions of production and exchange, and thus,
> on the basis of the mediation and subsumption of the particular, poses a
> terrain on which the State can realize the universal interest of society in
> 'the actuality of the ethical Idea.[48]

The educative role of civil society 'guides' or redirects unorganised self-

interests into an arrangement that is beneficial to the political state.

Contradictions are seen to merge themselves in a higher truth that

comprehends them. This constitutes a dialectic, a process of the continuous

unification of opposites, where particular differences are negated and

integrated.

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[48]Ibid., 25.

It is within this dialectical process where Hardt introduces his theme of labour. 'Hegel combines and highlights these economic and educative aspects in his conception that civil society is primarily a society of labor'.[49] Civil society is the site of the organisation of labour power, an area for the formation of labouring corporations. Before the onset of this organisation, labour exists in a pure or a 'concrete' form. This concrete form is the direct, tangible contribution that individuals make toward self-advancement. It is a self-determined, value-creating practice. Hegel, for example, locates this pure form in the labour of peasants, but he views concrete labour, which he sees as the human activity closest to nature, disparagingly. Like the state of nature, this concrete labour is 'uneducated in the universal interest'[50] and must be negated and integrated into the universal – through the medium of civil society. The process of negation and integration can also be understood as a process of abstraction. Hardt notes how:

> The process of abstraction, then, from concrete labor to abstract labor, is the educative process whereby the singular is transformed into the universal, by abandoning itself... [C]ivil society is not simply the society of labor but specifically the society of abstract labor.[51]

Through civil society, new identity constructs are imposed onto subaltern groups, transforming pre-existing systems of understanding. For Hardt, Hegel's final conception of civil society can be understood as an 'organisation of abstract labour'[52], a dialectical mechanism consisting of all the institutions

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[49]Ibid.
[50]Ibid.
[51]Ibid.
[52]Ibid.

of capitalist society that 'align' the particular interest of the individual with the 'universal' interest of the state.

The Site of Economy

Hardt sees Hegel's civil society as most prominently applied in the work of two thinkers, Michel Foucault and the political activist Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci's writings address the likelihood of usurping the dialectic to try to use civil society for democratic empowerment:

> [Gramsci] insists repeatedly in his notebooks on the importance of the Hegelian distinction between civil society and political society for any liberal or progressive political theory, but in effect he inverts the relationship between these two concepts, standing the relationship, he might say, on its feet.[53]

Gramsci's programme was marked by a unique voluntarism, a 'war of position' to unseat forces of the dominant hegemony in a society. He accepted Karl Marx's base-superstructure argument, that the class that has the material means of production at its disposal has concurrent control over the means of 'mental production'. But Gramsci did not view the dominant hegemony as impenetrable:

> Undoubtedly the fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed–in other words, that the leading group should make sacrifices of an economic-corporate kind.[54]

Gramsci believed that this compromise equilibrium could not 'touch the essential',[55] or would continue to support a dominant elite, but he suggests that

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[53]Ibid., 26.

[54]Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971): 161.

[55]Ibid.

a small pocket of resistance might form within it in which it may be possible to assert an alternative worldview.

Gramsci sees hegemony as being exercised through the capitalist state's institutions of civil society. As Hegel had noted, these institutions imbue the worldview of those elements that control the state apparatus. Gramsci sees this view as a kind of artificial consciousness – an understanding that is absorbed uncritically as 'common sense'. This position is a uniform view of the state and the extant social order in keeping with the wishes of the economically advantaged over the needs of the working class. It is a rule by consent, rather than by coercion. But groups in the proletariat who are able to transcend the artificial, 'common sense' element of their consciousness in favour of 'practical activity' or 'good sense' can enact a counter-hegemony.[56] Gramsci sees workers as embodying an alternative hegemony in their quotidian, practical activity. The proletariat demonstrates both 'good sense' and 'common sense' in their relations with the dominant elite and the state apparatus. Revolutionary groups must therefore participate actively in civil society, wage a persuasive 'war of position', until sizeable elements of the working class can transcend their artificial consciousness in order to initiate a 'war of movement' or counter-hegemonic process.

Hardt interprets Gramsci's perspective as a 'withering of the state' of sorts.[57] The Hegelian process of subsumption that flowed from society to state is reversed (from state to civil society) so that the state exists only secondarily

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[56]Ibid., 323.

[57]Hardt, 'The Withering of Civil Society', 26.

– not as Hegel's 'higher truth'. The state, forces embodying political power and legitimacy, 'descend' figuratively to 'fill a structural void left by a civil society that is not fully developed'.[58] Since the state has withered, or has 'descended' into civil society from its old, untouchable, transcendent position, it is now open to mediation within this imminent realm by constructive forces in civil society.

> But Foucault's writings do not support Gramsci's conclusions:

> Michel Foucault's work has made clear that that the institutions and *enfermements* (enclosures) of civil society – the church, the school, the prison, the family, the union, the party, and so on – constitute the paradigmatic terrain for the disciplinary deployments in modern society, producing normalized subjects and thus exerting hegemony through consent in a way that is perhaps more subtle but no less authoritarian than the exertion of dictatorship through coercion.[59]

Hardt notes how Foucault's observations about the role played by the institutions of civil society seem to confirm the initial vision that Hegel had wanted for them – '[t]he social dialectic thus functions in order that antagonistic social forces be subsumed within the prior and unitary synthesis of the State'.[60] Using Foucault's notion of governmentality, Hardt maps how Hegel's civil society in fact emerged. Sovereign societies were far less ordered than current-day states. In terms of power relationships, the state exercised absolute, direct authority over its subjects, but it was a transcendent entity and was removed entirely from the everyday. This relationship changed, however, with the passage to the modern state. The modern state, marked by governmentality, is characterised by its immanence to the population through a

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[58]Ibid.
[59]Ibid., 27.
[60]Ibid., 27-8.

multiplicity of forms. These forms, the sites of confinement of the disciplinary society, are characterised by an active engagement of the population under their jurisdiction. The active engagement occurs *within* those elements understood traditionally as constituting civil society. 'The same educative social processes that Hegel casts in terms of abstraction, Foucault recognizes in terms of training, discipline, and management'.[61] Thus for Hardt, Hegel's civil society *serves as the site of discipline or the operational domain of governmentality*, 'the productive site of modern economy (economy now understood in a large sense)'.[62]

Foucault's work does not support Gramsci's suggestion that the state has withered, or has 'descended' to an operative level that can be engaged and appropriated by forces in civil society. Gramsci had argued that workers embody an alternative hegemony in their everyday, practical activity, but this does not account for the fact that power has a directly productive role in the quotidian realm. For Hardt, the state has not at all withered: 'When Foucault argues that power cannot be isolated but is everywhere, that it comes from everywhere, that there is no outside to power, he is also denying the analytical separation of political society from civil society.'[63] Civil society is rooted in the disciplinary sites of confinement that embody governmentality. It must be understood as part and parcel of them. While power is not absolutely embodied in the state, it still cannot be 'seized' through civil society, as

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[61]Ibid., 28.
[62]Ibid.
[63]Ibid.

Gramsci has suggested. In this understanding, both civil society and the state

can be seen as a kind of gestalt:

> While this denies all the moral and teleological elements to Hegel's
> social theory, Foucault's understanding...does in certain respects takes
> the Hegelian notion of civil society to its logical conclusion. Foucault
> reformulates the educational processes of civil society in terms of
> production: power acts not only by training or ordering the elements of
> social terrain but actually by producing them—producing desires,
> needs, individuals, identities, et cetera. I see this not so much a
> contradiction but as an extension of Hegelian theory. The State, Hegel
> claims, is not the result but the cause; Foucault adds, not a transcendent
> but an immanent cause, statization, immanent to the various channels,
> institutions, or enclosures of social production.[64]

As disciplinary components of governmentality, both civil society and the state

must be understood as the end result of forces of power that are multiple and

imminent in the social realm.

Beyond the Dialectic

Hardt interprets Gilles Deleuze's discussion about the move toward the

control society through the above understanding. As the transition to the

'control society' ensues, and the enclosures of disciplinary societies break

down and transform (as part of a changing economy of power), civil society –

which Hardt has shown to be intimately linked with disciplinary sites of

confinement, will, by extension, 'wither away'. Seeking to discern what kind

of successor to civil society, or operational domain of governmentality, will

emerge in the control society, Hardt turns to an unorthodox reading of Karl

Marx by the political theorist Antonio Negri. Negri's work is a hermeneutic

reading of Marx, an interpretation and extrapolation of principles discussed by

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[64]Ibid., 29.

Marx in the *Grundrisse*.[65] Negri argues that it is no longer possible to posit a rigid differentiation between the 'political' and the 'economic' in an era of post-industrial capitalism. Based on this understanding of Marx, it is possible for Hardt to suggest: 'Straining their periodizations a bit, we could say that Foucault's societies of sovereignty correspond to feudal relations of production; disciplinary regimes rely on what Marx calls the formal subsumption of labor under capital; and societies of control point to the real subsumption under capital'.[66]

The subsumption of labour is Karl Marx's concept to explain how labour processes become subordinated and assuaged under capital.[67] A 'formal' and a 'real' stage mark Marx's subsumption process. The first, or 'formal', stage occurs when labour is explicitly taken over by capital. Capital needs the valued abilities that individuals have developed externally to its production process, so it willingly incorporates them as wage labourers in order to function. In the formal subsumption phase, capital 'knows' that it is the productive value of labour that sustains it, despite having full control over the workers it has taken on. More importantly, people who work as labourers in the formal subsumption are conscious of the crucial role they play and thus have leverage in determining the rates of production. The situation undergoes a massive transformation within the second, or 'real', stage, when labour becomes *unaware* of its subsumption within capital. Innovation in production,

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[65]See Antonio Negri, *Marx Beyond Marx*, trans. Harry Cleaver, Michael Ryan, and Maurizio Viano (South Hadley, Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey, 1984).

[66]Hardt, 'The Withering of Civil Society', 33.

[67]Hardt and Negri, *Labor of Dionysus: A Critique of the State-Form*, 257-61.

such as by technological advancement, creates alienation processes that invert the relationship between capital and labour. In the real subsumption, labour, as a concept, becomes newly understood as a process that is generated within capital. It is no longer viewed as something of value that exists independently from, and externally to, the forces of production. Conditioning processes enmeshed in the workday cause labour to be seen as *resulting from*, and only having value in, capital. Marx thus saw the norms of capital and the subjective beliefs of the individual labourer as becoming one in the same.

As Deleuze had noted earlier, production has given way to metaproduction, or alternatively, ordering processes marked by circulation and exchange. Such is also the case in the real subsumption of labour, where a blurring of the boundary between circulation and production occurs. The primary ordering processes of the real subsumption must be understood as existing *beyond* the dialectic. Hegel's dialectic was marked by a thesis, antithesis, and synthesis: an original tendency, an opposing tendency of which it inevitably gives rise, and the unification of the two tendencies in a new movement. For Hardt, the dialectic characterises the disciplinary society. But the traits of the real subsumption, which are analogous to forms of ordering in the control society, are *not* marked by a unification of opposites. 'What is subsumed, what is accepted into the process, is no longer a potentially conflictive force but a product of the system itself'.[68] The real subsumption *undoes any sort of dialectic* between labour and capital. It is domination in its purest form, an absolute determinant that is abstract from labour itself. From

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[68]Hardt, 'The Withering of Civil Society', 35.

their initial encounter, there are no opposing tendencies between labour and capital. This view of the control society as the 'State of the real subsumption'[69] can be seen in Antonio Negri's suggestion that 'capital has subjugated all lived time'[70], that the antagonism of class struggle no longer operates on an immediate stage and has become displaced to an abstract level. An analogy to the extra-dialectical ordering of control might be seen the process of genetic cloning. In natural reproduction, genetic material from two parental organisms is combined in an offspring. But in cloning, a donor cell is fused with an egg stripped of its DNA, or genetic information. As a result, the genes of the organism that develops from this union come only from the donor, so the organism is its genetic twin or clone.

Complex Co-optation

Hardt suggests that the 'control society' is marked by a kind of complex co-optation. Such a notion is implicit in his final description of this new system of order:

> Instead of disciplining the citizen as a fixed social identity, the new social regime seeks to control the citizen as a whatever identity, or rather as an infinitely flexible placeholder for identity. It tends to establish an autonomous plane of rule, a simulacrum of the social–separate from the terrain of conflictive social forces.[71]

In the context above, 'whatever' refers to a concept developed by the philosopher Giorgio Agamben.[72] For Agamben, a whatever identity or whatever being has two forms: a future ideal and a present distortion of this

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[69]Ibid.

[70]Negri, author's preface, xvi.

[71]Hardt, 'The Withering of Civil Society', 36.

[72]See Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993): 8.

ideal. The ideal is a 'form of belonging without relation and being [and] without identity', a concept of identity and community that is not linked to the state.[73] Agamben calls his ideal 'whatever singularities'.[74] This is a self-created, self-determined identity that is not 'produced' à la Foucault, by disciplines.[75] (Agamben believes that past identities were not truly individual, but forms of 'individuation', moulds of sorts, an illusion of individuality.) Agamben sees a distortion in the use of the ideal of the 'whatever singularity' as a management tool within governmentality. Within the current economy of power, a plurality of subjective identities is no longer a hindrance, an unacceptable or potentially destabilising force. It is not necessary to punish or contain 'deviant' identities, but merely to separate them from their autonomous creative potential. 'What we are left with is a form of hyper-possessive individualism...that works on entire populations of collectively identified bodies, extracting their affective potential (and, therefore their potential for thought and forms of belonging) for reactive ends'.[76]

Hardt's 'whatever identity' is a whatever singularity whose potential for emancipation has been contained. In the 'control society', identities that were formed outside of, and in opposition to, disciplinary power are incorporated *into the ambit of governmentality*. This process of incorporation

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[73]Robert C. Thomas, 'Whatever Intellectuals: The Politics of Thought in Post-disciplinary Societies', paper delivered in lecture form at the *Fifth Annual Humanities Symposium*, San Francisco State University, 15 April 1998, on internet site, http://online.sfsu.edu/~theory/mrt/lecture.html, 5.

[74]Agamben, 1.

[75]For Agamben, this ideal is exemplified in the events of May 1968 in France, when combined student and labour protests rejected traditional identities and temporarily paralysed the French state. For a view that echoes Agamben's interpretation of the protests, see Daniel Singer, *Prelude to Revolution: France in May 1968* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970).

[76]Thomas, 7.

is Hardt's 'autonomous plane of rule', a new kind of co-optation that substitutes an acknowledgement of identities hitherto ignored or repressed for normative change. It is not simply marked by, for example, the taking of differing movements or cultures into a larger group. Nor can it merely be equated with the related concepts of absorption, appropriation, or assimilation. This new type of co-optation must be understood instead as constituting a 'simulacrum of the social', an empty process of recognition and empowerment that is equivalent to Deleuze's notion of 'control'.

Hardt does not explicitly say if the agents who are primarily responsible for initiating these complex processes wholly conceive of their actions as constituting a 'co-optation effort', but such initiatives can be viewed as a kind of co-optation nonetheless. As will be recalled, Deleuze described the various forms of control as a modulation, a 'self-transmuting' moulding continually changing from one moment to the next. He saw 'normal' mouldings as those processes of power that were emblematised by Foucault in disciplines. These disciplinary enclosures were shown by Hardt to be tantamount to Hegel's civil society, the dialectic-led organisation of abstract labour. Complex co-optation can thus be seen as an extra-dialectical organisation of abstract labour, or alternatively, a self-transmuting form of past disciplines. Within this 'extra-dialectical organisation of abstract labour', the techniques for assuring the ordering of human multiplicities are no longer marked by rigid shaping processes whose end goal is a synthesis of old forms of identity with the 'higher' norms of the state. The techniques for assuring order now function through the surface expression of multiple forms of

difference.[77] Ordering techniques change or transmute to accommodate all forms of subjectivity that have formerly been excluded from disciplinary 'moulds'. Yet through the use of 'modulation', the tactical interplay of the traits of 'control' suggested above – ambiguity, asymmetrical recognition, and gradually diminishing forms of empowerment, these oppositional identities can be contained. Indeed the notion of a self-transmuting form of past disciplines would mean that an identity that was unacceptable or externally different from forms of identity embodied in past disciplines would become acceptable or intrinsically similar to them in the 'control society'.[78]

Relevance of Deleuze and Hardt to the Oslo Accords

Why are the theoretically diverse works of Deleuze and Hardt needed to elucidate and reconstruct the Oslo Accords? The use of these two thinkers as an explanatory template is in many ways predetermined by their conceptual linkages with the perspective of Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin that was relayed in

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[77]Deleuze and Guattari, 482-83.

[78]The concept of self-transmutation offered here can be viewed as a kind of self-organising system, but should not be confused with the idea of self-reference, or autopoiesis, that was developed by the systems theorist Niklas Luhmann. See Niklas Luhmann, *Essays in Self-Reference* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). The term autopoiesis means literally, self-production. It is the process whereby an organisation produces itself, as well as maintains and constitutes itself in a space. A biological cell, a living organism, and to some extent a corporation are examples of autopoietic systems. Luhmann sees autopoiesis as applying to all forms of social organisation. But this particular elucidation of autopoiesis does not cover the understanding of self-transmutation offered here and the use of term, which is so intimately linked with Luhmann's work, can be misleading because it may limit the scope of change that is perceived to have occurred. Deleuze's observations stress that the organisation and maintenance that occur in self-transmutation is quite unusual (it may not even appear to be similar to its predecessor in its new form) and does not follow logically from previously held patterns. See Deleuze, 'Postscript on Control Societies', 178-9. In a basic sense, self-transmutation may be viewed as a self-organising system since it is marked by an alteration that is not controlled by an external system. But the change is of an *unbounded* nature. While change occurs in autopoietic systems, such as growth or ageing in a living organism or restructuring in a corporation, it is still a relatively fixed and predictable process. For a detailed contrast of Deleuze's self-transmuting 'modulations' to Luhmann's autopoiesis see, Massumi, 'Requiem for Our Prospective Dead (Toward a Participatory Critique of Capitalist Power)'.

chapter one (pp. 51-7). Deleuze and Hardt's understandings of the changing nature of power relations alone can be drawn upon to answer what Raz-Krakotzkin hinted at, but failed to develop: 1) how Israeli attitudes and management strategies toward the Palestinians could have been reinvented in a manner that did not follow logically from previously held patterns, yet still have retained their defining essence; and 2) how this process could have occurred through the interim structure of the Oslo Accords.

Application and Hypothesis

Michael Hardt noted how his expansion of the general principles of 'control' that were first identified by Deleuze could be used to analyse other cases. The key to such an endeavour would be to identify the 'multiplicity of forms' that actively engaged and managed the populations that were under the jurisdiction of a particular state. Hardt located this 'operational domain' of governmentality within civil society, but his analysis was specific to social conditions in Western Europe and North America. Indeed Hardt noted that the social and political environment of developed states that lay outside of these particular geographic regions would likely be shaped by a different operative dynamic. He remarked that if endgame similarities to the 'withering of civil society' in Western Europe and North America were to be gleaned in such cases, it would first be necessary to identify the principles of 'population management' that were employed in accordance with the particular guiding national or social vision of these other states.[79] Once discovered, the transition to 'control society' forms of order could then be speculated.

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[79]See Hardt, 'The Withering of Civil Society', footnote no. 29, 39.

This study will build on Raz-Krakotzkin's claim from chapter one that the guiding impetus of the Israeli national consciousness remained the notion of 'empty land', even after the recognition of the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people (p. 54). Raz-Krakotzkin's analysis of Israeli nationalist and security discourse reflected Michel Foucault's conception of power as a complex strategic ordering of life, but as was shown, failed to grasp the entirety of change that occurred when Israel recognised the PLO in 1993 (pp. 51-8). But since Deleuze and Hardt advance and update Foucault's understanding of power relations, it is possible to use their insights to complete Raz-Krakotzkin's observations, to suggest that Israeli forms of 'population management' underwent transition to 'control society' types of governance in the Oslo Accords.

Before the Oslo Accords, the Israeli government had refused to recognise the PLO and its claim to represent of the Palestinian people. But if the recognition of the PLO by the Israeli government in 1993 is viewed as being tantamount to what Michael Hardt labelled a 'whatever identity', as being hollow in nature, than it is possible to speculate that Israel recognised the PLO for essentially the same reasons that it had previously challenged the organisation and disavowed its claims for Palestinian statehood. In the Oslo Accords, the government of Israel did not recognise the PLO as its equal, nor did it acknowledge that the Palestinians had an equal national right to the territory that both peoples claimed. The recognition process inherent in Oslo was not a prelude toward a fundamental resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but rather an innovative, and multifaceted attempt to consolidate Israeli control.

A perspective informed by Gilles Deleuze and Michael Hardt would suggest that the 1993 government of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres recognised the PLO so as to induce the organisation to abandon its goal of Palestinian statehood through a complex co-optation process, to bring its leadership into a position of lesser, but substantial power that it nonetheless would wish to maintain. But it would not see this desired end-goal as having resulted from clear-cut intentions. It would argue instead that the strategic endeavour at the heart of the Oslo Accords was a changing economy of power along Foucauldian lines – i.e. not planned *per se*, but rather a series of evolving and not-immediately connected tactics that nonetheless served to preserve Israel's guiding nationalist vision in changing form. Reflecting the principle of modulation identified by Deleuze, the Rabin government would have continually modified the 'rules of the game', in the general hope that, after being installed as the head of an interim-self governing authority, the PLO would in time abandon its original stance and settle for less than statehood in a final-status agreement. Recalling from the Introduction that Yitzhak Rabin's motives with regard to Oslo were not clearly known – apparently even to himself (pp. 6-8), it can be surmised that complex co-optation was a broad goal, an outgrowth of guiding national beliefs and security perspectives, but a phenomenon that did not operate on a fully articulated level. If this complex process was not wholly deliberative, it can be further presumed that Israel would have taken actions, which, from a rational perspective of policy analysis, would appear to be counter-intuitive in nature. The following chapters will plot the mechanics of these occurrences.

Chapter Three
'Modulatory' Predispositions

It will be recalled from chapter two that 'complex co-optation' is the utilisation of 'modulation,' the tactical interplay of asymmetrical recognition, ambiguity, and a gradual diminishment of concessions, to control those subaltern elements who had evaded or resisted the 'deployments' of power of the past 'governmentalised' state (p. 92). In this vein, this chapter will show how Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, the principal Israeli decision-makers during the Oslo Accords, were predisposed toward a 'modulatory' approach to peacemaking with the Palestinians, one oriented toward eventual complex co-optation. The chapter examines Rabin's past experiences in promoting Israeli security needs and the tactics that Shimon Peres long contemplated in relation to the Palestinian question. It suggests that this broad social vision became reconstituted, akin to a changing economy of power, in the later structure of the Oslo Accords.

In order to understand why Rabin and Peres were predisposed toward modulation or complex co-optation, it is first necessary to address their views on three key but interrelated concerns that can be viewed as being tantamount to a form of 'governmentality' or population management:

(1) the interplay between Israeli security, the prism of the Jewish historical experience, and the nature of Israeli nationalism, especially after June 1967;

(2) the status and political rights of the Palestinians; and

(3) the assessment of the Israeli public's commitment to nationalist goals, particularly in relation to the changing strategic climate in the Middle East.

Prone Toward Ambiguity

The categories of Israeli security, the prism of the Jewish historical experience, and Israeli nationalism have been grouped together for two reasons. First of all, because every Israeli leader, and not just Rabin and Peres, have had to grapple with these concerns that have tended to coalesce – despite their being arguably separate phenomena. The discussion therefore helps to better understand the mindset of the Israeli leadership. It is also the case that these factors of consideration that have been associated together in Israeli political discourse are not easily reconcilable in terms of a future political compromise. Thus they are discussed secondarily to convey that, in contemplating conflict resolution strategies, Rabin and Peres were prone toward ambiguity, a central 'tier' of modulation.

Security

The state of Israel emerged in war and has lived for most of its existence in a technical state of war with the majority of its neighbours. The issue of security has thus been of paramount importance within the Israeli national agenda, in a manner unparalleled in most other states. The Israeli Minister of Defence, unlike counterparts in other democratic regimes, has tended to exercise a greater role in politics and policy making than any other individual apart from the Prime Minster. It is even common for Israeli leaders to hold both portfolios. 'Security so dominated the Israeli decision-making process that it influenced, and often overwhelmed, almost all other dimensions

of foreign policy, and even major elements of domestic and economic policy'.[1] Indeed, Henry Kissinger once remarked that Israel had no foreign policy, only domestic politics.[2] The Israeli civilian and military leadership shaped the defining feature of national security doctrine during the first few years of the state. The concept was based on a particular strategic perception, one requiring a posture of military deterrence that was meant to serve a defensive role, but whose operational content was actually offensive in nature. Israeli policy makers have adhered to this central notion ever since; it not only has produced the structure and doctrine of the Israeli armed forces, but has shaped the nature of civil-military relations as well.[3]

Israeli leaders believed that their state would long exist in a hostile environment. The Arab states had accepted General Armistice Agreements in 1949, but these military understandings did not signify their intentions for peaceful coexistence or diplomatic relations with Israel. The decision of the Arab states to attack Israel was for the most part undertaken in order safeguard the national existence of the Palestinian Arabs.[4] Their subsequent refusal to accept Israel as a legitimate Middle Eastern state stemmed from a perception that its establishment had been an injustice. Israeli leaders understood this argument, but naturally believed otherwise. The Israelis perceived an

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[1]Mark Heller, *Continuity and Change in Israeli Security Policy* (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 2000): 9.

[2]Avi Shlaim, 'Israeli Politics and Middle East Peacemaking' *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 4 (Summer 1995), 20.

[3]Dan Horowitz, 'The Israeli Concept of National Security' in Avner Yaniv ed., *National Security and Democracy in Israel* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers. 1993): 13.

[4]It must be noted that critical historiography challenges this assumption in the case of Jordan. Shlaim (1988) documents that before the 1948 war had begun, the Jewish settler leadership in Palestine had reached an tacit agreement with Abdullah, the king of neighbouring Transjordan (later Jordan), to allow his forces to take over the West Bank, the area set to be a Palestinian Arab state, in return for his assurances not to enter territory that had been earmarked for the Jewish state by the 1947 United Nations partition plan. See Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, The Zionist Movement and the Partition of Palestine* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988).

irreconcilable Arab hostility toward their existence, which necessitated a high and ongoing state of military readiness in order to confront the continual threat of wars with one or more Arab armies.[5]

Israel had human and material resources that were quantitatively inferior to those of its adversaries, as well as limited territorial depth. It was thus vulnerable to protracted war, because of its limited staying power, and to surprise attack, because of the lack of space to trade for time. Israeli policy makers adopted broad strategies to cope with this situation. In addition to the promotion of immigration and the seeking foreign economic assistance, Israel would have to mobilise its existing resources a great deal more intensively than did its foes. In such a situation, the mobilisation effort would actually allow Israel to achieve quantitative parity, even local superiority, in terms of manpower and firepower. Israel also had to rely on the application of offensive force at the tactical and operational levels. The remaining material gaps could be overcome by cultivating qualitatively superior military technology, organisation and combat doctrines.[6] In particular, it was crucial for Israel to achieve a decisive victory on the battlefield. This scenario did not necessarily require the wholesale destruction of enemy forces, but did entail the elimination of their capacity to sustain combat before outside intervention could impose a cease-fire. Israel would be greatly disadvantaged if the fighting arena was not controlled under these terms, and would likely face a quick renewal of hostilities or a static war of attrition along border areas.

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[5]Some Israeli historians contend otherwise. Pappé (1992) suggests that Israeli leaders were unwilling to give up recent territorial gains in exchange for diplomatic relations and so did not exploit early opportunities for peace with Arab states. See, for example, Ilan Pappé, *The Making of the Middle East Conflict, 1947-1951* (London: I.B.Tauris, 1992).
[6]Heller, 11.

Israel was to rely on strategies designed to deter war. But it could never hope to achieve its political objectives *vis-à-vis* the Arab states solely through military means. '[H]owever decisive the victory on the battlefield, Israel would never have either the resources or the international freedom of action to achieve a strategic victory, in the sense of being able to impose its peace on a defeated adversary'.[7] For the most part, Israeli security policy was defensive with regard to neighbouring Arab states.[8] Military and civilian leaders agreed that security policy could serve the political objective of peace only if Israeli military superiority could deter Arab opponents from initiating war and, ultimately, compel them to forego military confrontation altogether.

Not all security concerns were perceived as existential threats. In particular, insurgency and terrorism were only viewed as 'current security' considerations, meaning a military nuisance that disrupted routine and affected the quality of life, but that posed no grave threat to Israel. Since its establishment, Israel has been susceptible to cross-border infiltration and guerrilla attacks, mostly from Palestinian militants based in neighbouring states. The traditional, tactical Israeli response to these activities was 'based on a combination of passive defences and active measures to harass and disrupt terrorist organisations, and deter or compel governments of states in which those organisations operated'.[9]

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[7]Ibid., 12.

[8]Unpublished interviews of former Israeli General Moshe Dayan in 1976 and 1977 suggest that there were noteworthy exceptions to this rule. Dayan, who was Minister of Defence during the June 1967 war, said that during the fourth day of the conflict, Israeli kibbutz residents along the border with Syria pressured the government of Levi Eshkol to seize the adjacent Golan Heights. He says the government was swayed by the political arguments of the kibbutz residents (who coveted the fertile Golan lands) and that the decision to seize the Syrian territory was not in fact motivated by security reasons. See 'Moshe Dayan, Interview on the Golan Heights and on Jewish Settlement in Hebron', 22 November 1976 and 1 January 1977', *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 28, No. 1 (Autumn 1997), 144-150.

[9]Heller, 24.

Israeli security policies as a whole constituted a sizable burden on the time and resources of the Israeli Jewish population. For the most part, this burden was sustained by a strong domestic consensus based on confidence in the political leadership. 'But the security consensus also rested on the legitimacy of the military establishment and the esteem in which it was held, and on the social mobility and acceptance that attached to participation in the security effort and in the hegemonic beliefs and norms that lay behind it'.[10] Indeed the widespread conviction amongst the Israeli populace was that the threats facing the state were genuine, there was no viable alternative, and so the demands and policies implicit in the primacy of security were not only necessary, but also completely justified. The national-security concept was sustained throughout the first two decades of Israel's existence and its guiding logic appeared to be given credence after the Israeli victory in the June 1967 war. (The Israeli military achievements notwithstanding, it can also be argued that the very need to fight a war at all stemmed from the failure of the deterrent that was supposed to be the core the Israeli security concept.) But it must also be noted that the pyrrhic victories in the October 1973 war and the war in Lebanon in 1982 created much unease and resistance within the Israeli populace. As a consequence, public scrutiny of matters of security became increasingly widespread and the Israeli leadership began to show greater reluctance toward the blanket use of force.

The prism of the Jewish historical experience

Security policy was affected by other factors unique to the Israeli experience, in particular *perceptions* and *behaviour* that were a product of

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[10]Ibid., 17.

Jewish communal life in the Diaspora. It is true that the founders of Israel believed that the establishment of the state had metahistoric and metaphysical dimensions.[11] For them, the state was the 'negation of the exile'. They were especially proud of the Israeli army, seeing it as the antithesis of centuries of Jewish passivity and weakness. Yet at a deeper level, there was a tendency to preserve the Diaspora distinction between Jews and non-Jews, a distrust of foreigners and outsiders. The political circumstances of the Israeli state were often seen to be a continuation of the Jewish historical experiences of isolation and persecution that had culminated in the Holocaust. This perception has often been widespread. For example, Yitzhak Rabin, during his 1974-1977 term as Prime Minister, echoed such thinking in his response to the November 1975 UN resolution equating Zionism with racism: 'The whole world is against us—when was this not so?'[12]

Israeli nationalism

As was conveyed by the perspective of Raz-Krakotzkin in chapter one, the exclusivist nature of Zionism, Israeli nationalism, was that it remained open-ended — easily liable to expansionism, even after the *de facto* partition of Palestine in the 1948 war. In this vein,

> Zionist discourse takes it as a given that the land of Israel, also known as Palestine, is the legitimate home of the group represented by the Jewish people. ... For those who are positioned by Zionist discourse, this knowledge legitimates the Jewish claim to the land while delegitimating the claim of others. ... Insofar as Zionist discourse takes for granted the legitimacy of the Jewish people's claim to the land, it denies the Palestinian Arab claim.[13]

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[11]See, for example, Yechiam Weitz, 'The Debate Concerning the Role of Culture in the State's First Years', *The Journal of Israeli History*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1996).

[12]Idem Efraim Inbar, *Rabin and Israel's National Security* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999): 12.

[13]Idem Laurence J. Silberstein, *The Postzionism Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999: 22-23.

Some, like Benvenisti, (1986) believe that Israeli nationalism was a

honourable and noble endeavour that went awry only after 1967:

> Our Zionist, liberal socialist philosophy did not escape the fate of other great liberating ideologies. Its failure to adjust to changing realities enabled dark forces to usurp its revered symbols, now fossilized and anachronistic, and turn enlightened, moral, and progressive ideas into reactionary beliefs and deeds.[14]

Others, such as Shafir (1989), argue that the exclusivist trends that became

most visible in the post-1967 settlement campaigns were not an aberration

from Israeli nationalism and indeed were innate to the earliest Israeli nation-

building activities that were established in Palestine between 1882 and 1914.[15]

Sternhell (1998) concurs, noting:

> After the victory of June 1967, none of the major leaders of the [ruling] labor movement thought that Zionism drew its moral authority not from the distant, historical, and mythological past but from its character as a movement of rescue. They did not believe that Zionism simply exemplified the universal right of peoples to define their own identity and to govern themselves. None of the major leaders of the labor movement believed that the Palestinians deserved the same rights...No leader was capable of saying that the conquest of the West Bank lacked the moral basis of the first half of the twentieth century, namely, the circumstances of distress on which Israel was founded. A much-persecuted people needed and deserved not only a shelter but a state of its own. No one then argued that this objective had been achieved in 1949 and that there was a moral difference between the territories conquered in the War of Independence and those won less than twenty years later. Both had been won from Arabs, but for entirely different purposes. Whereas the conquests of 1949 were an essential condition for the founding of Israel, the attempt to retain the conquests of 1967 had a strong flavor of imperial expansion.[16]

The Israeli Labour government (with whom Rabin and Peres were

affiliated) had maintained that the right of Jews to immigrate to Israel that had

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[14]Meron Benvenisti, *Conflict & Contradictions* (New York: Villard Books, 1986): 78.

[15]Gershon Shafir, *Land, labor, and the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 1882-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). See also Ran Greenstein, *Genealogies of Conflict: Class, Identity, and State in Palestine/Israel and South Africa* (Hanover, NH: Weslayan University Press, 1995).

[16]Zeev Sternhell, *The Founding Myths of Israel: Nationalism, Socialism and the Making of the Jewish State* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998): 336.

been secured in 1948 extended, *ipso facto*, to the territories occupied in the 1967 conflict. The Israeli Labour party traditionally framed its rhetoric within socialist and universal terms and so its post-1967 nationalist agenda has often seemed less glaring when compared to the populist and messianic language of its Likud counterparts. But the two parties have largely been in concurrence in regard to Jewish settlement in the occupied territories, varying only tactically.

The Israeli Labour government constructed the first settlements in the West Bank, initially placing them in unpopulated, 'security' locations such as the Jordan Valley. These settlements were meant to establish a presence in areas that Israel would eventually annex, in order to enhance the strategic depth of the 1949 borders, which at one point was only 9 miles/15 km wide. But because of nationalist sympathies, successive Labour governments assented when religious zealots agitated for the construction of Jewish settlements within densely populated Palestinian areas.[17] After coming to power in 1977, the Likud governments accelerated this process, building tens of Jewish settlements adjacent to Palestinian population centres. These 'political' settlements were reinforced and the welfare and the personal security of their residents became paramount, despite their playing little role in terms of augmenting overall strategic depth. But if the overall security value of this secondary category of settlements were challenged, the 'inalienable', historic Jewish right to settlement based on the pre-1948 experience was held up as justification instead.

It is crucial to understand that the Israeli government's settlement policies would blur the distinction between nationalism and security, very

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[17]For example, in 1968 the Labour Eshkol government established the settlement of Kiryat Arba, near the Palestinian town of Hebron. In 1974 the Labour Rabin government built Kedumim in 1974, near Nablus in the West Bank.

much shaping Rabin and Peres's later propensity for ambiguity. Israeli society has largely internalised the precepts of national security doctrine, believing it to be vital to its very existence. Moreover, security stances have been further promoted by interweaving them within nationalist themes that justify the moral legitimacy of the pre-1948 return of Jews to their ancient homeland; and the Jewish historical experience in history, with its fears of persecution and killings. But the settling of lands captured in 1967 especially combined and distorted these themes. It is true that some of the settlements do enhance Israeli strategic depth. But many of the security arguments given to justify the Jewish settlement activity in the occupied territories were largely spurious in nature. The security relating to 'political' settlements was defined in the narrowest of terms, addressing only the personal safety of the settlers themselves, but not the underlying causes of the antagonism and potential danger toward them. Little consideration was given into the hastening role the settlements might play in the overall security threat. Moreover, despite the clear change in historical circumstances that prevailed before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, nationalist explanations were offered forth that justified Jewish settlement in the occupied territories as a 'historic right' that exists irrespective of contrary positions of international law. It was this view that prevailed when Yitzhak Rabin's Labour government assumed authority in 1992. Even this government, which was liberal by Israeli standards and even issued a 'freeze' on the construction of new settlements, was unwilling to dismantle any of the 'political' settlements that had been constructed by previous governments. Rabin and Peres were definitely committed to the security of Israel's citizens. But this security pledge also

extended to the Israeli settlers in the occupied territories, whom they were unwilling to uproot, and whose continuing presence had become largely a nationalist consideration.

Asymmetrical Recognition

Rabin and Peres were independent thinkers with regard to the resolution of the Palestinian question. It should be noted, moreover, that Rabin's ideas were never as thoroughly developed as those of Peres. Rabin tended to have 'working assumptions' that were a product of his experiences in the military and government. Accordingly, it is more prudent to survey Rabin's personal history to discern his views on the Palestinians. Peres's views, on the other hand, can best be gleaned from his numerous writings that deal with the issue of the Palestinians. It is also worthwhile to cite accounts of Peres's many diplomatic overtures in this regard. Yet both Rabin and Peres's evolving views toward the Palestinians and the PLO reflected asymmetrical recognition, a prime component of modulation. It is necessary to relay their attitudes in order to convey that the 1993 recognition of the PLO was not the act of men whose fundamental perceptions had been transformed, but rather that of pragmatic chauvinists who never saw the Palestinians as their equals.

Rabin's Evolving Views

For most of his political career, Rabin had adhered to a wholly state centred conception of international relations. As a consequence, he long viewed the Palestinians merely as refugees and stateless sub-nationals, an element but not the crux of the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict. Addressing a joint session of the US Congress in 1976, for example, Rabin insisted that the Palestinians were not the root of the Arab-Israeli conflict and to view them as

such was 'to put the cart before the horse'.[18] Even after the emergence of the

PLO as a political actor, Rabin continued to maintain his state centred

worldview, believing the Arab states and not the PLO to be the primary threat

to be confronted at war and encountered at the negotiation table. In this vein,

Rabin had hoped that the 1977 diplomatic breakthrough between Israel and

Egypt would have had a ripple effect and bring about peace accords between

Israel and other Arab states, thus 'ending' the conflict of which the

Palestinians were a part, but not the core. Jordan was particularly crucial in

this regard, because Rabin sought to resolve, or rather sidestep, the Palestinian

question through a territorial compromise with Jordan. It was even difficult for

him to accept the Palestinian autonomy plan that was a component of the

Camp David Accords. As a minister in the 1984-1989 Labour-Likud

government of national unity, Rabin had initially believed that Palestinian

autonomy would be acceptable only if it were reframed as an interim

arrangement in which Israel and Jordan would establish a dual-control regime

over the West Bank and Gaza strip. He believed that since Palestinians

composed a sizable proportion of Jordan, and were thus an integral part of the

Hashemite regime, a solution to their political aspirations should be found

within a Jordanian-Palestinian federation. It was only quiet pressure from the

Jordanians that prompted Rabin to relent and accept some form of Palestinian

participation in a future dialogue. But Rabin had made such a concession only

to try to induce Jordan to begin formal peace negotiations. His gesture was by

no means a response to the growing international status of the PLO or the

support for its call for Palestinian statehood.

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[18]Avi Shlaim, 'Israeli Politics and Middle East Peacemaking', 21.

Rabin differentiated between the PLO and the Palestinian population of the occupied territories. He maintained a relatively forthcoming attitude toward the Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza strip, but at the same time he did not deem these 'native residents' to be a fully-fledged national group deserving of an independent state. He regarded the 'local' Palestinians solely a social community that was entitled to live in peace and economic prosperity under a system of limited, devolved of authority.

Rabin did not consider the PLO to be a legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, but simply a 'terrorist organisation'. While he did not believe that the PLO posed as grave a threat to Israel as the Arab states did, he nonetheless saw the organisation as a force to be reckoned with militarily. He held such an assessment even after the 1982 Lebanon war, when a largely weakened PLO was forced to move its base of operations to Tunis. He believed the PLO continued to play a politically destabilising role, and commented, for example, that the organisation would be used as a pawn by the Soviet Union in the global superpower confrontation, in order to undermine American diplomatic efforts in the Middle East.[19] As long as the PLO was fully committed to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, Rabin believed it to be a totally unacceptable partner for negotiations. This precept remained unchanged despite the enhanced international status of the PLO and the Jordanian insistence in April 1985 that the Palestinians must join the negotiating process.

Rabin's management approach to the 'local' Palestinian population in the territories was very much a product of what might be called 'democratic

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[19]Hemda Ben-Yehuda, 'Attitude Change and Policy Transformation: Yitzhak Rabin and the Palestinian Question' *Israel Affairs* Vol. 3, No. 3 (1997), 205.

nationalist' convictions. In 1992 he commented in this regard, on the 'right' of

Jewish settlement in the occupied territories versus the Palestinian question:

> I believe in the Jewish people's right to the entire Land of Israel. But the actual problem is the 1.7 million Palestinians in the territories who are a community that is completely different from us – in religious, cultural, and political terms. Therefore, even though I recognize the Jews' claim to all of Israel I do not want to annex 1.7 million Palestinians against their will because this will make Israel a binational state.[20]

The national character of the State of Israel as the 'Jewish state' would be

jeopardised if the West Bank and Gaza strip were officially annexed.

Annexation would require granting Israeli citizenship to the Palestinians of the

West Bank and Gaza strip, following the precedent set in 1949 with regard to

the Arab population of Israel. But if the Palestinians were legally

enfranchised, the combined numbers of Arab citizens of Israel would

eventually outnumber Jews. Through the democratic process, these Arab

citizens could assume control of the government and undo the Jewish national

character of the Israeli state. After annexation, it would only be possible for

Israeli nationalists to preserve this character through the juridical

disenfranchisement of the majority Arab population, in a manner similar to

Apartheid South Africa. Rabin was therefore opposed to annexing the

territories for democratic reasons, but as a nationalist he rejected the idea of

uprooting the Israeli settlements that had also been built there. He did however

seek a 'functional disengagement' of settlements from Palestinian towns and

cities. In order to secure a new territorial compromise with Jordan, Rabin

advocated that Israeli settlements should be established in relatively

unpopulated 'security areas', such as the environs of Jerusalem and the Jordan

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[20]Ibid., 208.

valley of the West Bank. But these criteria were only broad policy guidelines. As was relayed, Rabin did not strenuously object, for example, to 'ideological' settlements that were constructed in the midst of Palestinian areas, nor was he willing to support their subsequent dismantlement once they had been established.

Rabin's attitude toward the Palestinians changed as a result of his acceptance of the limits of Israel's significant military power. But his overall bearing toward them remained basically unaltered. After the 1982 Lebanon war confronted Rabin with the recognition of PLO military power, he began to search for a political solution that would accommodate both Israeli nationalist considerations and security needs. Rabin accepted the idea in April 1985 of an inclusion of local Palestinians who were not PLO followers as part of a joint negotiating delegation with Jordan. By 1986 he even agreed to accept PLO supporters from the territories in such a delegation, but not from the Palestinian Diaspora. But it must be understood that this new outlook still reflected his belief that bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Jordan would alone to lead to a comprehensive peace agreement. His moderated stance to the Palestinian population was but a slight repackaging of past ameliorative gestures offered in the economic and welfare, but not the political domain.

By 1989, Rabin had converted his approach towards the management of the Palestinians in the territories, as well as his awareness that Israel was unable to overcome the PLO by military means, into a new policy: an iron-fist response towards the *intifada* accompanied by the search for negotiations with moderate local Palestinians. When the Palestinian uprising began in December

1987, Rabin was Minister of Defence in the Labour-Likud national unity government headed by Yitzhak Shamir. Rabin was critical of Shamir for not using sufficient force to crush the *intifada*, issuing a notorious order to Israeli troops to 'break the bones' of Palestinian protesters. But when this policy failed, and his army commanders explained that the uprising was a political problem with no simple military solution, Rabin coined the phrase 'marching with two feet', meaning that he favoured a strategy utilising the military foot and the political foot. But Rabin still did not consider the PLO to be the genuine representative of the Palestinian people. He often lamented the lack of an authentic Palestinian leadership in the territories willing to 'resolve the conflict' and expressed hope that 'if Jordan and such a leadership [of local inhabitants] emerge, that would be wonderful'.[21] Rabin tried in vain to locate a suitable Palestinian partner and approached various figures in the Palestinian public with the question: 'Are you, any group among you, prepared to say that you – the residents of the territories – are willing to be our partner in a political settlement?'[22]

Rabin modified his belief that autonomy was acceptable only as a means to renew Jordanian participation in the peace process. He departed from his earlier view that the Arab-Israeli conflict was wholly an inter-state issue, recognising the existence of a far more complex situation involving several non-state elements. 'The Palestinian uprising, which he had initially (mis)perceived as frequent and large scale riots, but eventually came to view it as a civil uprising of a politically-aware population, convinced him that the Palestinians had openly declared both their hostility to Israel and their

[21]Ibid.
[22]Ibid.

readiness to carry out an uncompromising struggle'.[23] In May 1989 he and

Peres proposed a four-phase plan for Palestinian autonomy. The plan called

for a calming period, after which the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza

strip were to elect representatives who would serve as the core of autonomous

authority and that would later negotiate a final status agreement with Israel at

the end of an interim period. Rabin placed his hopes on the dynamics that

would develop during the transitional phase:

> to create through an interim agreement...a new reality which may bring
> about a change in positions. We hope this change occurs on their side,
> but they have the right to hope the change occurs on our side. This is
> the logic and I think the wisdom of dividing progress toward peace into
> stages.[24]

Rabin believed the independent-mindedness of the *intifada* could be harnessed

by Israel to create a leadership clique of local Palestinians who would

gradually reconcile themselves to the Israeli presence in the territories once

experiencing relative empowerment.

For Rabin, negotiations with local Palestinians were about prioritising

Israeli interests. Rabin did not hesitate to inflict collective punishment, even at

the expense of those Palestinian elements that had begun to negotiate with

Israel late in 1991 – who had argued to their fellow Palestinians that doing so

would improve their lives and end the occupation. In response to a series of

sensational knife attacks by Palestinian extremists against Israeli civilians in

early 1993, Rabin initiated a closure policy, sealing off the West Bank and

Gaza strip and preventing any Palestinians from entering Israel. The action

brought about an end to the violence toward Israelis, but Rabin did not

consider its devastating effect on the economy and the everyday life of

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[23]Ibid., 209.
[24]Ibid., 211.

Palestinians, how it would foment greater frustration and incentives to violence. He argued to his constituents that the closure was in a fact a preview of the autonomy deal that he sought to reach with the Palestinians, an arrangement that would be of ultimate benefit to Israel.

Peres's Vision for the Palestinians

In his memoirs as well as in his later works, Shimon Peres reveals an evolving strategy that conceives of new boundaries and borders as a way to substitute material and economic gain for full sovereign rights for the Palestinians. At first glance, Peres's vision seems quite enlightened:

> The New Middle East, as I envisage it, is neither a pipe-dream nor an expendable luxury. It is a vital necessity without which we shall not be able to raise the living standards of the people of our region. As the standard of living goes up, the level of violence and tension will go down.[25]

But the desire to raise living standards in the Middle East is not an admission by Peres that all peoples of the region share equal national and political rights. On the contrary, economic development is intended to offset the severity of the rather different understanding that Israel is entitled to extraordinary rights vis-à-vis the Palestinians. It is within this context that Peres believes that the issue of the political status of the Palestinians, which remains open-ended and is thus potentially destabilising, must be resolved:

> Before laying the foundation of this New Middle East, as before any building project the ground must be cleared. In our case, the ground is sown with mines, and these must be painstakingly defused.
> I have never doubted that the Palestinian problem is a mine that could trigger any number of others, and that defusing the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is the key to regional peace. That perception became all the more true, and all the more urgent, in the wake of Camp David and the Israeli–Egyptian peace treaty. I

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[25]Shimon Peres, *Battling for Peace: Memoirs*, Edited by David Landau (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1995): 297.

constantly searched for new and creative ways of tackling the Palestinian issue.[26]

For Peres, 'new and creative ways of tackling the Palestinian issue' meant to search for political solutions that would address the status of the Palestinians but that would simultaneously *prevent* them from attaining an independent state.

Peres built on the ideas of his mentor, Moshe Dayan, who long sought to shape a 'functional' compromise for shared rule of the occupied territories between Israel and Jordan. In a clandestine meeting with King Hussein of Jordan in 1975, for example, Peres, who at the time was Minister of Defence in the 1974-1977 Rabin government, first began to articulate his conception of this idea:

> I proposed that a possible solution lay in the creation of three political entities: Israel, Jordan, and a Palestinian entity that would be administered by the other two jointly. The Palestinian entity, comprising of the West Bank and Gaza, would be wholly demilitarized. It would fall under no single sovereignty; instead, residents carrying Jordanian passports [meaning Palestinians] would vote for the Jordanian parliament, and those with Israeli citizenship [meaning Jews living in Israeli settlements] would vote for the Knesset in Jerusalem. The [Palestinian] inhabitants of the Gaza Strip, many of whom were stateless refugees, would receive Jordanian passports... Our basic position was that we opposed the creation of a separate Palestinian state.[27]

It is misleading of Peres to describe his idea as a 'Palestinian entity' because it was to be neither Palestinian in national character nor an entity in political form. Peres was not even advocating a restoration of the sovereignty exercised by Jordan over the West Bank from 1948-1967. He was suggesting instead that both Jordan and Israel exercise a kind of extra-territoriality in the West Bank and Gaza strip, akin to the 19th century concession system in which

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[26]Ibid., 298-9.
[27]Ibid., 301.

European consulates were granted full authority over their nationals within designated areas of China and the Ottoman Empire. But in Peres's design, it would be understood that the extra-territorial powers given to Israel and Jordan would not be exercised in a sovereign host-state, but rather in a mutually agreed 'no-man's land'! Despite Jordanian receptivity to these ideas, the loss of power of Peres's Labour party in 1977 effectively ended his official ability to explore non-sovereign solutions to the Palestinian question for the next decade.

The 'Jordanian option' remained as Peres's solution to the Palestinian question for many years. In April 1987, as Foreign Minister in the Labour-Likud government of national unity, Peres secretly drew up a programme with King Hussein for an international conference, to be held under the auspices of the Great Powers, which would sanction the implementation of an Israeli-Jordanian dual-control regime in the West Bank and Gaza strip. It was to be a conference where international actors facilitated, but did not impose conditions on, the parties:

> I was ready for a conference, but wanted no 'laying down' by anyone. Solutions must evolve out of free, bilateral negotiations between the Middle East parties, and the conference must merely serve as a useful framework under the aegis of the international community.[28]

Facilitation was to give a veneer of legitimacy and objectivity to an agreement that was fundamentally rooted in power politics and that was to be. implemented at the expense of the national and political rights of the Palestinians. Peres intended to create an irreversible *fait accompli* that would

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[28]Ibid., 307.

isolate, and be the death-knoll, of Yasser Arafat and the PLO.[29] But to Peres's dismay, the plan did not succeed.

Peres had tried to circumvent the authority of the Likud Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir. Since he knew that the staunch nationalist Shamir would be opposed to the convening of a conference that would address changing the *status quo* in the occupied territories, Peres attempted to engineer his conference plan as though it were an outside initiative that the Prime Minister could not outright oppose. (Either Shamir would eventually accede to the outcome of the conference, or he would lose power because of the opposition from the public, in which case Peres could be elected and pursue the conference aims as Prime Minister.) As such, Peres requested US Secretary of State George Shultz to put forward the agreement reached with King Hussein as an American proposal. Shultz recalled that, 'the foreign minister of Israel's government of national unity was asking me to sell to Israel's prime minister, the head of a rival party, the substance of an agreement made with a foreign head of state...Peres was informing me, and wanting me to collaborate with him, before going to the prime minister'.[30] Peres avers that Shultz was mistaken and not only he did inform the Prime Minister of the agreement but also that he explained to Shamir that it was necessary to present the agreement as an American proposal because Hussein's standing would be damaged from the revelation of secret meetings with Israel.[31] Shamir, who confirms Shultz's account of Peres's duplicity,[32]

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[29]Ibid., 306.
[30]George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph – My Years as Secretary of State* (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1993): 939.
[31]Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 311.
[32]Yitzhak Shamir, *Summing Up: An Autobiography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1994): 169.

sent a personal emissary to the Secretary of State to express his opposition toward, and thus effectively undermine, Peres's conference plan. It is important to understand that the endgame intentions and operative mechanics that were first generated during this failed episode, the use of international facilitation to legitimate an agreement that essentially overrode Palestinian national rights *and* the generating of peace negotiations by 'roundabout' means, would surface again as the central components of Peres's diplomacy in Oslo.

After the onset of the *intifada* in December 1987, Peres became even more adamant of the need to change the *status quo* in the occupied territories. Although he was convinced the uprising would not have occurred had his plan with Jordan been implemented, Peres understood that a new reality had been created and that it would no longer be possible for Israel to politically circumnavigate the Palestinians. This is not to say that Peres embraced the idea of a Palestinian state as a solution to the *intifada*. He merely believed that since Israel could no longer sidestep the Palestinian issue by dealing with Jordan, it had to deal directly with Palestinian representatives, a local leadership who, after being granted substantial devolved powers from Israel, could cool the passions ignited by the uprising. In was in this vein that, in 1989, Peres had authorised regular meetings between his deputy, Yossi Beilin, Beilin's acquaintance Professor Yair Hirschfeld of Haifa University, and Faisal Husseini, a prominent Palestinian from Jerusalem. Hirschfeld met Husseini at least once a week, and would become well acquainted with the Palestinian leadership from the occupied territories. Moreover Beilin met Husseini every few months and Peres met the prominent Palestinian eight to

ten times.[33] Indeed it was this very link to the Palestinians that would later play a crucial role in generating the Oslo back channel.

As was noted above, Peres co-authored a plan with Rabin in May 1989 to hold elections in the territories for nominating representatives that would conduct negotiations for a transitional period of self-rule and later for a permanent settlement with Israel (p. 112). But in March 1990 the Labour party left the coalition government after Prime Minister Shamir had spurned an offer of the US Secretary of State, James Baker, to facilitate a modified form of the proposed Israeli-Palestinian dialogue. This falling out was not due to Shamir's objection to Palestinian statehood, for in this regard Peres completely agreed with him. Peres in fact opposed Shamir's refusal to seriously explore non-sovereign alternatives that might be used to assuage the Palestinian uprising.

A Refinement of Asymmetrical Recognition

Rabin and Peres's evolving attitudes toward the Palestinians can be seen as a refinement of asymmetrical recognition. Rabin's views in his early career represent the most extreme end of this equilibrium, since he virtually denied a distinctly Palestinian component of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Both men gradually acknowledged the Palestinians, but only as a sub-national grouping whose fate was ultimately bound up with the Hashemite regime in Jordan. Moreover, this shallow recognition was more a function of a concern for the internal political nature of Jewish Israeli society and did not reflect a perception of a rival with an equivalent national claim. This relative acceptance translated into recognition of the need for limited self-government under Israeli auspices after the outbreak of the *intifada* in 1987, and, as will be

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[33]Idem Andrew S. Buchanan, *Peace with Justice: A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements* (London: Macmillan, 2000): 92.

shown in chapter four, would later facilitate the recognition of the PLO as a prelude toward complex co-optation.

Gradually Diminishing Concessions

The following section recounts how Rabin believed that the Jewish Israeli population had become fatigued, how it would be less able to endure future challenges which had never before been encountered, and would thus impel the national leadership to forego the 'inalienable' Jewish right of settlement in the territories captured in 1967 in exchange for an end to protracted conflict. He therefore sought to utilise the strategic climate favouring Israel that emerged in the Middle East after the 1991 Persian Gulf War in order to pre-empt this situation and attain regional peace agreements that would meet his security concerns and nationalist considerations instead. When his tactics proved unsuccessful, Rabin was forced to adopt a different strategy formulated by Peres. It is necessary to discuss all of these factors in order to outline the dynamic that would be reconstituted as the 'gradually diminishing concession' component of a complex-co-optation agenda.

A General Fatigue

Rabin was aware that the Israeli population had become increasingly beleaguered and weary of the continuing protracted conflict with the Palestinians and the Arab states. Moreover, this general fatigue had begun to translate into a diminishing consensus for past security policies, thus restricting the use of force. Losses in materiel and casualties had grown sizably over the course of six wars, adding to a natural desire for stability and normality. This is especially so in a society with universal compulsory military

service and active mobilisation of reservists, where the bulk of the population has become directly sensitised to the price of protracted conflict.

Rabin seemed especially attuned to the consequences of a war-weary Israeli society. He began to fathom the long-term implications of an Israeli society reluctant to sustain a protracted conflict for the sake of nationalist principles. (In Deleuzian terms, he grappled with the 'breakdown' of the Zionist consensus.) In private forums, Rabin compared the behaviour of the Israelis when bombed by the Egyptians air force in 1948 to the response to Iraqi Scud missile attacks in 1991.[34] He lamented how in 1948 over thirty civilian casualties left no imprint on daily life in Tel Aviv, while in 1991 tens of thousands fled the city and its suburbs. His felt that by losing some of their perseverance and determination, Israelis had changed for the worse. He also publicly stated his assessment that the staying power of Israeli society and its willingness to pay a painful price, a core element of the security consensus of the Israeli leadership, had significantly diminished. Having experienced the difficulties of state building and defence, Rabin saw the Israeli public of the 1990s as being spoiled and too easy to panic. He feared that in future conflict, there would be much pressure to end the war quickly, preventing the Israeli military from achieving a decisive victory in battle. In this regard it is also pertinent to relay that Ehud Barak, who was chief of staff during the Rabin government, shared Rabin's concerns about the fabric of Israeli society. Barak, who Rabin was grooming as his protégé and successor, described these changes as negative phenomena that had to be confronted by a concerned and responsible leadership that was nonetheless faithful to Israeli nationalist

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[34]Efraim Inbar, *Rabin and Israel's National Security*, 161.

principles and counter: '...accumulated weariness and cynicism, accompanied by an aggressive and intrusive media, depreciation of the Zionist deeds, the development of a cleavage in the consensus over Israel's political goals, even over the objectives of the use of force (we have seen it in Lebanon and in the Intifada) – all these create a perception, as well as reality of weakness'.[35]

Rabin was concerned that the next, more liberal generation of his Labour party would not be able to adequately maintain Israeli security or remain true to nationalist principles in future negotiations with Arab neighbours. As the first native-born Israeli Prime Minister, Rabin was involved in the conflict to an extent considerably more than any of his predecessors. As a result of his experiences as a commander in the 1948 war, as chief of staff of the Israeli army during the June 1967 war, as ambassador to the United States, and later as Prime Minister and as Minister of Defence, he had come to see himself in his later life as kind of guardian of his nation. Eitan Haber, Rabin's adviser and speechwriter, saw this perceived guardian role as shaping the Prime Minister's central desire to address and offset the growing psychological exhaustion of Israeli society.[36] The opposition Likud parliamentarian Ariel Sharon, who held regular meetings with Rabin – despite their holding of differing political opinions, quoted him as saying, 'The people are weak...The people will have difficulties withstanding an additional war...this is why we have to make concessions'.[37] Yisrael Tal, a reserve general and colleague of Rabin, confirmed that the Prime Minister was especially concerned of the corrosive effects that the *intifada* had placed on

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[35]Ibid.
[36]Ibid., 162.
[37]Ibid.

the staying power and the morale of the Israelis. 'The off-the-record Rabin expressed a great measure of pessimism about the direction of Israeli society and the capacity of the IDF to meet the security challenges facing Israel'.[38]

The New Strategic Threat

Why did Rabin believe that the Israeli people would be less able to endure future threats as they had done in the past? His assessment seems to have been greatly shaped by knowledge of how the changing scope of warfare would alter a future Middle Eastern conflict. Although Rabin did not leave any writings that dealt systematically with the Arab-Israeli conflict or the peace process that began under his administration, it is possible to utilise speeches he gave in the early 1990s, when he held no governmental office, to reconstruct the strategic mindset he formed during the period immediately prior to his election in 1992 and the signing of the Oslo Accords shortly thereafter in 1993. Despite his conviction that Israel's deterrence strategy had helped foment a peace treaty with Egypt in 1979 and that it continued to function effectively, Rabin was *nonetheless* acutely sensitive to ongoing military changes in the region.[39] He cautioned that Israel had grown overly accustomed to wars in which its armed forces had been able to reverse the tide of battle from defensive to offensive action, transferring the fighting to Arab territory and attaining defeat as quickly as possible.[40] He started to suggest a finite utility to existing Israeli defensive strategies that were designed to deter war:

> We have learned the hard way from previous wars–irrespective of their origins–that Arab armies undergo a rapid refurbishing of their military.

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[38]Ibid., 163.

[39]Yitzhak Rabin, 'Deterrence in an Israeli Security Context', address given to the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, May 1991, in Aharon Klieman and Ariel Levite ed., *Deterrence in the Middle East: Where Theory and Practice Converge* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993): 10.

[40]Ibid., 11.

To date, experience has shown that following each war, Arab countries have obtained armaments in greater quantities and improved quality. I cannot remember a war where the country defeated by us did not subsequently improve the quantity and quality of its arms.[41]

He began to speak of the possibility of a new style of Arab-Israeli warfare, an environment far more painful than the Israeli home-front had ever experienced: 'Today, we know that hostile Arab states intend to attack us, in the next war, on three fronts simultaneously: on the battlefield, at our rear logistical and support bases, and at our civilian population centers'.[42] Rabin predicted that a launch of missiles at Israeli cities would cause massive alarm and he was certain that the Palestinians and the Arab states neighbours would be better able to withstand the attrition involved in a protracted conflict.

Rabin seems to have pondered all the strategic possibilities available to Israel. He expounded on the gap between Israel's foremost goal of transforming and conditioning neighbouring Arab states in line with its national interests and strategic vision and its actual status as a small country:

> When one's objective is to destroy the enemy's forces, one must ask "for what purpose?" In order to impose your political will! A case in point was World War II. The Allies defined the war's objective as the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperialist Japan—and they attained this objective. They then implemented radical reforms: Macarthur implemented social reform in Japan, the Allies divided Germany, and West Germany underwent a transformation, as did Italy.
> The first question that requires a clear-cut answer in the formulation of the Israeli security policy: is the result attained by the Allies a feasible alternative in the Arab-Israeli conflict? Realistically, can we undergo five years of economic austerity and devote the budget to an IDF military buildup—and then conquer the Middle East? Are we capable of bringing the Arab nations to a state of affairs comparable to that of the Axis powers at the end of World War II? This question must be answered before a security policy can be formulated.

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[41]Yitzhak Rabin, 'After the Gulf War: Israeli Defense and Its Security Policy' address given to the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University, 10 June 1991, translated by David M. Weinberg; in Efraim Inbar, *Rabin and Israel's National Security*, Appendix A: 174.
[42] Ibid., 177.

> We must strive to defend the state and attain a solution to the conflict with our neighbors, but there are great differences in the international situation pertaining in World War II and the international situation today of Israel. I once said that between the Allies, the Axis, and the "Almighty," there wasn't any entity that could have restricted the actions of the Allies. In the case of the Arab-Israeli conflict, there are superpowers and international actors that stand between the Arab countries at war with Israel and the "Almighty."
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> Furthermore, in the situation that exists today, Israel cannot formulate a security policy involving the imposition of preferred peace arrangements following upon the defeat or conquest of Arab countries. This is not a pleasant situation–but is a given! I repeat and further emphasize: without agreeing in this regard, a security policy cannot be fashioned. And therefore, we cannot set for ourselves far-reaching political goals such as the *imposition* of peace as a security policy.[43]

Since Israel could not feasibly impose its will on the Arab states, and past deterrence strategies were seen as less of a guarantee against a harsh new type of regional war, Rabin desired that an accommodation be sought with the Arab states during the strategic climate favouring Israel in the early 1990s.

Upon taking office in 1992, Yitzhak Rabin saw a strategic 'window of opportunity' to resolve the conflict with Israel's Arab neighbours and best secure the status of Israel as regional hegemon. The end of the Cold War and the subsequent dissolution of the USSR had disadvantaged Syria and the PLO because these former Soviet clients were no longer receiving the financial and military assistance that had previously been central in sustaining their confrontation with Israel. Similarly, the 1991 Persian Gulf War had severely weakened the conventional fighting capabilities and nuclear potential of Iraq, the only regional state that heretofore was capable of rivalling Israeli military strength. Rabin believed that he had to act quickly in order to permanently cement the new regional *status quo* that had emerged overwhelmingly in Israel's favour. Rabin furthermore sought to make use of this 'window of

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[43]Ibid., 173-4.

opportunity' to counter the rise of Iran, fearing the Islamic Republic could attain strategic parity with Israel by the end of the 1990s:

> Iran has replaced Iraq in its megalomaniacal ambitions in empire building....Within seven years from today, this [rising power] will be the threat [to Israel] in the Middle East. We have this time to resolve problems. I believe we will succeed.[44]

Rabin believed that attacks by 'second tier' states like Iran or Iraq would be unlikely if Israel were to attain peace treaties with its immediate neighbours.[45] In March 1992, he wrote that, '...if we succeed within five to seven years to conclude peace, or almost peace, with the Palestinians, Jordan, and afterwards with Syria, we will have largely limited the motivation for a [nonconventional] arms race'.[46]

The Madrid Framework: An Avenue for Rabin's Aims

After the defeat of Iraq in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the United States and the Soviet Union co-convened an international conference in Madrid, Spain to discuss a diplomatic resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. In this context, bilateral negotiating rounds began between Israel and a delegation of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza strip. The first phase of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations were to deal with the status of Palestinian self-government in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, and at the end of three years of such a regime, negotiations were to begin on the final status of these territories. Negotiations were conducted on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. The first five rounds of the talks (which had moved

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[44]Yitzhak Rabin, Speech delivered at the International Center for Peace in the Middle East, Jerusalem, 17 December 1992, cited in Idem David Makovsky, *Making Peace with the PLO* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996): 113.

[45]Efraim Inbar, *Rabin and Israel's National Security*, 140.

[46]Yitzhak Rabin, 'Making Use of the Time Out' *Politica* (Hebrew) 44 (March 1992): 29, cited in Inbar, 140.

from Madrid to Washington) were held while the intransigent Shamir government was still in power.[47]

Rabin inherited the Madrid talks upon coming to office but was unable to use the framework to achieve his aims. But he 'failed to follow through in the role of the role of "Israel's de Gaulle," which one highly informed observer of Israeli politics, Shlomo Avineri, had predicted'.[48] In the first weeks of office the Rabin government sought to promote progress on the Palestinian track. Hundreds of political prisoners were released and restrictions that had been placed on Palestinians during the *intifada* were eased. Yet the Palestinians did not respond to these good will gestures that were meant to demonstrate that the new administration was serious about reaching an accord:

> Rabin the strategist believed in "marching with two feet"–coordinating diplomatic and military moves so that one strengthened and complemented the other. He saw no contradiction between offering better terms in Washington at the same time that the army stepped up its assault in the territories; like a general, he thought in terms of softening up the enemy, forcing him to table. "If you continue to pull the trigger," Rabin warned the Palestinians, "it will be unfortunate because your fate will be bad and miserable. We say to you: consider your deeds well....You will bear the consequences of your mistakes."
> But Palestinian society did not function as one coherent organism, with gunmen and negotiators serving as different arms of the same

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[47]After losing an election to Yitzhak Rabin's Labour party in June 1992, Shamir admitted that he had sent a delegation to the conference and successor talks solely to please the superpower sponsors. His true goal had been simply to negotiate indefinitely, while simultaneously increasing the Israeli settlement presence in the occupied territories: 'I would have conducted negotiations on autonomy for ten years, and in the meantime we would have reached half a million people in Judea and Samaria'. Interview with Joseph Harif in *Ma'ariv*, 26 June 1992, quoted in *Time*, 7 July 1992, cited in Ibid. Andrew S. Buchanan, *Peace with Justice: A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements*, 132.

[48]Idem Myron J. Aronoff, .'Labor in the Second Rabin Era: The First Year of Leadership' in Robert O. Freedman, ed., *Israel Under Rabin* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995): 139.

body. The army's tactics enhanced the stature of the Palestinian fighters while undermining the negotiators.[49]

There was no response because the actions that had been intended to generate rapid progress at the bargaining table had occurred in tandem with hard-line security measures that simply alienated Rabin's Palestinian interlocutors.

Rabin was a rather one-dimensional thinker, indifferent to the incommensurability issues marking his approach of 'marching with two feet'. (This is not to suggest that security concerns are not compatible with the search for diplomatic and political solutions to conflicts, but only that Rabin's widely developed use of force was not matched by an equally sophisticated, political understanding of the 'local' Palestinians with whom he wished to reach an agreement.) Cobban (1995) confirms this assessment, noting that when he operated on the basis of 'marching with two feet' as Minister of Defence from 1988-1990, 'Rabin seemed to have absorbed none of the lessons—arrived at over the preceding years by some of his country's most thoughtful political commentators—about the real links that exist between the security condition in which Palestinians were living in the territories and the political balance within the Palestinian community'.[50] Shlaim (1995) agrees, noting that while Rabin was not as immovable as his ultra-nationalist predecessor Yitzhak Shamir,

> A lifetime spent as a soldier inclines him to proceed with caution, on the basis of "worst-case analysis," and makes him reluctant to assume any political risks. Rabin is not endowed with imagination or vision, and he certainly has no empathy for the other side in the conflict. Like a staff officer, he concentrates on the practical side, examines alternative courses of action, and carefully weighs the costs and

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[49]Glenn Frankel, *Beyond the Promised Land: Jews and Arabs on the Hard Road to a New Israel* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994): 334.

[50]Helena Cobban, 'Israel and the Palestinians: From Madrid to Oslo and Beyond' in Robert O. Freedman, ed., *Israel Under Rabin* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995): 97.

benefits of each. This is his greatest strength and greatest limitation as a statesman....Rabin likes to think of himself as a great strategist, like Henry Kissinger, combining the use of force and diplomacy to achieve political ends. But his political thinking is crude, his diplomatic style is unsubtle, and his use of force is extremely heavy-handed.[51]

Rabin's approach to conciliation was a bizarre combination of accommodation and recalcitrance. He was determined to achieve an agreement with the Palestinians, but lacked the requisite *savoir-faire* in order to do so.

The incident that best illustrates Rabin's 'marching with two feet' strategy prior to Oslo was the deportation of 415 Palestinians that began on 17 December 1992. The immediate background to the incident involved the staging of ambushes by Hamas gunmen against Israeli soldiers in the Gaza strip and the West Bank. Escalating the violence, a Hamas cell operating inside Israel kidnapped an Israeli border guard, and demanded the release of Sheikh Ahmed Yasin, the imprisoned leader of the Islamic movement, in return for the soldier's freedom. In response, Rabin ordered mass arrests of suspected Hamas activists and sympathisers (1200 people total). When the body of the abducted Israeli was discovered shortly thereafter, Rabin decided to deport some 415 men assumed to be the primary leaders and organisers of the arrestees. Rabin argued that the action was necessary for the sake of the peace process; it was a pre-emptive operation against violent incidents being planned by Hamas, including the assassination of the Palestinian negotiators with whom Israel was dealing in Washington.[52] But the deportation order was without precedent. (Even the Shamir government had rejected proposals of this sort on legal grounds.[53]) Indeed none of the alleged Hamas leaders were

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[51]Avi Shlaim, 'Prelude to the Accord: Likud, Labor, and the Palestinians' *Journal of Palestine Studies* 23 no. 2 Winter 1994: 12.
[52]Frankel, 336.
[53]Ibid.

charged, tried, or allowed to appeal before being 'dumped' in a no-man's land

in Lebanon:

> The deportation exposed Rabin as an unreconstructed Arab-basher. Having recognized the need to march with both feet, the military foot and the political foot, he reverted to his old habit of kicking with the military foot. Far from demonstrating that the only language the Palestinians understand is force, his action revealed that force is the only language he himself instinctively resorts to in dealing with the Palestinians. Rabin had plainly stated that for him security takes precedence over peace, and in this sense he was true to his word. The problem with his notion of security is that it denied the basic human rights of the Palestinians. This was a major reason for the lack of progress in the peace talks. During the [1992] election campaign, Rabin ran as a candidate who would conclude an agreement on Palestinian autonomy within six to nine months. Yet six months after taking office he dealt a body blow to the entire peace process by his savage treatment of the Palestinians.[54]

An undertaking intended to weaken Hamas instead discredited the peace talks

and weakened Palestinian moderates.

Peres's Contribution

It was Peres who would provide the framework that Rabin was unable

to formulate of his own volition. While he lacked the security credentials and

subsequent public trust that was enjoyed by the Prime Minister, Peres had

much greater savvy than Rabin.

Upon returning to office as Foreign Minister in 1992, Peres began to

search for a way to implement a particular framework of Palestinian self-rule:

> Since we had effectively lost the 'Jordanian option', at least for the time being, we had no choice but to develop a Palestinian option. I felt that there was no real prospect of implementing the [purely functional, non-territorial based] Palestinian autonomy plan as originally proposed by the Likud governments as their interpretation of the Camp David agreements in 1978. Negotiations on the basis of the Camp David formula had led nowhere in the past. I believed that genuine implementation would mean in practice negotiating in practice the handover of the entire West Bank and Gaza to Palestinian rule, for which we were not ready. Instead, I supported the idea of an interim

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[54]Avi Shlaim, 'Prelude to the Accord: Likud, Labor and the Palestinians', 16.

agreement. If we could not agree at this stage on a map, at least we could reach an agreement on a timetable, in the hope that time would alter the circumstances so that we would eventually be able to agree with the Palestinians on a common map.[55]

It is misleading of Peres to say that the Labour government was 'not ready' to negotiate the 'handover of the entire West Bank and Gaza to Palestinian rule'. Peres should instead say the Labour government was 'unwilling' to completely give up the West Bank and Gaza strip. Indeed this understanding is implied in his statement. Peres asserts that if Israel and the Palestinians could not agree on a map, then hopefully time would 'alter the circumstances' so that two sides could later reach a compromise. Either Peres means that Israel would reverse its stance and eventually agree to handover the entire West Bank and Gaza strip, or that, after experiencing the future fruits of self-rule, the Palestinians would reconcile themselves to the unwillingness of Israel to relinquish the whole West Bank and Gaza strip to them. Since for Peres '[a]ny attempt to forcibly remove [Jewish settlers in the occupied territories] could create an irreparable split within the nation'[56] and given that his 'overlapping sovereignty' plan with Jordan had allowed for Israeli settlements to remain in the West Bank and Gaza strip, it is unlikely that after the interim period, Israel would alter its position and come to accept the Palestinians' 'map'.

Peres understood that the local Palestinian leadership did not have the power or the public support to foreswear statehood. Unlike the role that Peres had earlier planned for Jordan, the Palestinians with whom Israel was negotiating could neither make such a monumental decision, nor outflank the

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[55]Ibid., 321.
[56]Ibid.

PLO. Peres began to contemplate an idea of dealing with the PLO in a manner

that was tantamount to complex co-optation:

> My Cabinet colleagues, including the Prime Minister, believed that the
> indigenous Palestinian leadership who comprised the negotiating team
> in Washington would gradually gain stature and independence and be
> able to negotiate without the close and stifling supervision of the PLO.
> I felt that they were mistaken. But they felt that I was wrong and were
> concerned that it would be impossible to negotiate with Arafat. In
> August 1992, in a private conversation with Rabin, I suggested that
> Israel should reconsider its position on negotiating with Arafat. But
> there was no agreement between us.
> In January 1993, in another private meeting with the Premier, I told
> him again that, in my view, we must take bold steps toward negotiation
> with the PLO. As long as Arafat remained in Tunis, I argued, he
> represented the 'outsiders', the Palestinian diaspora, and would do his
> best to slow down the peace talks. I suggested that we propose to
> Arafat and his staff that they move to Gaza. Once there, they would
> have the right to vote and stand in elections; and if elected, they would
> represent the Palestinians directly in negotiations with Israel. My
> criticism of the Washington talks was that we were trying to reach a
> declaration of principles without any reference to specific territorial
> issues. The way to succeed, I believed, was to link a declaration of
> principles to a tangible concept of 'Gaza first plus'.[57]

Peres advocated negotiations with the PLO, but it is important to note that he

never said that Israel must recognise the political programme of the

organisation that called for the establishment of a Palestinian state. Similarly,

Peres's description of his proposal for 'Arafat and his staff' to 'move to Gaza'

and 'stand in elections' implicitly conveys co-optation goals. Peres in fact

begins to suggest an idea of specifically installing Arafat as Israel's junior

partner in Gaza, in order to place the PLO Chairman in a position of

substantial authority, which, despite any painful concessions he might make,

would be in his interest to maintain. Such an understanding is implied when

Peres links a potential negotiation with Arafat with a 'declaration of principles

on specific territorial issues'. Peres notes his criticism that the parties at the

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[57]Ibid., 323-4.

Washington talks were attempting to reach a declaration of principles without any reference to particular territorial issues. But the 'territorial issues' were implicit for the Palestinian delegation in Washington. They were operating with the intent to secure self-rule over all Palestinian areas that Israel had occupied since 1967, the entire West Bank and Gaza strip. So for Peres, 'redefining' territorial issues through his understanding of 'Gaza first plus' would have meant establishing the boundaries of an interim period negotiating map that would favour Israel, creating a *fait accompli* that Arafat – the new negotiating partner – would eventually be forced to accept.

'Gaza first plus' was designed to give the PLO a foothold in the West Bank, overriding the concerns of the leadership of the organisation that Israel was only willing to give them control of the Gaza strip, but it is crucial to understand that the plan gave the Palestinians territorial jurisdiction within both areas in order to try to alter their understanding and perception of what it meant to control land. The plan not only redrew boundaries, it was an attempt to change their very nature, to create an incipient, substitute concept of land. Peres says:

> I came up with the idea of "Gaza first" in 1980. I thought it would make things easier if we could reach an agreement in two strokes–first Gaza, then [specific areas, but not] the [entire] West Bank...[But] [n]ot one Arab country [that could serve as a substitute interlocutor for the Palestinians] has shown a readiness to annex the Gaza Strip. Yasser Arafat well understood the situation and turned his attention to Gaza, where he could gain not only yet another television appearance but also a territorial foothold. Israel, too, I believe had an interest in his doing so.
> But, again, how could this be accomplished? I assumed if we proposed "Gaza first," the Palestinians would suspect we were offering "Gaza only." Without a clear sign for continued negotiations regarding the West Bank, the Palestinians could not agree. I had also learned that offers made out of hand tend to be rejected, whereas those made in response to a demand are considered victories. In other words, the

chance of getting "Gaza first" depended on two prerequisites: that it be "Gaza plus" and that the Palestinians ask for it.

...Finally the offer was framed and consolidated, with Gaza and Jericho first in accordance with demands by the PLO... I preferred to offer Jericho as a sign of our intent to continue negotiations, even if "Gaza first" would be the main policy. There were no Jewish settlements in the immediate Jericho area, therefore there would be no need to discuss their fate. We proposed that an administrative center be set up in Jericho to take the pressure off [Palestinian claims to nearby] Jerusalem...[I]n contrast to the Washington negotiations, the Oslo accord also included a paragraph on the Gaza strip and Jericho. Thus, in Oslo the Palestinians gained not only philosophical principles, though important in themselves, but also land.[58]

Peres, belittling Arafat for being a self-interested figure that sought television appearances above all else, saw the PLO Chairman as open to manipulation if he were offered land. In order to persuade Arafat to come to the Gaza strip, he needed to be led to believe that he had achieved a victory – that his administration would eventually extend into the territory *of* the West Bank. But Peres had in mind a rather different semantic distinction. 'Gaza and Jericho first' would reframe lands under PLO jurisdiction simply as 'territories *in* the West Bank', meaning the territory *not* in its entirety or even as contiguous areas of control. It was to be a system of substitutes, such as when Peres notes that the town of Jericho could serve as the Palestinians' West Bank administrative centre instead of East Jerusalem. The Palestinians would be given what they coveted most, land, in order to prevent them from achieving statehood.

Peres spoke of gradually institutionalising the sub-sovereign role of the PLO:

[Palestinian autonomy] is a station on the road to a permanent solution, but not in itself a permanent solution. Yet I felt at the time and I still feel that we have to reveal our vision gradually. If we reveal

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[58]Shimon Peres, *The New Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993): 20-23.

it ahead of time not only will we encounter unnecessary opposition, but we will give away before negotiations what we should keep for our fallback position.[59]

The 'unnecessary opposition' to be avoided was a demand for a Palestinian state at the end of the interim period. Peres believed that the Palestinians would benefit so much from economic co-operation with Israel that they would be eventually persuaded to accept sub-sovereignty over statehood. He thought it possible to bring about this situation by casting the sub-sovereign arrangement designed for the Palestinians in supra-national terms:

> The concept of sovereignty was introduced in the sixteenth century, but since then sovereignty has lost a great deal of its meaning. Because as in the Middle Ages, when we went from cities to states, today we are in the process of going from states to communities, or commonwealths. This is clearly true on the economic side, but it doesn't stop there – it goes from economy to strategy to common passports and common currencies.
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> Now I think the next step should be an agreement that we will be based on three different borders or frontiers: a military one, an economic one, and a political one. The military border should be the Jordan River line, which means that no foreign army may cross the Jordan River and threaten Israel. And whatever territories are given back to the Palestinians will remain demiltarized. And also I think the Jordanian, Palestinian, and Israelis economies should cooperate. You cannot put an endless number of custom posts and barriers on such a small territory.
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> ...I'm talking about a sort of Benelux. Politically any agreement should take into consideration the demographic layout. Wherever there are densely populated Palestinian areas it should be under the rule of the Palestinians, except for the security locations. In the beginning it will look strange, but lets not forget that the Gaza-Jericho agreement – the nature of [Palestinian] autonomy was also unprecedented. We created precedents, we didn't follow precedents...
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> You see, the great story about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not so much the size of the land or the number of people, but the complex nature of the conflict. On such a small piece of land, with such a long history, with such a great conflict – it's very hard to find a solution. We came in at the last moment. Because in politics it's like in your own kitchen: you can break eggs and make omelets [sic], but you cannot make eggs again from omelets [sic]. Bosnia, for example, is an omelet [sic]. We are being very careful now to stop the omelet-ing, so

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[59]Shimon Peres and Robert Littell, *For the Future of Israel* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998): 77.

to speak, of the Arab-Israeli conflict. And to cut it exactly is not a simple matter. But that it what we have to do and what we will do.[60]

Peres is describing a customs union between two sovereign states and a sub-sovereign entity. In his vision, Israel would continue to maintain an armed presence alongside Palestinian-ruled territories, which would not constitute a sovereign state. The Palestinian economy would be integrated with those of Israel and Jordan, and the benefits of such an arrangement should suffice to compensate for any diminished sense of Palestinian national honour that might emerge from a lack of conventional sovereignty. Yet it is inaccurate to describe his proposal as a type of Benelux, which was a customs union of three fully sovereign states. Indeed, Peres's concession that the future arrangement 'will look strange' as well as his jargon about the 'complex nature of the conflict', 'creating precedents', and 'cutting political omelettes' all refer to the permanently sub-sovereign Palestinian entity that he expected the PLO to govern.

Peres provided a revealing window into his thoughts regarding the PLO at a UNESCO conference in Grenada in December 1993 – two months after the official signing of the Oslo Accords. Discussing a 'hypothetical' outcome of the final status talks, Peres not only suggested that the Accords were simply a means to implement his past ideas of 'functional compromise', but also that the decision to recognise the PLO was motivated by designs similar to complex co-optation. Developing the idea that he secretly proposed to King Hussein in 1975, Peres argued that after the interim period of Palestinian autonomy, the West Bank would differ politically from the Gaza strip. While the latter area would eventually become a demilitarised,

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[60]Ibid., 123-125.

independent state, the West Bank would acquire a different status, developing

instead as an autonomous polity composed of Palestinians and Israeli

settlers.[61] A local parliament would be established for the West Bank, in which

both Palestinians and Israeli settler candidates would stand for election. This

devolved assembly would be responsible for all internal matters, while

security and foreign relations would remain under the aegis of Israel. At the

same time, Peres noted, settlers would continue to be Israelis and vote in

elections for the Israeli Parliament, while Palestinians would be able to vote

for candidates in the *Jordanian* Parliament (but not the Palestinian national

legislature to be based in Gaza city, hence blocking any future Palestinian

legal claims to sovereignty over the West Bank!). Peres anticipated that the

final status agreements would implement these ideas, establishing a permanent

legal basis for Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza strip.[62] It should

be noted that the notion of complex co-optation is implicit in such a

programme. '[Peres] acknowledges, and promotes, the PLO as the vehicle for

implementation of this idea'.[63] Only if the PLO were co-opted, would it ever

conceivably consent to establish a Palestinian state in the Gaza strip, but not in

the West Bank! Peres seems to have believed that PLO would eventually be

'mollified' into accepting a system of substitutes, consenting to the functional

division of the West Bank into spheres (security, local affairs, Israeli

settlement, etc.) with responsibility apportioned between itself, Israel, and

Jordan.

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[61] Amnon Barzilai, 'For Peres – Yet Another Vision', *Ha'aretz*, 28-11-94, cited in Geoffrey Aronson, *Settlements and the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations: An Overview* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1996): http://www.ipsjps.org/html/book.html.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

A Synchronisation

It is important to recognise that Rabin's approach to peacemaking, when augmented by Peres's formulations, was capable of becoming reconstituted as the 'gradually diminishing concession' component of a complex-co-optation agenda. Indeed, the following chapter will detail how Peres's strategic gradualism would come to synchronise with Rabin's concern for security, an evaluative criterion geared entirely toward Israeli concerns and wholly indifferent to Palestinian needs and operating constraints.

Predispositions or Premeditation?

It has been illustrated that Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres both possessed general tendencies toward asymmetrical recognition, ambiguity, and a gradual diminishment of concessions in their peacemaking efforts with the Palestinians. Yet predispositions do not confirm that the two Israeli leaders actively premeditated to co-opt the PLO. Chapter four will in fact show that complex co-optation came about not because of an initial collaboration between the two Israeli leaders, but rather as a result of Peres's subterfuge and insubordination! Nonetheless, Peres's efforts produced a situation in which both men's predispositions would assume their final, 'modulatory' form.

Chapter Four
Mapping Co-optation

This chapter maps the process in which complex co-optation unfolded. It suggests the independent Norwegian initiative that created a line of contact with the PLO provided a divergent opportunity for Shimon Peres to achieve his desired political solution for the Palestinians. But since his influence and decision-making power were limited, Peres had to engineer the backdrop of the Oslo negotiations through somewhat shifty means. Despite this 'uncoordinated' catalyst, an environment was nonetheless created that provided an outlet for Yitzhak Rabin's own burgeoning predispositions toward complex co-optation. Rabin then took a role in shaping the negotiations, whereupon the co-optation element came to be structured as a kind of 'phased diminishment of expectations', beginning with the 1993 DoP, gradually developing in the 1994 Cairo Agreement and culminating in the 1995 Oslo II Agreement.

Oslo: The 'Modulatory' Foundation is Lain

The following section recounts at length a number of events pertaining to the Oslo negotiations between December 1992 and September 1993. It is necessary to recount these events for several reasons. First, it is to demonstrate how Shimon Peres directed the setting of the Oslo negotiations, and how his actions created an independent momentum that would eventually appeal to Rabin. Second, it is to show that the government of Israel recognised the PLO in a manner equivalent to Michael Hardt's 'whatever identity', embracing the organisation as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people but negating its agenda of independent statehood. Third, it is to reveal that that the

interim stage of DoP was structured with a 'modulatory' foundation, as open to constant tactical modification and revision by Israel.

Oslo as an Extension of a Long, Petty, Internal Political Feud

Shimon Peres believed that the secret back channel that emerged in Oslo might provide the means to achieve his political aims vis-à-vis the Palestinians. But why, as introduced above, would Peres have to resort to unconventional tactics in order to sell Rabin on negotiations with the PLO? It should not be misconstrued that Rabin was simply implacable and thus would not listen to the ideas of his own Foreign Minister. Rather it should be borne in mind that Rabin and Peres had long been bitter rivals. Rabin's ascension to leadership of his party in 1974, and consequently the post of Prime Minister until 1977, was due largely to his being one of the few Labour party leaders who was not involved in, and whose reputation had thus not been harmed by, the ill-preparation and mismanagement of the October 1973 war. But Shimon Peres had also coveted the post. Peres, a protégé of the Israeli founding leader David Ben-Gurion, had been responsible for building up the nation's defence infrastructure and nascent nuclear programme in the 1950s and 1960s. Because of these political considerations, Rabin felt impelled to give Peres the powerful post of Minister of Defence in 1974. The tension between the two was quite intense and often adversely affected the functioning of government. 'From that moment on, the two never stopped bickering, stabbing each other in the back, stealing each other's glory, hiding important facts and events from each other, trying to keep each other out of power'.[1]

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[1] Amy Wilentz, 'The Heart of Israel: A biography of Yitzhak Rabin and a chronicle of his country's 50-year road toward peace' *New York Times Book Review*, 24 May 1998, http:///www.nytimes.com/books/98/05/24/reviews/9805024.24wilentt.html.

The rivalry continued after April 1977, when Peres displaced Rabin as leader of the Labour party. From 1984-1986, during his tenure as Prime Minister in the Labour-Likud coalition government, Peres often sought to contain Rabin's influence. Rabin's disdain for Peres thus grew considerably, reaching its apex in 1990, when his rival engineered a failed no-confidence vote in the government of Yitzhak Shamir. '[Rabin] had lost his revered post as defense minister and was convinced that his old rival had sacrificed the unity government and the peace process in the name of blind ambition'.[2] In 1991 the Israeli Labour party had adopted a party primary system to choose its head. In the new system, all of the party's registered members and not just its central committee chose its leader. The new arrangement was to the detriment of Peres, who was far less popular on the Israeli 'street' than Rabin. In February 1992, Rabin assumed control of the Labour party and thereafter began to take many measures to marginalize the influence of Peres. Rabin even gave an anti-Peres speech on his election night in June 1992. Upon taking office, Rabin deprived Peres of the defence portfolio, a post the latter very much desired to hold in the new government. Peres had also been sidelined from the bilateral negotiations in Washington and much of the US-Israeli relations that were central to the peace process.

The Oslo Channel Begins

The Norwegian connection began in April 1992, when Peres's deputy Yossi Beilin met Terje Rod Larsen, the director the Oslo-based Institute for Applied Social Sciences (FAFO) to discuss a study on Palestinian living conditions in the occupied territories. In their conversation, the two agreed that

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[2]Idem Glenn Frankel, *Beyond the Promised Land: Jews and Arabs on the Hard Road to a New Israel* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994): 138.

it was necessary for Israel to initiate back-channel contacts with the PLO, as a means to get round an Israeli ban on contacts with the PLO and to provide a forum for discussing the deadlocked talks in Washington. When Beilin became the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister in June 1992, Larsen notified contacts in the Norwegian Foreign Ministry of their discussion. In September 1992, Jan Egeland, the Norwegian Foreign Minister, who was visiting Israel and the occupied territories in connection with the FAFO project, suggested to Beilin that Norway would be willing to arrange a discreet back channel for negotiations between Israel and the PLO. The Norwegians attempted to schedule substantive meetings either in Oslo or Jerusalem, but to no avail. Since Rabin had vetoed Peres having private meetings with Faisal Husseini, Beilin had feared conducting 'official' back channel negotiations and preferred unofficial, private conversations instead. In this regard, he dispatched Yair Hirschfeld – who had been Peres's and Beilin's unofficial attaché to the local Palestinians since 1989 (pp. 117-118), to meet with Hanan Ashrawi, an academic in the Palestinian delegation at the Washington talks, in order to discuss the opening of an unofficial back channel to accompany the multilateral talks.[3] She recommended that Hirschfeld meet with Ahmed Qurai, a PLO official who would be in London to confer with the Palestinian negotiating team. (Qurei co-ordinated the Palestinian teams in the various multilateral negotiations in the Madrid framework.) The two met in the British capital and, aware of the Norwegian facilitation offer, agreed to begin unofficial pre-negotiations to be held under the academic auspices of FAFO in Oslo. Hirschfeld consulted with, was given approval, by Beilin, who 'saw

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[3]Pinhas Inbari, *The Palestinians between terrorism and statehood* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1994): 210.

potential in the FAFO-disguised talks: participation by private Israeli citizens in an academic context would circumvent the Israeli ban on contacts with the PLO; academic talks could reconnoitre PLO positions without obligation or commitment; by conducting talks under FAFO auspices and funding, the Israeli government avoided official sanction maintaining full official and credible deniability'.[4]

The first of five rounds of secret, exploratory talks were held under the guise of an academic conference at Borregard estate in Sarpsborg, Norway on 20-22 January 1993. Hirschfeld and another academic, Ron Pundik, represented the Israelis, while Qurai and deputy PLO officials represented the Palestinians. The two Israelis were instructed not to engage in negotiations, but to determine sensitive issues and identify common ground. Terje Larsen and his wife, Mona Juul, served as a facilitation team. Larsen maintained daily contact with Beilin in Jerusalem and PLO leaders in Tunis while Juul served as the Norwegian government's liaison, keeping officials in Oslo appraised of progress and requesting official intervention when necessary. The first round of talks produced the Sarpsborg document, an agreement on three points:

(1) Israeli withdrawal from Gaza;

(2) Scaled economic devolution based on proven cooperation, leading to economic institution building; and

(3) An international economic assistance plan for the Palestinian entity in Gaza.[5]

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[4]Idem Andrew S. Buchanan, *Peace with Justice: A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements* (London: Macmillan, 2000): 93.
[5]Ibid., 95.

With an initial framework in hand, Beilin approached Peres because he needed the sponsorship of a senior party figure with the weight to promote and foster the continuation of the back channel. Peres was eager to oblige. As was noted earlier, 'Peres, as Foreign Minister, had been sidelined by Rabin from being a central figure within the Israeli peace policy making structure and saw in the Oslo talks an opportunity to become involved in the policy-making process'.[6]

The Ripple Effects of Peres's 'Independent' Actions

In line with the circuitous methods of diplomacy that he had undertaken in 1987, Peres began to act 'independently' of Prime Minister Rabin in order to advance the Oslo momentum:

> Whilst Rabin rebuffed Peres's [January 1993] appeal [to officially meet with the PLO] he did however sanction the continuation of the Oslo backchannel, thus allowing Peres a foothold in the policy-making process. Peres thus embarked on a schedule, indulging in subterfuge and insubordination in his efforts to circumvent Rabin. Rabin requested that Peres delay the Oslo talks by several weeks because of an imminent visit to Israel by [US] Secretary [of State Warren] Christopher. Peres instead approved their immediate resumption. Peres [also] believed if East Jerusalemite Faisal Husseini joined the Palestinian delegation in Washington it would ...privately signal Peres's power to the Palestinians in Tunis [with regard to the Oslo backchannel] and would publicly signal a shift in the Israeli attitude towards the inclusion of such a high-profile PLO figure from the occupied territories. Therefore Peres manoeuvred Rabin into adopting his negotiating strategy by raising the idea with Christopher in Washington on 16 February. Peres suggested that Rabin would be more likely to accept Husseini's participation if the US proposed the idea. During Rabin's first trip to the US in early March, Rabin assented to the US proposal to include Husseini in the talks.[7]

Peres thus set a crucial chain of events in motion which, when augmented by further unilateral actions on his part, would result in an upgrade of the Oslo talks to an official level.

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[6]Ibid.
[7]Ibid., 97.

The Oslo talks that Peres authorised to immediately resume, contrary to Rabin's orders, had an important ripple effect. The parties drafted a declaration of principles over two sessions, beginning on 11-12 February and concluding on 20-21 March. The document, known as Sarpsborg III, served as the basis for the final version of the Oslo agreement. It contained 15 articles, with annexes on:

1) the status of Jerusalem and Palestinian elections (it was decided that Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem could both vote and stand as candidates in elections for a self-rule council);

2) the establishment of Palestinian economic institutions and economic development; and

3) proposals for aid from G7 countries and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development to fund infrastructure and development projects.

Because they were operating at an unofficial level, the Israeli negotiators were able to make proposals to whet the appetite of their Palestinian interlocutors. They caused the Palestinians to start to place greater stock in the Oslo discussions, orienting them toward certain future expectations. For example, the Sarpsborg DoP discussed a complete but graduated Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza strip within two years of an agreement, to be held under the auspices of a UN trusteeship that would govern the territory in preparation for independence. After the upgrade to the official level, this notion of a trusteeship, which played an instrumental role in sustaining Palestinian interest in the back channel, would be dumped because Peres feared creating a precedent for UN involvement in Israeli administration of the occupied

territories.[8] The Palestinians would agree to forget the idea, fearing that adherence to it might slow an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.[9] But in February-March, the expectations of the PLO team were much higher, especially since the trusteeship idea was included within proposals to negotiate on Palestinian sovereignty and borders, as well as 1948 refugees, within the aegis of final status talks on the occupied territories. They did not yet know that any specific mention of future Palestinian sovereignty and borders would be removed from later drafts of the DoP.

Peres decided again to enhance the growing momentum of the Oslo talks. Peres knew that Rabin was moving closer toward his positions. For example, Rabin admitted to US Secretary of State Christopher during a visit to Washington in March 1993 that all Israeli attempts to promote an independent Palestinian authority in the territories had failed. He acknowledged that the Palestinians living in the territories were not willing to defy the PLO, and that only Arafat could make a deal on their behalf.[10] But Peres was also very much aware that Rabin's conclusion was merely a tactical analysis and did not signal intent to recognise the PLO or upgrade the Oslo talks to an official level – Rabin could simply decide to give up on reaching any accord with the Palestinians. Peres notes:

> [Rabin] was sceptical about the Oslo talks; sometimes he wholly disbelieved in them. When asked later why he did not share the secret with any of his close aides, he replied frankly that he doubted anything would come of Oslo.[11]

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[8]Idem Shimon Peres, *Battling for Peace: Memoirs*, Edited by David Landau (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1995): 333.
[9]Buchanan, 99.
[10]Idem David Makovsky, *Making Peace with the PLO* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996): 39-41.
[11]Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 330.

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So Peres decided to 'supplement' his ongoing direct appeals to the Prime Minister of the need to reach a deal with the PLO. Without notifying or consulting with Rabin, Peres contacted the Egyptian Ambassador to Israel, Mohammed Bassiouny, in early April and relayed that Israel would be interested in giving the PLO territorial jurisdiction over the Gaza strip and Jericho. Bassiouny reported his conversation with Peres to President Hosni Mubarak, who in turn notified Arafat. Arafat told the Egyptian President on 12 April 1993 that he would accept Peres's proposal. Shortly thereafter, during the 14 April Rabin-Mubarak summit held in Ismailiya, Rabin was informed of Arafat's apparent willingness to assume authority over Gaza and Jericho, if he were also given control of 'key arteries'. Rabin was flabbergasted, and claimed that the Ismailiya summit had been the first time he had heard of the Gaza-Jericho idea.[12] Peres maintains differently, that he discussed the idea of offering control of Jericho to the PLO, and only nonchalantly admits that he did not 'specifically tell' the Prime Minister that he had contacted Arafat via the Egyptians.[13]

Although Peres's insubordination had infuriated Rabin, it nonetheless yielded results. Unlike Yitzhak Shamir, who earlier had quashed Peres's efforts to circumvent his authority (pp. 116-7), Rabin was willing to explore what Peres's 'roundabout' diplomacy had produced. The 'Gaza-Jericho' proposal resonated with his views that political solutions for the Palestinians must be grounded in an asymmetrical relationship favouring Israel. Peres, who was unaware of the entirety of Rabin's concerns about declining Israeli national stamina and the need to reach accords in order to stabilise the regional

[12]Makovsky, 37.
[13]Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 331.

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political arena in Israel's favour, had simply surmised that Rabin might consent to the Jericho plan, if it were presented to him from the 'outside', since withdrawal from the environs of Jericho had been a component of Labour party strategy since the 1968 'Allon plan'. Rabin was very much interested in the PLO offer to govern Gaza, but, at the same time, he was extremely apprehensive about the security implications of Arafat's desire to control the border crossings into the self rule areas from Jordan and Egypt and a request for an 'extra-territorial' road linking Gaza and the West Bank.[14] Control of borders suggested an equality that was at odds with Rabin's sub-sovereign conception of the Palestinians. But he did not dismiss the offer and indeed began to explore it. 'Rabin worried that Oslo had not ascertained the PLO's true position, which led him, uninformed of Peres's role, to test the PLO negotiators to find out if they were acting under the full authority of the PLO leadership'.[15]

Arafat's Manoeuvres

In the context of Rabin's explorations, Arafat began manoeuvres to persuade the Israeli Prime Minister to sign an agreement with the PLO. The PLO leadership was enthusiastic about Peres's hints about 'Gaza-Jericho plus', but was aware of the divergence of positions between Rabin and Peres and understood the need to create a direct line of communication with the Prime Minister. In order to demonstrate their seriousness and commitment to the Oslo negotiations, for example, the PLO complied with Rabin's demands (communicated indirectly through the back channel) that the continuation of Oslo was contingent upon resumption of the Washington talks, that Faisal

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[14]Buchanan, 103.
[15]Ibid.

Husseini be 'appointed' as head of the Washington delegation, that there be a cessation of posturing in the multilateral talks, and that Yusef Sayigh, a Palestinian delegate who was explicitly identified with the PLO, be removed from one of the plenary meetings in Washington. But to further sway the uncommitted Rabin to officially deal with the PLO, Arafat instructed the Palestinian delegation in Washington to sustain the talks without advancing them and, at the same time, the Palestinians in Oslo were told to make concessions that were of great appeal to the Israelis. For example, the Palestinian delegation in Washington brought the talks to a standstill by demanding the inclusion of East Jerusalem as an integral part of an interim agreement. (East Jerusalem had been formally annexed by Israel and the challenging of this status is extremely volatile in Israeli public opinion.) Yet at the end of the fourth round of Oslo talks, 30 April – 3 May, the PLO team agreed to exclude East Jerusalem from interim self-rule – to address its status in final-status negotiations, and consented to the ambiguous idea that Palestinians from the city could 'participate' in elections, instead of specifically defining if they could be candidates as opposed to voters in elections for the interim self-rule authority.[16] In exchange for respecting Rabin's circumspection and the demonstration of goodwill, Arafat demanded that Israeli negotiators of equal stature with official status replace the academics at Oslo, or the talks would be discontinued. Arafat had shown a willingness to accede to Israel's nationalist demands and its asymmetrical

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[16]Makovsky, 42.

rights. 'Rabin was impressed by Arafat's ability to impose his will and the results were not long in coming'.[17]

Upgrade to the Official Level

Rabin and Peres agreed to upgrade the back channel in mid-May. Peres relays of the meeting in which he and Rabin made the decision that:

> We met alone on 14 May...In a series of lengthy consultations, I stressed that the PLO men in Oslo were more flexible, more imaginative and more authoritative than the West Bank-Gaza team negotiating in Washington. In Oslo, interesting proposals had been made to define the jurisdiction of the autonomy and to establish Israel's residual status and powers during the interim period – two issues that had long been deadlocked in Washington.[18]

Peres discussed how the institutionalised sub-sovereign role that both men desired the Palestinians to hold had a distinct possibility of coming to fruition, if the negotiations proceeded unchanged on their current path so that the post-1967 Israeli military and settlement presence in the occupied territories – what Peres calls 'Israel's residual status and powers during the interim period' – could become permanently entrenched. The two agreed that Rabin would retain political distance while Peres would nominate suitable negotiating officials. Peres suggested that he personally head the delegation head but Rabin vetoed this possibility as too high a level of political involvement. Peres thus named Uri Savir, the director-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, as the delegation head.

At the outset, the two sides approached official negotiations from different viewpoints. The PLO team believed that 'official status' had meant finalising the details on the Sarpsborg III document. Savir, however, was not

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[17]Inbari, 208.
[18]Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 329.

authorised to negotiate a deal, only to ascertain if it were possible to actually

conclude an agreement.[19] Savir and Qurai developed a close rapport and were

quickly able to discern and address the fundamental wants and concerns of

both sides. Savir understood that 'the Palestinians needed to know that

autonomy *could* lead to a state, while the Israelis needed to know that it would

bring security, because once the 'red lines' were understood, everything else

could be negotiated. But if these were not understood, negotiations could

continue for years without results'.[20] Qurai needed an Israeli indication that an

agreement *would* lead to statehood – a Palestinian state would be the

inevitable outcome, and not simply a clear possibility, of the interim period. It

must be stressed that Savir pushed for a negotiating framework that would

bridge the differing endgame expectations of the two sides through the use of

'constructive ambiguity'.

Bearing in mind the admonition of Aharon Klieman in chapter one that

constructive ambiguity both offers the pretence of peacemaking as well as

lacks the substance that is necessary for such an endeavour to truly prevail (pp.

27-37), it is possible to see how the negotiating framework offered by Savir

could have been used to strategically alter the dynamic of the Israel-PLO

relationship:

> Although the Israelis did not guarantee a state, their conditional
> inference that if an interim agreement was concluded which ensured
> Israeli security, maintained stability, established Palestinian institutions
> and elements of Palestinian sovereignty, linked Tunis with the
> occupied territories and resulted in economic cooperation, then the
> impetus would exist to go beyond an interim stage to a final status
> which would inevitably include negotiating statehood. Thus Savir and

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[19]Savir was instructed to 1) ensure the PLO continued the Washington talks; 2) maintain total secrecy regarding Oslo; 3) ensure that East Jerusalem was not part of an interim agreement; 4) temporarily waive Jericho; and 5) ensure Israel's veto on referring disputes to arbitration.

[20]Emphasis added, Buchanan, 106.

Qurai established a negotiating *modus vivendi* based on implied mutual recognition and respect for each other's aspirations, namely security and a state, bolstered by economic interdependence.[21]

If the 'conditional inference' and the 'implied mutual recognition and respect for each other's aspirations' are viewed from the critical perspective informing this study – as an acknowledgement of past repressed identities but not as a precursor to normative change, then such notions can be seen only to indicate a changing economy of power on the part of Israel, as opposed to an acceptance of the inevitability of Palestinian statehood. For the Israelis, the negotiating framework would be used to transmute the 'red lines' of the PLO, so that the leadership of the organisation would modify its positions and eventually settle for less than statehood.

A Decisive Tactical Advantage

Ambiguity acted to cloud the Israeli intentions, ironically, by an initial mapping of common ground. Agreement was reached on a security annex, calling for a demilitarised Gaza, a Palestinian police force that would maintain security in the population centres under its control, and a redeployment of Israeli armed forces outside of Palestinians towns and cities. But while it was certainly necessary to focus on the arrangements of the interim stage, agreeing to defer the most contentious issues until later gave Israel a decisive tactical advantage. Savir, energised by the pace of the talks, reported to Rabin that an agreement was possible.[22] Savir recommended to Beilin that a legal expert should examine the draft understandings, and so Yoel Singer, an attorney who had served in the legal department of the Israeli army and had been involved in the Camp David negotiations, was brought in to consult. Singer produced a

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[21]Ibid.,106-7.
[22]Makovsky, 47.

brief legal analysis that, while critical, noted that there was potential to develop some of the proposed ideas.[23] Although Singer believed that the Sarpsborg document lacked legal precision, he was enthusiastic about the large substantive areas about which the PLO was willing to compromise, in contrast, for example, to the Palestinian negotiators in Washington who had insisted that during the interim period of autonomy the Palestinians should have jurisdiction over Israeli settlements and East Jerusalem and that a declaration of independence should be prepared. He confirmed to Rabin that the ambiguity that straddled Israeli security and nationalist considerations – and was to be the basis to sustain the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza strip – could be made operationally secure in an agreement with the PLO. Rabin very much trusted Singer, whose analytical assessments, attention to detail, and critical temperament reflected his own concerns, and so asked the lawyer to travel to Oslo to determine if the PLO offer was genuine.

Singer began to consolidate Israeli positions upon his participation in the Oslo sessions from 25-27 June. 'When the two delegations broke to brief their respective leaders, it was Singer's role which proved crucial and pivotal'.[24] He briefed Rabin that an agreement could be achieved, and told Peres without mincing words that, 'if we don't make peace with these people, we are idiots'.[25] The Israelis were extremely pleased to hear from Qurai via Singer that the arrival of Arafat in Gaza would not only galvanise the Palestinian public against Hamas, but also that Arafat would end terror against Israel. But their understanding of how this programme would be implemented

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[23]Buchanan, 107.
[24]Ibid., 109.
[25]Idem Jane Corbin, *Gaza First* (London: Bloomsbury, 1994): 104-5; Makovsky, 53.

was guided by their past tendencies to manage the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza strip through the recourse to force.

The Israelis believed that if Arafat were installed in Gaza and subsequently buoyed up, he would accept their security dictates *tout court* and would use any means necessary to maintain his authority. They did not appear to be open to other alternatives or scenarios. Rabin echoed this belief on 9 September 1993, just before the official signing of the DoP. He seems to have expected the PLO to act in par with his own dealings with the Palestinians during the *intifada* and in the December 1992 deportation episode (pp. 110-111, 128-9):

> I prefer the Palestinians to cope with the problem of enforcing order in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians will be better at it than we were because they will allow no appeals to the Supreme Court and will prevent the Israeli Association for Civil Rights from criticising the conditions there by denying it access to the area. They will rule by their own methods, freeing, and this is the most important, the Israeli army soldiers from having to do what they will do.[26]

Since the PLO had consented to forego control over Israeli military and settlements areas during the interim period, and because the commitment to police Gaza on behalf of Israel suggested that Arafat's self-interest predominated above all else, the Israelis decided that they could very likely structure an agreement to create an irreversible *fait accompli* in their favour.

Repackaging the Bottom Line

The Israelis presented the PLO team with the first written draft Israeli-PLO document on 4 July at a session in Gressheim, Norway. The new DoP, which superseded Sarpsborg III, 'represented for the Israelis an arrangement

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[26]*Yediot Aharonot*, 9 September 1993.

to cohabit rather than a plan to divorce'.[27] It contained many noteworthy altered provisions:

1) an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, *except settlements*, within three months of the DoP being signed;

2) Israeli settlers, settlements, foreign visitors to the territories and Israeli military locations to be exempt from PLO jurisdiction;

3) The PLO to have *functional* jurisdiction, 'early empowerment', over health, education, welfare, taxation and tourism – but any additional Palestinian administrative responsibilities would require mutual agreement with Israel;

4) Israel to retain responsibility for external security, Israelis in the occupied territories, as well as 'internal security' in the Palestinian self-rule areas; and

5) An Israeli military redeployment from Palestinian population centres in the West Bank *to other parts of the territory*, upon withdrawal from Gaza.

Echoing Peres's desire to redefine territorial issues, Rabin had demanded that redeployment, which would essentially demarcate the territories to be under Palestinian jurisdiction, be made an issue for Israel's sole discretion. The Declaration called for 'consultation' with the Palestinians on this matter, but did not require 'agreement' with them. In line with Rabin and Peres's predilection for ambiguity, the interplay of nationalist and security considerations was to be solely an Israeli concern. For Rabin, the movement of Israeli forces relating to strategic defence and for the protection of Israeli

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[27]Buchanan, 111.

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civilian settlements in the West Bank and Gaza strip would not be conditional on the consent of the Palestinians.[28] The Gressheim document proposed the initial redeployment of Israeli armed forces on the eve of Palestinian elections, but without specifying from which population centres. It linked further redeployment to an Israeli evaluation of Palestinian performance on security, but it did not fix any criteria for such an assessment.

The Gressheim DoP, free from many of the ambiguities that marked the earlier Israeli-PLO understandings, very much represented Israel's underlying intentions at Oslo. Rather than simply reflecting a common bargaining tactic, in which diminutive initial offers are scaled upward in subsequent talks, the document demonstrates just how little Israel was prepared to offer its Palestinian interlocutors. After the Palestinians angrily raised objections to the Gressheim DoP, its formulae were simply repackaged with the same ambiguity-based satisfiers that had been previously used. For example, in the Gressheim document, Israel tried to scrap its earlier commitment to negotiate over Jerusalem in final status talks. Following considerable Palestinian protest, the Israelis agreed to reaffirm their prior agreement, which was to acquiesce merely to discuss the status of Jerusalem in final status talks, but without making any predefined concessions or even commitments to the nature of the discussions. In a similar environment of contention, the two sides were still at odds over five broad areas:

1) the inclusion of UN SCRs 242 and 338;

2) the permanent status negotiations;

3) the nature of 'Gaza/Jericho' first;

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[28]Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 33.

4) elections and Jerusalem; and

5) the issue of Palestinian displaced persons from 1967.

It was in the negotiation process, and subsequent air of crisis, over these issues of dispute that the 'modulatory' foundation would begin to assume its functional form.

Counter-Proposals

Advised by Taher Shash, an Egyptian lawyer who had worked on the Camp David Accords, the PLO demanded more than 20 revisions of the Gressheim document.[29] Arafat, who was personally behind the new Palestinian proposals, believed that certain conditions of proto-statehood within the autonomy regime would guarantee eventual Palestinian sovereignty as well as control over East Jerusalem. In particular, Arafat sought 'the replacement of the word 'Palestinian' with 'PLO' in respect of the political body with whom the agreement was made and with whom the Israelis would be partners [believing that explicit recognition of the PLO brought with it implicit recognition of the PLO's political agenda, that is, the right to an independent state]; control of the Allenby bridge [the international border over the Jordan river], extraterritorial roads between Gaza and Jericho (including an air corridor), with Gaza/Jericho crossing points 'under the responsibility of the Palestinian authorities, with international supervision and in cooperation with Israel'; and Palestinians from East Jerusalem to be eligible in elections for an autonomous authority'.[30]

The Israelis would not countenance the Palestinian counter-proposals. The negotiating environment faced collapse and the Norwegian sponsors had

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[29]Makovsky, 59.
[30]Buchanan, 112.

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to make a great effort to resuscitate the talks. Buchanan notes of this crisis

period that, '[m]uch of the Norwegian effort resolved around the human

dimension, that is convincing both sides as to the real and genuine desire of

the other to reach an agreement, rather than concentrating on purely technical

and substantive points of disagreement'.[31] Phrased differently, as the

aforementioned critique of Deiniol Jones in chapter one demonstrated (pp. 46-

48), the Norwegians believed in the need to bring about a breakthrough in

Israeli-PLO mutual recognition and endeavoured to build connections between

the representatives of the two sides, but did not act to ensure equality of rights

for the Palestinians. Their efforts convinced the Israelis that their goals were

feasible. On 11 July, under cover of an official visit to the Tunisian President

Zine El Abedine Ben Ali in Tunis, the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Johan

Jurgen Holst, accompanied by Larsen and Juul, met with Arafat. They assured

the PLO Chairman that Israel was very keen to reach an agreement in Oslo

and were able to ascertain that he too was fully committed to the success of

the negotiations. They sent a letter to Peres on 12 July that the talks were

worth pursuing:

> Holst stressed his impression that Arafat was very much behind the
> Norway talks. He was involved in the details and dedicated to the
> talks' success. This made an impression on the Israelis.[32]

Larsen and Juul met with Peres in Jerusalem on 13 July. After discussing the

details of an accord, Peres told them that Israel would allow Arafat to settle in

Gaza and administer self-rule personally.[33] Larsen and Juul notified Holst of

their meeting with Peres, who in turn related the news to Arafat. Arafat then

immediately conceded on issues of extraterritoriality and Rabin permitted the

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[31]Ibid.

[32]Makovsky, 61.

[33]Ibid.

talks to continue. Arafat had foregone those elements of his proposals that were explicitly linked to notions of future sovereignty. He assumed that the impending recognition of the PLO by Israel would achieve the same aim, and did not consider that the act might reflect a different purpose.

Mutual Recognition on Israeli Terms

The Israelis sought to use mutual recognition for tactical reasons:

> [I]t was clear from Oslo that the PLO wanted a 'package deal', the DoP for mutual recognition. Arafat's approval was a *sine qua non* for any agreement, as he believed that return to Gaza not only symbolized the embodiment of Palestinian nationalism, it was also important for his and the PLO's existence, the importance of which to Arafat was not lost on the Israelis when extracting concessions.[34]

Rabin authorised Savir to offer specific terms of mutual recognition at the 25-26 July session. But the PLO insisted that discussions on mutual recognition be interlinked with their objections to the Gressheim document, which related to security issues and the nature of Gaza/Jericho. The Israelis would not change their stances on the security of settlements, borders, redeployment, and control over internal and external security. The PLO was particularly loath to concede over issues such as the powers devolved to the Palestinian autonomous authority, where the self-rule council would be located, the timetable of transfer of responsibilities, and the competencies to be transferred.[35] The Israelis outright refused to renegotiate these issues, and as a result, Qurai stated his intention to resign. But on the verge of Qurai's departure, Savir privately reached a compromise with him. On par with the system of substitutes conceived by Peres in relation to giving land to the Palestinians, Savir's plan set down seven pre-conditions for mutual

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[34]Buchanan, 113.
[35]Corbin,134.

recognition in tandem with 'eight for eight' concessions, so that if the PLO assented to seven pre-conditions and gave way on eight points of contention, it would receive eight substantive concessions from Israel in return.[36] But the Israeli pledge to make concessions turned out to be a *de facto* bluff that sustained the momentum of the negotiations. In the end, the Palestinians would make the exact sweeping concessions desired by the Israelis, in exchange for recognition of the PLO and allowing their return to Gaza.

A second back channel, in the form of a secret exchange of letters between Rabin and Arafat, prompted the PLO to yield to Israeli positions. Without disclosing Oslo, Arafat asked Ahmed Tibi, a prominent Arab Israeli doctor with links to both the PLO and the Israeli government, to establish an independent line of communication with the Prime Minister. Tibi met the cabinet minister Haim Ramon on 17 July, exhorting him to ask Rabin to exchange letters with the PLO. Neither letter was explicitly directed to the other party or was initialled by its source. Moreover, Rabin believed he was contacting Mahmoud Abbas, a senior member of the PLO Executive Committee who was the chief Palestinian 'patron' of the Oslo talks. Rabin's letter aimed to discern the PLO's understanding of functional and territorial jurisdiction; to elicit how they interpreted the status of Jerusalem during the interim period; and to convey that mutual recognition need not be formally linked to the DoP. In addition, Rabin wanted Israel to hold ultimate authority for all security issues in Gaza and Jericho, for the Israeli forces that had

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[36]The seven preconditions were: 1) PLO recognition of the right of Israel to exist in peace and security; 2) PLO commitment to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of UN SCR 242 and 338; 3) repeal of provisions in the PLO covenant calling for the destruction of Israel; 4) PLO renunciation of terrorism and cooperation with Israel in combating violence; 5) PLO call to stop the *intifada*; 6) PLO commitment to resolve all outstanding issues with Israel peacefully; 7) Agreement by Arafat to represent himself as 'Chairman of the PLO' and not as the 'President of Palestine'.

redeployed in the occupied territories to have sanction to intervene in the self-rule areas pre-emptively, in retaliation, or for the 'hot pursuit' of subjects.[37] (Rabin would not allow the PLO to have unqualified jurisdiction over settlements and military locations in the occupied territories beyond Gaza and Jericho, in order to prevent the Palestinians from claiming *de facto* sovereignty over the entire West Bank during the final status negotiations.[38]) Arafat responded by agreeing to Israeli control over settlements, settlers, and Israeli travellers in the territories, but qualified that Israeli jurisdiction would be over 'external', rather than as Rabin had phrased, 'overall' or 'comprehensive' security; he also agreed to exclude East Jerusalem from the Palestinian self-rule area, and linked these concessions to the Israeli acceptance of mutual recognition. Rabin acclaimed this correspondence to have been 'the turning point' that led to the breakthrough.[39] For in this act Arafat had allowed Rabin to accept the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and, at the same time, virtually nullify its goal of independent statehood from taking hold.

A Growing List of Concessions

Israel was able to win further concessions from the Palestinians by giving the false impression of making progress in bilateral talks with Syria.[40] Moreover, on 26 July, Israel began a bombing campaign to combat the activities of Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, an event that prompted US Secretary of State Christopher to visit Jerusalem and Damascus, the major influence over the Shiite militia group. An impression of 'shuttle diplomacy' was created by Christopher's actions, intimating progress on the Israel-Syria

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[37]Makovsky, 67.
[38]Ibid.
[39]Ibid.
[40]Ibid., 64.

track where none existed. In this context, Peres wrote a letter to Foreign Minister Holst, to be shared with the PLO, suggesting that the Oslo negotiations could be eclipsed, if they were not quickly concluded:

> I must share with you my view that they [the PLO] may opt to aspire for a too-perfect solution....The vacuum may be filled by opposing forces, or with other initiatives, including the possibility of desired progress between Israel and Syria. Secretary Christopher is at this very moment visiting our region.[41]

Peres's impetus seems to have succeeded as 'the PLO made a number of concessions in the first week of August, precipitated by a strong concern that Israel was possibly in the process of shifting its focus and emphasis in negotiations from the Palestinian to the Syrian track.[42] Rabin even commented that, by mid-August, he was surprised by the growing list of PLO concessions.[43]

The PLO accepted 'modulatory' compromise. For example, Rabin authorised Ramon to contact Abbas via Tibi to enquire if the PLO would change its attitude on assuming responsibility for 'comprehensive security' and its insistence for authority over territory that included military installations. But on 7 August the PLO responded that it would not alter its stance. It favoured 'flexible' phrasing, but would not concede on these two issues.[44] But, the 'threat' of Israel turning to the Syrian track, coupled with the very real danger of a domestic political corruption scandal involving a junior coalition partner threatening the future of the Rabin government,[45] made the PLO even more agile and, at an unofficial meeting in Paris, its leadership agreed to restart the back channel. At the 13-15 August round of Oslo talks,

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[41] Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 343.
[42] Buchanan, 115.
[43] Makovsky, 66.
[44] Ibid., 67.
[45] Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 345.

substantive disagreement over important interim issues remained. But these differences were simply glossed over:

> What the negotiations concluded was an agreement to disagree whilst pressing on with reaching an agreement. At this point, it seems that the negotiators were intent on concluding an historic deal, with finer points of interim period disagreement, let alone final status disagreement, to be left to future, post-deal negotiations.[46]

There were no guarantees the future interim negotiations would proceed with success.

The PLO clearly had a different understanding from Israel of what would be the end result of the agreement to disagree:

> Those [PLO leaders] who oversaw the creation of this diplomatic framework either wilfully ignored the centrality of settlements, or, more likely, inexplicably failed to understand their importance as a prime indicator of Israeli intentions. For while Palestinians may have conceded that many if not most settlements would remain as part of a peace agreement, they have failed to confront the notion that the continued existence of these outposts also legitimises a permanent, preponderant Israeli military role throughout the territories. Palestinian leaders have failed to acknowledge the critical importance of settlements in the ongoing contest for control of lands between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River.[47]

Unaware of Rabin's earlier conclusions, the PLO leaders feared that if they had not made the concessions on settlements, Israel would somehow manage to reach an agreement with the delegation in Washington instead, splitting the Palestinians in the occupied territories and the diaspora.[48] Arafat believed that, in spite of the restrictions during the interim period of autonomy, he would be able to reapply the techniques of influence and rule he had employed when the PLO was based in Lebanon. For example, in August 1993

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[46]Buchanan, 120.

[47]Geoffrey Aronson, *Settlements and the Israel-Palestinian Negotiations: An Overview* (Washington DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1995): http://www.ipsjps.org/html/book.html.

[48]Inbari, 204.

Arafat had said: "I ruled Lebanon from Faqahani – and Gaza is several times larger than Faqahani." What he meant was that he had ruled all of Lebanon from the Beiruti quarter where the PLO command was sited and from the much larger Gaza he would also be able to run the West Bank.[49]

In addition, the PLO Chairman had faith in future diplomacy with his new partners, as can be seen, for instance, when he told Hanan Ashrawi that '[t]he Palestinian state will start in Gaza-Jericho and from there I will negotiate with the Israelis to end the occupation in the rest of the Palestinian territories on par with the other Arab leaders'.[50] The PLO leaders convinced themselves that mutual recognition had meant that Israel had accepted the inevitability of Palestinian statehood: the autonomy offered in the DoP could somehow lead to independence if enough rhetorical statements were made.[51]

Israel had achieved the first step necessary for complex co-optation. While Rabin, in line with his secret correspondence with Arafat, did moderate his demand for comprehensive Israeli responsibility for external security and granted the Palestinians jurisdictional 'early empowerment' – the immediate transferral of civil responsibilities such as education and taxation, he nonetheless extracted the crucial concession, first grasped by Peres, to negotiate the precise borders of the self-rule entities, both of the Gaza strip and the ill-specified Jericho 'area', during later implementation talks. Shortly thereafter, the DoP was initialled in a secret ceremony in Oslo on 20 August. Letters of mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO were exchanged on 10 September and the Accords were formally inaugurated at a ceremony on the White House lawn on 13 September. Israel thus structured the interim

[49]Ibid. 196-7.
[50]Hanan Ashrawi, *This Side of Peace* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994): 259.
[51]Idem Edward W. Said, *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination 1969-1994* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1994): 416.

stage of DoP as open to constant tactical modification and revision in its favour, an ordering mechanism akin to Gilles Deleuze's 'modulations' of control. It recognised the PLO in a manner tantamount to Michael Hardt's 'whatever identity', embracing the organisation as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people but negating its agenda of independent statehood.

Phased Diminishment of Expectations

The purpose of the next section is to suggest that the post-DoP peace process was directed in line with Rabin and Peres's past propensities for offering gradually diminishing concessions. Evidence for such a claim can be seen in several noteworthy instances that occurred throughout 1994 and 1995. First, the Israeli decision to uphold its settlement policy in the wake of a massacre of Palestinian worshippers by an Israeli settler gunman, rather than make changes to alleviate the strained new political circumstances, is especially revealing. Second, the structures of the May 1994 Cairo Agreement and the September 1995 Oslo II Agreement suggest a broad strategy in which the Palestinians would receive concessions in the form of devolved powers but which nonetheless reinforced Israel's power over them. Moreover, Israeli actions in the midst of deadlocked negotiations as well as statements made afterward by Rabin and Peres, during the signing of the Oslo II Agreement, seem to confirm such an interpretation.

Rabin's Response to the Hebron Massacre: Presaging Co-optation

The Rabin government's co-optation intentions are evident in its response to crises that occurred in the months between the September 1993 signing of the DoP and the May 1994 implementation agreement for interim

self-government arrangements in Gaza and Jericho. For example, on 25 February 1994, the Israeli settler Baruch Goldstein gunned down 29 Palestinians in the Tomb of the Patriarchs in the West Bank city of Hebron. After the massacre, the Palestinians seem to have realised the extreme folly of their reasoning that the Israeli government would gain the public approval to dismantle settlements in final status negotiations only after their constituents had fully internalised the existence of Palestinian partners in peace during the interim period. The Palestinians made the killings the core of a massive public relations campaign to call for a revision of the Oslo provisions on settlements. Yet Rabin's response 'offered clear evidence that he had no intention of evacuating settlements during the interim period'.[52] He rejected the calls for an evacuation of the 43 Israelis families living in the midst of Hebron in favour of more limited measures, such as banning the more militant settler organisations. It should be noted that:

> Had a decision been taken to remove to the zealots in the immediate aftermath of the bloody events of February, Rabin would have made both a political and security master stroke. The settlement movement and its political patrons were then unprepared for such a move, which would have won public support. The [Israeli armed forces], too, would have been relieved of assigning its soldiers for the thankless and tireless task of guarding the settlers.[53]

But evacuation of Israeli settlers from Hebron would have established the precedent that dismantling settlements was an integral part of the Oslo process. It would have undermined the possibility that a permanently sub-sovereign Palestinian entity would be the end-result of Palestinian autonomy. Rabin was not only committed to maintain settlements, even those as divisive as the one in Hebron, but also to assure their 'natural growth', or continued

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[52]Aronson, *Settlements and the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations: An overview.*
[53]Cited in Aronson, Ibid.

expansion *alongside the Palestinian self-rule areas*. Indeed, it was this very notion that was to guide the Israeli negotiation of the autonomy implementation agreements.

The Cairo Agreement: An Anchor

The May 1994 Cairo Agreement, officially known as the 'Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area', outlined the mechanisms and limits of Palestinian autonomy according to the 'Gaza-Jericho first' framework. The Agreement very much reflects the 'modulatory' style of governance established in Oslo, whereby mutual recognition and 'conditional inferences' suggest one particular outcome of the peace process, but once the means to implement the reached understandings are actually negotiated, Israel concedes grossly less to the Palestinians. Israel manipulated the arrival of PLO forces in the autonomous areas, an event of great emotional significance for Palestinians, to its own ends. For Arafat's constituents 'the return of thousands of Palestinians to the West Bank and Gaza was a sign that it is *possible* to return to the homeland'.[54] But for the Israelis, this 'return' was the crux of complex co-optation. Peres intimates that it was to be a contained precedent:

> I fully understood the tremendous political and emotional significance for the PLO of such a 'return', but I was convinced that this was the right step. I was determined to negotiate carefully so as to achieve a balanced accord, beneficial to both sides.[55]

The symbolism of the return was empty and was used solely to advance Israeli interests. For example, Israeli leaders believed that outside 'police forces' would empathise less with the local population and preferred Arafat's Palestine Liberation Army, which had been scattered in Arab countries

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[54]Helena Lindholm Schulz, *One Year Into Self-Government* (Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, 1997): 9.
[55]Peres, *Battling for Peace*,337

throughout the Middle East, to the training of a gendarmerie primarily from the West Bank and Gaza.[56]

The devolution of powers to the PLO-run Palestinian Authority (PA) created new cadres of middlemen. Azmi Bishara notes in this regard that:

> A new Palestinian elite emerged from [Oslo]. It is composed of individuals in Palestinian leadership circles who have become part of the fabric of Israeli-Palestinian relations, who approach matters that relate to the general interest from the narrowest of perspectives – that of their own vested interests. Certain matters rest in their hands, and their commitment to the Palestinian cause has become conditioned by their need for permits to pass through Israeli military checkpoints and by the commissions they get, thanks to their Israeli connections. Having good connections in Israel can make you rich. This group of co-opted individuals – which includes also some former militants and prisoners – has become, in a way, a clientelist network, and for them the main issue is how to keep the peace process alive under all circumstances. In the process itself their privileges can become a source of pressure on them; for example, after any 'terrorist' action or during Israeli holidays a hermetic closure in the Occupied Territories is imposed by Israel. During this closure all permits to pass the checkpoints are cancelled including those granted to the so-called VIPs. Only members of the exclusive status (VIP 1) – a new category invented by Israel – are allowed to keep the permits. Only Israel defines who and who is not a VIP 1.
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> My estimate is that the hard core of the new elite consists of a few hundred individuals, but the circle of people who have ties with them, and therefore benefit from the situation, number in the thousands. The group has a hierarchical structure, with several channels connecting them to Israel, from officials in the smallest ministry to the responsible for security, the economy or civilian coordination. The importance of any given individual varies according to Israeli calculations; one moment this individual is important, then, someone else is.
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> This pyramid of VIPs is a new phenomenon for Palestinian society. We have had PLO militants and bureaucrats who controlled the purse strings for the disbursement of contributions to the resistance movement. There have always been those with ties to Jordan, or other Arab countries, and their agendas. But being a VIP is something new. Israel decides who is a VIP, who has freedom of movement and who has the power to make deals.[57]

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[56]Saïd K. Aburish, *Arafat: From Defender to Dictator* (London: Bloomsbury, 1998): 281.

[57]Azmi Bishara, 'Reflections on the Realities of the Oslo Process' in idem George Giacaman and Dag Jørund Lønning ed., *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems* (London: Pluto Press, 1998): 220-1.

While empowering the Palestinian VIPs, Israel simultaneously attempted to gradually diminish the expectations of the new elites. This phased diminishment of expectations is first seen in the structure of the May 1994 Cairo Agreement. In order for Israel to successfully execute this programme, the Palestinians would start to receive successively less than had been previously suggested.

The Cairo Agreement began to implement the demands prioritising Israeli settlements and security considerations that were first made clear at Gressheim (pp. 153-6). As such, the agreement 1) excludes settlements, settlers, and settler-related resources (land and water) from any Palestinian jurisdiction, interference, or control; 2) limits Palestinian land use near settlements; and 3) allows for continuing Israeli control over Palestinian zoning and land-use decisions. Regarding security, the agreement committed the newly created Palestinian Authority (PA) to maintain the existing system of military orders in the occupied territories, the legal basis of the occupation established by Israel. Following the August 1993 Israel-PLO understandings about 'flexible phrasing', the PA won some power to redraft these laws in order to better address the civic concerns of the people under its rule. Israel, however, retained a veto over all new legislation. Under the Cairo Agreement, Palestinian legislation cannot 'deal with a security issue which falls under Israel's responsibility', nor can it 'seriously threaten other significant Israeli interests protected by this agreement'.[58]

The Cairo Agreement gave form to Rabin's earlier demand that redeployment, which would basically draw the map of the Palestinian

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[58]Geoffrey Aronson, 'Historic Israeli-PLO Accord Leaves Settlements Intact' *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories*, Volume 4 Number 4, July 1994: http://www.fmep.org/july94.html: 4.

territories during the interim period and thus define the nature of the final status talks, be an issue for Israel's sole discretion (p. 154). The Israeli political commentator Hemi Shalev noted in May 1994 that:

> Arafat's arrival [in Gaza] symbolizes the PLO's liquidation as an external, terrorist organization and its conversion into the Palestinians' established political arm, operating in the territories under an Israeli eye. This, in actual fact, was the main goal of the Rabin government in the entire Oslo process.[59]

Israel had transformed the PLO from a threat into the guarantor of its presence in the occupied territories. As previously agreed, the newly defined Jericho 'area' in the West Bank was completely surrounded by Israeli controlled territory. But more significantly, under the terms of the Cairo Agreement, Israel retained exclusive control over approximately 20 percent of the Gaza strip: a northern area comprised of three settlements and surrounding land, and the southern *Katif* bloc of 12 settlements and their environs. The Israeli journalist Avraham Tal commented in the wake of the Cairo Agreement that, '[u]nder these conditions, the 'independent government' of the interim period lacks all meaning, and from the Palestinian perspective, is pathetic'.[60] In order to lay the actual ground in which the PLO would begin to adjust to a permanently sub-sovereign arrangement, the agreement created territorially contiguous blocs of Israeli settlements amidst non-contiguous blocs of Palestinian autonomy (See Map I, p. 259).

Delaying Negotiations, Shifting Priorities

Israel sought to limit the expansion of Palestinian rule once Arafat had returned to Gaza in July 1994. Throughout the remainder of the year, Rabin shared an informal consensus with settler groups of the need to delay the

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[59]Aronson, *Settlements and the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations: An overview.*
[60]Avraham Tal, *Ha'aretz*, 6 May 1994, cited in Ibid.

expansion of Palestinian self-rule and, at the same time, pursue an accelerated programme of settlement construction in Jerusalem and its West Bank environs.[61] On an official level, Rabin led the Palestinians to believe otherwise. He cited different reasons why redeployment was being delayed, namely rooted in security as a number of sensational attacks by Palestinian militants on Israelis inside Israel and in the occupied territories had occurred during this period. (See chapter five.) But security, while extremely important for Rabin, was not his sole motivation for the delay. The negotiations on redeployment continued haphazardly throughout 1994 and the first half of 1995, providing, from the Israeli perspective, the period for the Palestinian leadership to begin to adapt to diminished expectations. Azmi Bishara noted in 1995, in the midst of this period ostensibly deadlocked over security:

> Look at what Israel is doing on the ground. It is investing millions of dollars for an infrastructure of roads that will link up most of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank and fragment the Palestinian 'areas' into so many townships. And the end of the day, we can call these townships a state if we wish. We can call Arafat an emperor if we wish. But the reality is bantustanisation. Now, when the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators sit down to negotiate the final status, they are going to be the same negotiators who negotiated the bantustans. They are going to operate according to the same imbalance of power. If we add that, by that time, Israel may also have peace treaties with the frontline Arab states, where is the incentive for Israeli withdrawal? The aim of autonomy is separation without withdrawal, and it's realisable. Why would the Israelis throw it away?[62]

The negotiating impasse seems to have been largely of the Rabin government's own making, in order for the PLO leadership to adapt to the foothold they had been given in Gaza while Israel consolidated its hold over the West Bank. Further evidence for such broad designs can be seen in the

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[61]Ibid.

[62]Graham Usher, 'Bantustanisation or Binationalism? An interview with Azmi Bishara' in Uta Klein and Christian Sigrist ed., *Prospects of Israeli-Palestinian Co-Existence* (Münster, Germany: Lit Verlag, 1996):142.

instance on 17 April 1995, when Rabin offered to consider a Palestinian state in the Gaza strip if Arafat would forego sovereign claims to the West Bank until permanent status negotiations.[63]

It is worthwhile follow up the observation that the delayed negotiations allowed the Israelis to shift their diplomatic priorities. In line with Rabin's views on the need to reach peace agreements because of growing domestic war fatigue and the danger of new strategic threats, Israel utilised the improved climate promoted by the peace process in order to advance relations with its other Arab neighbours. In June 1994, Israel and Jordan signed a preliminary agreement ending the state of war between them, and a formal peace treaty was signed on 26 October 1994. Soon thereafter, several other Arab states established lower-level diplomatic relations and economic ties as well. Even Syria agreed, in effect, that its dispute with Israel was no longer existential and concerned only the return of the Golan Heights. If these events are understood as having occurred within the context of Rabin's position that Israel had asymmetrical rights vis-à-vis the Palestinians, than it can be seen that the Palestinians were but a legitimating stepping stone for Israel's integration into the Middle East and, as such, it was only necessary to continue to concede the bare minimum to them.

Oslo II: Preserving Israel's Cardinal Interests

On 28 September 1995, Israel and the PLO initialled the 'Israel-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip' (also known as 'Oslo II' and the 'Taba Agreement' for the Egyptian resort where it was negotiated.) The agreement outlined the next stage of Israeli redeployment in

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[63]Samuel Segev, *Crossing the Jordan: Israel's Hard Road to Peace* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998): 364.

the West Bank and detailed the mechanisms and limits of extending Palestinian self-rule beyond the Gaza strip and Jericho to significant portions of the West Bank.

The territorial principles intended to make the PLO adjust to a permanent sub-sovereign role that were first secured in the Cairo Agreement, the creation of territorially contiguous blocs of Israeli settlements amidst non-contiguous blocs of Palestinian autonomy, were reaffirmed, and expanded upon, in the Oslo II agreement. The main feature of the agreement is the division of the West Bank into three areas, 'A', 'B', and 'C', each with a different mix of Israeli and Palestinian responsibility (See Map II, p. 260). 'The true import of the treaty—which aims to end the century-old conflict over the lands of Palestine—can not be understood without these maps'.[64] Area A, which is about 1 percent of the West Bank, consists of the major Palestinian cities, in addition to Jericho: Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Kalkilya, Nablus, Ramallah, and Tulkarem. (In Hebron, however, a 3.5 sq. km area inhabited by 400 Israeli settlers and 20000 Palestinians remains entirely under Israeli control.) In Area A, the Palestinian Council has complete authority over civilians. Area B, which totals 27 percent of the West Bank in which Israel retains 'overriding security responsibility', consists of all other Palestinian population centres. In Area B, powers not related to territory are transferred to the Palestinian council. In Area C, comprising 72 percent of the West Bank, including all settlements, military bases and areas, as well as 'state lands', Israel continues to hold full authority. The agreement includes a timetable for

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[64]Geoffrey Aronson, 'Oslo II Heralds New Era in Israeli-Palestinian Relations' *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories*, Volume 5 Number 6, November 1995: http://www.fmep.org/july94.html: 3.

the transfer of undefined parts of Area C to Palestinian control, beginning in the latter part of 1996. The Oslo II interim accord thus 'reflects, in large measure, Israel's successful effort to preserve what it consider to be its cardinal interests in the West Bank–principally its demands to remain in strategic control of the entire area and to preserve its exclusive control over its settlements and settlers'.[65]

The Israelis intended Oslo II to be an irreversible path in which the PLO would have to accept a sub-sovereign role. For Rabin, 'the Cairo and Oslo II agreements represented a great victory in his campaign to secure a permanent Israeli role in the occupied territories. Winning the PLO's collaboration in a system of continuing Israeli rule in Gaza and the West Bank was first among his achievements, he believed'.[66] While official rhetoric suggested otherwise, the interim agreement transformed the Israeli occupation into a partnership operating with Palestinian consent:

> On the ideological level, Rabin, more forcefully than any previous leader, repudiated what he called "the hallucination of Greater Israel"– which claimed Israel as the exclusive heir to a divinely ordained sovereignty throughout "Judea and Samaria." In the wake of Oslo II, one can no longer speak of a single entity called Judea and Samaria, but rather many Judeas and Samarias with pieces of the West Bank sandwiched among them.[67]

This transformation was synonymous with what Michael Hardt had called a 'simulacrum of the social'; it promulgated a departure from past norms, but in fact was intended to preserve these norms in new form.

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[65]Ibid., 5.
[66]Ibid.
[67]Geoffrey Aronson, 'Oslo II Heralds New Era in Israeli-Palestinian Relations' *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories*, Volume 5 Number 6, November 1995: 5.

At the onset of Oslo II, there seems not to have been a complete understanding between the senior Israeli policy makers, Rabin and Peres, on what would be the exact outline of the permanent status arrangement with the Palestinians that the agreement was to lead to. Peres's deputy Yossi Beilin confirmed as such in an interview on 7 March 1997:

> [T]he heart-to-heart talks about "where the process was leading" were held only between the sides but not within them. Talks like this were held between us and the Palestinians, and later between Likud people and Labor people. But within the Labor Party, within the government, and within the negotiating team, I don't recall any genuine discussion on a permanent solution.[68]

This is not to say that the end goals of Rabin and Peres sizably differed. At the signing of the Oslo II Agreement in September 1995, Peres's vision was more developed than that of Rabin. However, both men seemed inclined toward a common end. Indeed such an understanding is perfectly consistent with the premise of this study – that the strategic endeavour at the heart of the Oslo Accords was not planned *per se*, but rather was a series of evolving and somewhat disconnected tactics that nonetheless sought to preserve Israel's guiding nationalist vision in changing form.

Rabin discussed the final status arrangement that he broadly intended the interim agreement to eventually bring about, when he presented Oslo II before the Israeli parliament on 5 October 1995:

> We view the permanent solution in the framework of the State of Israel which will include most of the area of the Land of Israel as it was under the rule of the British Mandate, and alongside it a Palestinian entity which will be home to most of the Palestinian residents living in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

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[68]Idem 'Interview with Yossi Beilin on the Permanent Status Arrangement', *Ha'aretz*, 7 March 1997.

> We would like this to be an entity which is less than a state, and which will independently run the lives of Palestinians under its authority. The borders of the State of Israel, during the permanent solution, will be beyond the lines which existed before the Six Day War. We will not return to the 4 June 1967 lines.[69]

Rabin also called for the annexation of settlement areas straddling the Israel-West Bank border and the establishment of extra-territorial Israeli settlement blocs within the territory of the future, sub-sovereign Palestinian 'entity'. Explaining how such an outcome would indeed come to be, the Prime Minister echoed the principles of 'modulation' that had first been grasped by Peres:

> I must emphasise that we have not committed ourselves, and I repeat, we have not committed ourselves to the scope of the redeployment at each stage. Most importantly, it was defined in the agreement that the restrictions on the completion of the redeployment are issues that will be discussed on the permanent settlement, as is stated in the Agreement itself...[70]

Israel's Palestinian interlocutors, wishing to maintain the power they had been given, would have no choice but to accept the terms that would later be imposed on them.

It was Peres who more fully articulated the underlying aims of the Oslo II agreement. In his address before the opening of the winter session of the Israeli parliament, Peres argued that the structure of the interim agreement, which prioritised Israeli over Palestinian national claims, was simply a 'natural' norm:

> We have not given up anything we possessed. We have recognized a reality in which some parts of the western Land of Israel [meaning Palestinian population centres in the West Bank and Gaza strip] were not in our possession. Gaza was not in our hands. All we have given up is something that we had not possessed in real terms. The people who

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[69]Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Ratification of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement, Address to the Knesset, 5 October 1995, at Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs internet site, http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAHtel0.
    [70]Ibid.

live in Nablus and Bethlehem are Arabs, not Jews. Why should we be their bosses or their police?

We have not forfeited our historical right to the Land of Israel. History is not a matter for concessions or changes. However, it is similarly impossible to disregard a reality that has taken shape over hundreds of years. We are not the ones who partitioned the country; it was partitioned between the Jewish population and the Palestinian population. It is not the Oslo Agreement that created the map; the map created the Oslo Agreement. What we can choose is the type of partition we want – a partition by knives or by agreements. We can build a place of eternal strife, or, as one of our leading authors proposed, a duplex dwelling.[71]

The growing demographic presence of the Palestinian people, described in Peres's parlance as the 'reality that has taken shape over hundred of years', needed to be politically addressed in order to protect the Jewish national character of the State of Israel. At the same time, this 'reality' did not have the right to independence. Peres ironically declared that 'we are not the ones who partitioned the country', meaning that Israel was somehow not responsible for the settlement of Jews in the occupied territories. Since he believed that settlement was an inalienable Jewish right, the presence of Israeli settlers in the occupied territories was simply deemed as normal to that of the Palestinians. He went further, saying that the presence of settlers in the West Bank, which the international community has decried as a violation of the Geneva Conventions, was no different than the existence of the Arab minority in Israel:

Israel has a million Arab citizens, and our relationship with them is respectful and free of violence. In the territories there is the same composition of population as Israel, though not in the same proportion, and there is no reason in the world that the relationship that prevails in Israel should not prevail in the territories.[72]

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[71]Remarks by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres at the Opening of the Winter Session of the Knesset, 23 October 1995, at Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs internet site, http://www.israel.org/mfa/go.asp?MFAH016f0.
[72]Ibid.

This analogy implicitly conveys that Israel would remain in *de facto* control over the West Bank.

The interim agreement, far from preparing Israelis to digest the idea of withdrawal and eventual Palestinian independence, would allow settlers to remain permanently alongside the Palestinians. Peres notes that '[t]he edifice we are building is based on a change in relations, not in location'.[73] He asks rhetorically, 'Is the autonomy a blueprint for a Palestinian state?' His answer reflects his earlier formulations.

> Not necessarily. For example, it also can be a framework including demilitarized zones, even an arrangement for areas without sovereignty.[74]

Peres's answer of 'not necessarily' suggests that, in his eyes, the final status agreement was to resemble what he had proposed in his 1993 UNESCO speech. There would be a Palestinian mini-state in the Gaza strip while the 'arrangement for areas without sovereignty' means that a Palestinian 'entity' in the West Bank, despite having links to the government in Gaza, would be part of a 'functional' compromise arrangement with Israel and Jordan. It was not to be a territorial compromise. Shalom Yerushalemi, an Israeli journalist, confirms this interpretation of Peres's remarks:

> Anyone who heard Peres's speech at the opening of the Knesset's winter session understands... [that he] would like to stabilize the map of the interim settlements, hoping that this will be the permanent map of Israel and the Palestinian entity: Neither separation, nor annexation. To swallow the Palestinians, but not to eat them. That is why Peres is so enthusiastic about the Oslo II accords which gave the Palestinians control of about only 27 percent of the West Bank, and left Israel with the authority over Palestinian security and foreign affairs. Perhaps that is also the reason that he rubbed his hands with glee after the accord was signed and said in private conversation at the home of the Chinese ambassador, "We screwed the Palestinians."

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[73]Ibid.
[74]Ibid.

Indeed Peres conducted the lengthy [Oslo II] negotiations at Taba mainly about the authority to be transferred to the Palestinians and said hardly anything about the borders. Peres believes, or want to believe, that the 140,000 Jewish settlers will remain in the territories in perpetuity, and that no Jewish settlement will ever be evacuated.[75]

The maintenance of settlements in a functional compromise arrangement cannot be reconciled with Palestinian independence. Peres's blunt statement at the home of the Chinese ambassador concurs with Rabin's general vision: the final status talks that were to eventually proceed on the basis of the Oslo II Agreement would result in a continued degree of Palestinian autonomy, but not true sovereignty.

A Destabilising Effect?

The Israelis managed to secure Palestinian signatures to the interim agreements. But how effective was the Rabin government in actually implementing 'control society' forms of governance? The following chapter details the destabilising effect that designs akin to complex co-optation had on the autonomy regime headed by Yasser Arafat.

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[75]Shalom Yershalemi, 'Trying to Understand Peres' *Maariv*, 25 October 1995, in Israel Shahak, 'Translations From Israeli Hebrew Language Newspapers', *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* February/March 1996, 117-118, http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/0296/9602018.html.

Chapter Five
An Extra-Dialectical Condition

It will be recalled from chapter two that Gilles Deleuze noted the phenomenon of *subcontracting* as being particularly emblematic of 'control societies' (pp. 75-6). Such a observation relates intimately to the subject of this chapter: Israel's subcontracting of its security to the PLO, the on-the-ground relationship between Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Rabin government in 1994 and 1995. The chapter recounts these events, highlighting crises in particular. In this context, it discusses how Arafat instated a system of personalised authoritarianism, a means of rule that, while corrupt and undemocratic, nonetheless indicated a genuine commitment to a co-operative relationship with Israel and diplomatic resolution of the conflict. It suggests that the failure of the Rabin government to wholly embrace Arafat's *modus operandi* to its advantage, and its seemingly contradictory practice of disempowering its partner in peace instead, can best be understood as traits of an 'extra-dialectical' condition that had come to define the relationship between Israel and the PLO after Oslo.

Differing Conceptions of Security

Rabin and Arafat had differing conceptions of what the subcontracting of security entailed. These disparate approaches emerged immediately after the DoP implementation talks began in October 1993. There was great discord over what were to be the means by which Arafat would 'eliminate terrorism'. It will be recalled from chapter four that Rabin had assumed during the DoP negotiations that Arafat would accept Israeli security dictates without qualification, the PLO Chairman would act in the same Draconian manner

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towards Palestinian militants as Rabin had done during the *intifada* and in the Hamas deportation episode (pp. 128-9). Arafat's position in response to Rabin's demands is well illustrated in a December 1993 meeting held in Tunis between the Palestinian leader and the Israeli Minister of Housing, the reserve general Benjamin Ben-Eliezer. Arafat told Ben-Eliezer:

> I understand your security concerns. However, instead of a civil war in the Gaza Strip, I prefer to try to integrate the fundamentalist groups–Hamas and Islamic Jihad–into my future administration.[1]

It is thus necessary to examine the interplay of these two disparate approaches.

How Sincere was Arafat?

Yasser Arafat has a reputation for duplicity and many have speculated that his reticence to accept Rabin's security programme was because he did not 'irrevocably abjure violence, unleashing it if not by command, then by a subtle acquiescence'.[2] In other words, it is assumed that Arafat was still committed to the use of violence to help his political cause and thus did not prevent attacks by Palestinian militants as a sort of roundabout negotiating tactic to pressure Israel to further withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza strip. But this was not the case in 1994-1995, during the Rabin administration. Yasser Arafat was committed to a diplomatic, political resolution of the conflict with Israel because it was the only viable option for his political survival. But it was this same base self-interest, and the resulting desire to consolidate his rather tenuous authority vis-à-vis the Islamic opposition, that often caused him to take a somewhat cavalier attitude toward the letter of the Oslo Accords. For instance, after Arafat's arrival in the autonomous areas in

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[1] Idem Samuel Segev, *Crossing the Jordan: Israel's Hard Road to Peace* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998): 354.

[2] Ibid., 351.

July 1994, there was an intensified Palestinian effort to smuggle arms and ammunition into the Gaza strip, through tunnels from Egypt's Sinai Peninsula and by sea.[3] Similarly, he was prone to idiosyncratic behaviour and verbal posturing – devices that were meant to veil the scope of his concessions to Israel and to gradually bring the majority of the Palestinian population under his fold, but which frequently gave his Israeli interlocutors the impression that he still sanctioned violence as a negotiating strategy.

A telling example of Arafat's diplomatically uncouth style of face-saving and intended populist inclusion can be seen on 10 May 1994, when shortly after the signing of the Cairo Agreement, the PLO Chairman addressed a crowd of worshippers at a mosque in Johannesburg, South Africa:

> Now, after this agreement, which is the first step and nothing more than that, believe me – a lot remains to be done. The jihad will continue. Jerusalem is not only of the Palestinian people, but of the entire Islamic nation ... After this agreement you must understand that our main battle is not to get the maximum out of them here and there. The main battle is over Jerusalem. I regard this agreement no more than the agreement signed between our prophet Muhammad and the Quraysh in Mecca. We must remember that Caliph Umar refused to accept this agreement and considered it an 'inferior peace agreement'. However, the prophet Muhammad accepted it, and now we accept the agreement, but in order to continue on the way to Jerusalem. Together and not alone.[4]

Arafat's reference to early Islamic history could suggest that he was never truly committed to the Oslo Accords. After all, in 627 AD the prophet Muhammad reached a ten-year truce with the stronger Quraysh tribe in Mecca; but when the pagan rivals violated the agreement after only two years, the Muslim forces overtook them. In this context, Arafat appears to suggest that he never intended to seek a long-term conciliation with Israel, to make the

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[3]Ibid., 366.
[4]*Ha'aretz*, 23 May 1994.

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concessions required to reach a final status agreement. Similarly, his talk of jihad seems to convey that he in no way sought to make the transformation from revolutionary leader to statesman, that he viewed the Oslo Accords solely as a mechanism to create a PLO-controlled state. But this was not so and the speech was only bravado. In the immediate wake of the Cairo Agreement, in which sweeping concessions had been made to Israel (pp. 166-171), it was necessary for Arafat to tout his nationalist and Islamic credentials. He intended to continue his commitments to Israel, but in order to do so he felt it was necessary to invoke imagery and to undertake populist actions that were bound to be unpalatable to the Israelis.

Arafat's particular *modus operandi* did not mean that he sanctioned terrorism against Israel. He did in fact act to prevent violent deeds from occurring, but not solely through the means that Rabin had expected of him. The official Palestinian responses to crises that arose in 1994-1995, a potentially successful system of control was that was considerably undermined by the actions of the Rabin government, cannot be understood without first relaying the central operative dynamic and structure of the Arafat regime.

Personalised Authoritarianism

Immediately upon arriving in Gaza, Yasser Arafat established a dictatorial regime. His consolidation of power in such a manner disappointed many Palestinians, but it was not at odds with the agreements that were reached between the PLO and Israel. It could even be said that the authoritarianism of the Palestinian Authority, as well as its anti-institutional personalisation of power, fostered a better climate in which to negotiate with Israel. Israeli leaders have typically found many advantages in dealing with

Arab strongmen. President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, for example, was not accountable to the vagaries of domestic public opinion when he travelled to Jerusalem in November 1977.[5] The Israelis often praised the 'steadfastness' of King Hussein of Jordan and even spoke of Hafez al-Assad as a potential partner in peace, noting in particular how the Syrian dictator continued to honour his 1974 separation-of-forces agreement with Israel. In the same manner, Arafat was perfectly willing to stifle dissent to advance his own interests, which included providing suitable security for his Israeli interlocutors.

In order to consolidate their own power, the PLO 'outsiders' who arrived in the West Bank and Gaza strip in 1994 instituted a system of personalised authoritarianism.[6] 'Personalised authoritarianism is the rational political response to the problems of power consolidation for a returning leadership socially and politically removed from the realities of Palestinian life since 1967'.[7] Because its authority to govern ultimately came from Israel, the PLO had to create a politics antithetical to the system of decentralised decision-making that had emerged locally during the *intifada*. If it were to continue to receive Israeli sanction, the PLO could not maintain the tradition in which 'neighbourhood, village, town and regional popular committees formed a highly diffuse decision-making 'structure''.[8] After all, there was the likelihood that popular protest given expression in these institutions would oppose the concessions that would have to be made to Israel, and thus

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[5]William Quandt, 'Democracy', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73 No. 4 (Jul./Aug. 1994): 2.

[6]Glenn E. Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997): 174.

[7]Glenn E. Robinson, 'The Growing Authoritarianism of the Arafat Regime', *Survival*, vol. 39, no. 2, Summer 1997, 48.

[8]Ibid.

destabilise Arafat's authority. In order to permanently stifle these voices, the PLO 'outsiders' therefore implemented a new, authoritarian system based on personalities.

> Authoritarianism and personalism, in this case, were not the natural results of some teleological political culture or even the by-product of the psychology of Yasir Arafat. Rather, these two intertwined phenomena were the result of the political logic of state-building in the unusual circumstances of Palestine. Ruling by decree limited the necessity of "doing politics" in Gaza and the West Bank – that is, directly engaging a vibrant civil society – a task which the "outsiders" were little prepared to undertake and at which they may not have been terribly successful. At the same time, the personalisation of politics directly undermined the core political strength of the new elite, which was collective action through institution building. Rather than play into the strength of the "inside" PLO, the PA changed the rules of the game, emphasizing personalism, demoblization, and deinstitutionalism instead.[9]

Proximity to key individuals, not institutions, would define the distribution of power in the Palestinian autonomous areas. In order to achieve this aim, an environment of confusion was deliberately fostered in terms of political hierarchy. 'The key bit of evidence to suggest that such confusion is deliberate and not just the by-product of creating a new polity is the sustenance of *ambiguous lines of authority* throughout the PA'.[10]

The absence of a clear chain of command built on a method of rule that Arafat had used before with success in Lebanon and Tunis, a form of order that has been described as 'one boss but a thousand franchises'.[11] In this system, horizontal forces without clear hierarchy vie with each other in order to gain the attention of Arafat, the 'boss' who controls the distribution of the spoils of power and is thus never challenged by a unified opposition. In the PA, the 'franchises' were concentrated within four broad areas: police and

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[9]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 181-2.
[10]Emphasis added, Ibid., 186
[11]Ehud Ya'ari, 'Can Arafat Govern?', *Jerusalem Report*, 13 January 1994: 27.

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security forces; 'state' bureaucrats; the notable social class; and a reconstructed cadre system from Arafat's Fatah faction of the PLO.

The police and security forces comprise the prime component of the Arafat regime, as a result of their frequently used coercive authority. Reflecting the PA Chairman's organisational preferences, there is no functioning chain of command and the heads of four different police and security forces report directly to Arafat. 'Such fragmentation is purposeful, preventing the emergence of a strong and unified security apparatus which might pose political problems for Arafat in the future'.[12] This structure of fragmentation allowed in particular for an effective 'carrot and stick' approach to be used with militant opponents of the regime, particularly from Hamas and Islamic Jihad. For example, many, but not all of the leaders and personnel of these services are returning 'outside' Palestinians, insuring loyalty against 'inside' discontent. The implicit message to the Palestinian man on the street was that political misbehaviour would warrant heavy-handed treatment by 'outsider' police. Indeed, security forces composed of 'outsiders', such as the civil police in Gaza city headed by Ghazi Jabali, have been known to arrest, torture, and kill members of opposition groups who jeopardise the viability of the regime. On the other hand, security forces made up largely of 'insider' Palestinians, such as the Preventive Security Force (PSF) run by Jibril Rajoub in Jericho and Muhammad Dahalan in Gaza City, have been used successfully to promote dialogue and rally support for the PA. Many Palestinians, even in the Islamic opposition, regard the leadership and personnel of the PSF as

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[12]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 178.

representing authentic Palestinian nationalism.[13] But it must be noted that the PSF has been just as effective in implementing the PLO-Israeli security understandings.[14]

The bureaucracy is the second most important element of the Arafat political base, heavily anchored in a system of political patronage. When families of civil servants are included, for example, more than one-quarter of people in the Gaza strip are dependent on the PA for their livelihood.[15] Although the patronage machine is not as pronounced in the West Bank, the extensive distribution of 'state' jobs throughout the Palestinian territories did successfully foster dependency on, and hence support for, Yasser Arafat and the PA. In effect, Arafat attempted to gradually extend the web of the VIP system established by Israel that linked the personal self-interest of Palestinian administrators with Israeli security considerations (p. 167).

Arafat incorporated members of the formerly dominant, land-owning Palestinian elite, or 'notables', into his political base. This was an especially shrewd political move. '[G]iven their long political history and their still respectable resources, notables could confer upon the PA a certain

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[13]See, for example, 'Interview with Mahmud Zahhar' *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 24, no. 3 (spring 1995): 81-89.

[14]In January 1994, Rajoub and Dahalan held security coordination meetings in Rome with Ya'acov Peri, head of the Israeli internal security police, and General Amnon Shahak, the Israeli deputy chief of staff, who was appointed chief Israeli negotiator. Because of political sensitivities that were involved, the meeting did not reach a formal accord, but rather a kind of tacit agreement instead. 'This boiled down to modus vivendi where, in return for intelligence on the Palestinian opposition and especially the Islamists...[the Israelis] would grant Dahalan and Rajub free rein to create a de facto police force throughout the West Bank and Gaza, both before and during Israel's redeployment from these areas' (Graham Usher, 'The Politics of Internal Security: The PA's New Intelligence Services' *Journal of Palestine Studies* XXV, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 27). 'Free rein' meant that 'Fateh armed bands...will be charged with putting down any sign of opposition [to Oslo]; the intent is for them to administer show-punishments at the earliest possible stage, aimed at creating proper respect for the new regime (Ehud Ya'ari, 'Can Arafat Govern?': 23). On 18 September 1994, in response to a question in the Israeli cabinet, Yitzhak Rabin acknowledged that PSF personnel were operating throughout the West Bank in pursuit of suspects and opponents and in complete cooperation with Israeli security forces (*Ha'aretz*, 19 September 1994).

[15]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 178.

respectability'.[16] Yet, the position of the once-powerful notables had greatly diminished since 1967 and this class no longer had an autonomous base from which to oppose Arafat's authority. At the same time, the notables owed their newfound political positions directly to Arafat, and it was to the PA that their loyalty was given. Since the wielding of authority of the old land-owning class remained a powerful memory in the Palestinian areas, Arafat was able to harness the strong clan loyalties (*al hamula*) that were still linked to these personalities to his own political advantage. Also, because such a move implicitly conveyed that the PA was the heir to an 'aristocratic' legacy rather than a democratic one, it had the benefit of further marginalizing those former *intifada* activists who remained a potential threat to the Arafat regime. 'Rolling back the partial gains of the Intifada brought added security to Arafat's own position; there was no better symbol of this than making the notable social class a bedrock of PA power'.[17]

Arafat's political faction of the PLO, Fatah, is also a pillar of PA rule. As the largest single faction of the PLO, Fatah contains many activists and institution builders who had helped mobilise Palestinian society before and during the *intifada*. Although decisions were often taken in the field and institutions run with regard to the local context, these cadres remained loyal to the PLO in Tunis. In line with his efforts to consolidate his authority, Arafat had to neutralize locally popular and partially autonomous cadres within Fatah. 'Loyalist cadres – numbering in the thousands – were retained, while those with substantial autonomy were removed from decision-making

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[16]Ibid.,179. For a more detailed account of the past political power of Palestinian notables, see Muhammad Muslih, *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).
[17]Ibid.

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positions and were replaced'.[18] But despite its reconstitution, Fatah preserved much of the important social structures, such as labour unions, women's committees, voluntary works organisations and student blocs, which had catered to the everyday needs of the Palestinian population during the uprising. By preserving a semblance of these popular organisations, Fatah prevented the formation of a destabilising social vacuum that might have been completely filled by the Islamic opposition. The faction served another vital function in the PA. Although Fatah was not formally linked to the executive in Gaza, its leaders were nonetheless implicitly linked with it, and so for example, were quietly mandated by Arafat with a two-fold role: to cultivate a dialogue with the political leadership of Hamas, but to simultaneously 'seek out and neutralise' the independent military cells of the Islamic organisation that were planning attacks against Israeli targets.

The Security Relationship: An Extra-Dialectical Condition

What value could a system that combined gross patronage, a deliberate lack of governing transparency, and a mass proliferation of police forces have played for the peace process? Personalised authoritarianism, while hardly constituting the ideal arrangement to advance conciliation and cooperation with Israel, was of worth because it was reconcilable to, capable of harmonising and integrating with, Israeli security requirements. Or in other words, to use the Hegelian concepts employed by Michael Hardt (pp. 78-92), the operative dynamic of the Arafat regime had the potential to be dialectically amenable with the interests of the Israeli state under Rabin.

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[18]Ibid.

A 'dialectical' scenario did not come about. It will be recalled from chapter three that Rabin's evaluative criterion for security was rather one-dimensional in nature; this standard was bound to nationalist considerations (as reflected in the preservation and maintenance of Israeli settlements), and, reflecting his asymmetrical views of Israeli and Palestinian rights, was largely indifferent to Arafat's face-saving requirements and operating constraints (pp. 106-113). As such, the likelihood of a dialectical synthesis, which in terms of Israeli-Palestinian relations was comparable to an new arrangement that found satisfiers to successfully meet the needs and interests of both sides (security and a prelude to sovereignty), was essentially precluded.[19] The previous 'dialectical' aim for the Palestinians of the occupied territories, the intended synthesis of old forms of their identity with the 'higher' norms of the Israeli state, can be discerned from earlier Israeli political programmes that were meant to address the status of the Palestinians, the aforementioned 'Jordanian option' and post-1989 autonomy plans (pp. 106-119). Inherent to both proposals was a conception of the Palestinians as 'folk residents' to be acclimated to a sub-national political status under the continued aegis of the Israeli state. The Israeli recognition of the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people in 1993 and as its partner in the interim self-government arrangements should have logically overridden this previous dialectical aim.

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[19]In contrast, during the Camp David negotiations, Israel and Egypt were successfully able to come to such a 'dialectical' arrangement over the related issue of security versus sovereignty. Egypt demanded that the Sinai Peninsula, which Israel had occupied in the June 1967 war, be returned in exchange for a peace treaty. Israel insisted on keeping the territory for security reasons, as the large expanse served as a buffer to separate Israel proper from Egyptian forces. But American mediators were able to reconcile the two positions by reframing the concepts of sovereignty and security in a manner that was acceptable to both sides. Israel agreed to evacuate the Sinai, to have the territory be restored to Egyptian sovereignty, in exchange for guarantees of the permanent demilitarisation of the peninsula and the presence of a US-led border monitoring force therein. See Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991): 41-2.

But a new synthesis of the two opposing national claims, one that resulted in recognition of the bi-nationality of the land, did not come about. Instead, an extra-dialectical condition emerged that, as the view of Raz-Krakotzkin conveyed in chapter one (p. 54), still sought to consolidate the predominance of the Israeli association with the land.

Israeli conflict management strategies for the Palestinians had assumed 'control society' forms of rule and hence were no longer open to any possible 'unification of opposites'. The nature of security reflected that a bi-national synthesis of perspectives had not come about. A bi-national perspective recognises both the Israeli and Palestinian claims to the land as equals. A security approach rooted in such a view would translate into an equal prioritisation of the long-term approach to achieving stability and security of the national leaderships of both sides. It would neither ignore, nor only be expected to prioritise the immediate safety concerns of just one of the parties, Israel. As such, Arafat's intent to slowly incorporate Hamas and Islamic Jihad into his political ambit would be viewed as a viable option to be fostered and encouraged to strengthen the overall security of both sides. But no Israeli recognition of this sort occurred. As the aforementioned quote by Michael Hardt relayed (p. 88), in the extra-dialectical condition, '[w]hat is subsumed, what is accepted into the process, is no longer a potentially conflictive force but a product of the system itself'.[20] After the inauguration of the Palestinian Authority in May 1994, this phenomenon manifested tangibly as a kind of Israeli hyper-management of the security role of the PA. It is certainly true that the PLO had assented to a junior partner status in the Oslo Accords, but

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[20]Idem Michael Hardt, 'The Withering of Civil Society' in Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller ed., *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998): 35.

the Israeli attitude toward the PA that emerged after the Cairo Agreement was one of expected subservience and extreme indifference to the mood of the Palestinian 'street'. Rabin often acted toward his Palestinian partners as if they were mere hirelings.

The Rabin government did not intentionally seek to vitiate Arafat. Indeed, throughout 1994 and 1995:

> ...Israel sought to rule (as far as security matters were concerned) indirectly through the PA. Even when it did not believe the PA was doing enough [against Islamic militants], Israel had to lie low in order to bolster the PA's legitimacy and independence in the eyes of its own people.[21]

Yet despite an official policy that was intended to shore up the Palestinian leadership, Arafat's regime was considerably damaged by a series of actions taken by the Rabin government. This contradictory behaviour finds correspondence in the very tensions that embody the 'control society'. It will be recalled from chapter two that the forms of 'control' increase subjection to dominant forces by allowing for greater perceptions of emancipation, and then by contrasting these new systems to the preceding, more restrictive forms of governance (pp. 74-5). But even in the midst of this process of improvement, the key traits of prior systems of order are only ostensibly transmuted and do not completely disappear (p. 71). It was shown in the previous chapter how the Rabin administration proceeded to enfranchise, and then offered gradually diminishing concessions to the PLO-run PA (pp. 164-178), the equivalent of the relative empowerment of the 'control society'. Yet at the same time that Israel began to consolidate these gains, the efficacy of its new economy of power was slowly being jeopardised. Additional measures were taken, in

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[21]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 190.

response to a number of security crises, that likely undermined a long-term, successful effort akin to complex co-optation from taking hold. While Rabin did have legitimate concerns about the safety of his own constituents, he took a series of responsive measures that only served to antagonise and collectively punish the majority of Palestinians, making it seem to them that the new circumstances under which they lived were not truly better than before they achieved self-rule. Rabin's actions, seemingly inconsistent with his government's stated goals with regard to the PA, can best be understood as the outgrowth of an extra-dialectical condition.

Addressing the Islamic Opposition

The entry of the PLO in the Gaza strip in May 1994 was marked by its own misgivings about the Palestinian Islamic movements. In this regard it should be understood that Hamas is a mass movement, the only Palestinian group capable of posing a challenge to the hegemony of the Fatah-PLO controlled PA.[22] (Islamic Jihad, on the other hand, is a much smaller organisation; but it perceives itself as the vanguard of Palestinian society and is thus committed to waging an active and highly visible struggle against Israel.[23]) The Hamas activist Ghazi Hamad notes that since 1987, the growing stature of the group had unnerved the leaders of the PLO in Tunis.[24] Despite amiable dialogues that were held with Arafat's leadership, Hamas declined to

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[22]In opinion polls carried out by the Center for Palestine Research and Studies between October 1993 and March 1995, Hamas received between 12% and 18% of popular support, making it the largest supported movement after Fatah, and the only faction besides Fatah to obtain more than 10% of the total support. Cited in Idem Helena Lindholm Schulz, *One Year Into Self-Government* (Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, 1997): 64.

[23]Interview with Mr. Ala Saftawi, Islamic Jihad sympathiser, cited in Ibid., 69.

[24]Ghazi A. Hamad, 'The Relationship Between Hamas and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA): The Conflictual Past and the Unknown Future' in Wolfgang Freud ed., *Palestinian Perspectives* (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH, 1999): 181.

be incorporated into the structures of the PLO.[25] After 1991, it tended to publicly oppose all PLO political and diplomatic initiatives. Hamas later opened several offices in neighbouring Arab countries, causing some PLO leaders to see the Islamic movement as trying to usurp the PLO position as official representative of the Palestinian people. Armed clashes between Hamas and PLO supporters occurred in the Gaza strip in 1992 and 1993. Moreover, both Palestinian Islamic movements declared their opposition to the Oslo Accords and vowed to continue violent actions against Israeli military and civilian targets. Indeed, in response to the February 1994 Hebron massacre, and despite a PLO-Israel agreement to investigate and take future preventive measures against such kinds of events from recurring, the military wing of Hamas, the Qassam brigades, bombed Israeli civilian targets in the towns of Afula and Hadera in April, killing 21 people total.[26]

The newly formed PA immediately began to engage the Islamic opposition. In spite of past turbulent relations, PLO leaders reasoned that the actual emergence of a Palestinian government would create a patriotic momentum and hence a conciliatory dynamic to foster links between the national and Islamic camps. There is some evidence to support such reasoning. After September 1993, Hamas leaders had argued that the DoP would unravel before its implementation had even begun, especially after the April 1994 bombings in Afula and Hadera.[27] But this did not occur and the onset of Palestinian rule in the Gaza strip was in fact met with widespread jubilation.

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[25]In 1990 Hamas requested integration into the Palestine National Council (PNC), the principal decision-making body of the PLO, but with the conditions that it would receive 40-50% of total representation and that the PLO make far-ranging ideological concessions.

[26]The Qassam brigades are named after Sheik Izz al-Din al-Qassam, a radical and confrontational Palestinian Muslim leader who led armed campaigns in 1934-35 against Jewish settler targets.

[27]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 193.

This euphoria was especially because the arrival of the PLO was a symbol of the Palestinian 'right of return', a key element of the Palestinian national narrative. In this regard, Hamas publicly welcomed the arrival of the PLO administrators and police, and there was a general feeling of good will between both groups.[28] The first months of self-rule can be viewed as sort of assessment period, in which PA-Hamas dialogues were commonplace. It must be noted that Hamas leaders refused to meet personally with Arafat, for such an encounter would have conveyed an official endorsement of the PLO's political strategy toward Israel. But in meetings with Arafat's deputies and intermediaries, Hamas representatives largely mollified the apprehensions of the PA by stressing that the Islamic movement would not abide infighting or any sort of civil war amongst Palestinians.[29] They even agreed to refrain from making inflammatory statements that would undermine the legitimacy of the PA.[30] At the same time, they refused to abandon armed confrontation, but in a manner that suggested they were waiting to see what Arafat would deliver, suggested that they 'would be ready to continue such tactics in the future', that the decision to engage in violence was not inevitable.[31] Indeed, the first five months of PA rule were free of attacks against Israeli targets.

Arafat's initial *modus vivendi* with Hamas was not a total guarantor of stability. The operating constraints of the PA related to the diffuse structure of the Islamic opposition groups. For example, Hamas, in a manner similar to the earlier PLO, had become an umbrella organisation with many different elements and factions:

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[28]Hamad,181.
[29]Ibid., 185.
[30]Ibid.
[31]Ibid.

The political and military wings of Hamas had, years before Oslo, become independent of each other in order to preserve the vulnerable political decision-makers. The military wing came to resemble the earlier Islamic Jihad organisation: secretive, small and cell based. While there was clearly communication between these two wings, it was also clear that neither side controlled the other.[32]

In order to prevent violent acts against Israeli targets, the PA had to win over the political leadership and act separately to try to contain the military cells. But such an act was further complicated by the trans-national structure of the Islamic opposition, whose leaders were based both inside and outside the occupied territories. While the differing interests of these two constituencies were not important during the *intifada*, sizable differences and goals between the two communities became apparent after the Oslo Accords. The Diaspora leadership, based in Amman and Damascus, tended to view Oslo as a process only of benefit to the Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza strip. The PA was not able to successfully cultivate ties with this 'outside' leadership, who subsequently provided vast financial and logistical support to militant elements such as the Qassam brigades.[33]

Crises

The first crisis that occurred after Arafat's arrival in Gaza was in fact triggered by the actions of an autonomous Hamas military cell. On 9 October 1994, the cell kidnapped an Israeli soldier, Nachshon Wachsman, and demanded the release of 200 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for his safe return. Despite any evidence, the Israelis insisted that Wachsman was being held in Gaza, in territory under the jurisdiction of the PA. They suspended peace negotiations in Cairo and implemented an indefinite closure of the Gaza

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[32]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 193.
[33]Ibid., Hamad, 184.

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strip. Arafat publicly condemned the act and vowed to punish the individuals who were responsible. The Palestinian security forces then began a methodical and extensive search, arresting and forcefully grilling 350 Hamas supporters. They even 'severely interrogated Palestinian journalists on the hunch that since they had received Hamas's message about the kidnapping they must know the provenance of the messenger'.[34] The information gathered from these rather heavy-handed efforts enabled the Israelis to locate Wachsman, although the conscript was subsequently killed on 14 October, during a botched rescue attempt in the village of Beit Naballah, an area in the West Bank still under Israeli control. The central role played by Arafat's forces in assisting the Israelis is most evident, for example, in a statement that Hamas issued shortly after the incident which warned the PA to 'cease supplying information on our...*mujahidin* [i.e. military cells] to the Zionist intelligence and occupation authorities'.[35] But the Israelis continued to blame Arafat and to demand a better performance from the Palestinian security apparatus, despite the fact that their previous accusations about the whereabouts of the kidnapped soldier had been incorrect. The internal closure of the Gaza strip that was implemented as an initial response to the kidnapping was kept in place and the resulting economic suffering and deprivation only served to foment anger and discontent with PA rule.

The Israeli response to the kidnapping seems peculiar. In many ways the Palestinian crisis management of the episode represents an ideal for Israel. When the military cells acted irrespective of Arafat's constructive engagement

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[34]Graham Usher, *Palestine in Crisis: The Struggle for Peace and Political Independence after Oslo* (London: Pluto Press, 1997): 69.
    [35]Graham Usher, 'What Kind of Nation? The Rise of Hamas in the Occupied Territories' *Race and Class* October-December 1995, 77.

efforts, he ordered mass arrests without charges, and did not hesitate to use forceful interrogations to gather the information required by Israel. As such, the actions could have warranted an acknowledgement that the PA had in no way been responsible for the abduction, Israel had erred by claiming that its soldier was being held in Palestinian controlled areas, and that full security cooperation had been given. But such reasoning presupposes an equal prioritisation of Israeli and Palestinian interests, which included allowing Arafat to save face in front of his constituents. Indeed Hamas was a popular social movement, whom the Palestinian leader was trying to court. His acting against them was domestically unpopular because it smacked of servitude. But if Israel had recognised the contribution of the PA, then Arafat could have argued to middle-ground elements within the Palestinian population that although the actions he took were painful, they were a necessary component of building a strategic relationship with Israel, a process that was delivering tangible results to them. A positive Israeli acknowledgement would have been such a marked departure from past, contemptuous attitudes toward the Palestinians that it would have added weight to the PA argument that security cooperation was an inevitable part of a 'give and take' process. But the actual Israeli reaction, being extra-dialectical in nature, conveyed that the PA was simply expected to do Israel's bidding – without receiving any empathy or expressed appreciation in exchange. (Moreover, as the retention of the closure indicated, 'non-compliance' would be met by collective punishment.) The scornful attitudes predating Oslo were still at play and Arafat was made to look like a lackey.

Israeli actions and demands complicated Arafat's stabilisation techniques. The internal closure of the Gaza strip that remained in place created a climate that led to further extremist acts.[36] On 19 October Hamas claimed responsibility for a bus bombing in Tel Aviv that killed 22 people and left 50 wounded. After the bombing, Arafat publicly denounced Hamas as 'terrorists' and 'conspirators receiving orders from outside to destroy our dream of a homeland'.[37] The PA Chairman had repudiated denunciations of terrorism for much of his political career and for him to use the term 'terrorist' to vilify others left a powerful impression on his supporters.[38] It signalled an impending confrontation with the Islamic opposition. However, Arafat was mindful of the domestic political risks that an official crackdown on Hamas would entail and so he authorised the 'independent' armed Fatah cadres to pressure the group into quiescence. But these tactics were unacceptable to the Israelis, who demanded an official and visibly coercive clampdown instead. PA Planning Minister Nabil Sha'ath commented on the net effect of Israeli pressure tactics during this period: 'I would suggest not making Arafat look like an Israeli agent, like an "Uncle Tom" serving his masters...the effect on us is devastating'.[39]

Dissatisfied with what they perceived as inaction by the PA, the Israelis chose to act unilaterally. Exercising the rights to 'pre-emptive intervention' and retaliation against Palestinian militants that were guaranteed by the Accords, Israeli undercover units assassinated a number of leaders affiliated with Hamas and Islamic Jihad, *inside* areas under the control of the

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[36]Idem Hanan Ashrawi, *This Side of Peace* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994): 12.

[37]Usher, 'What Kind of Nation? The Rise of Hamas in the Occupied Territories' ,77.

[38]Idem Saïd K. Aburish, *Arafat: From Defender to Dictator*, 286

[39]*New York Times*, 9 November 1994.

PA. Alluding to the efforts of the Palestinian security forces, Arafat made a personal appeal to Rabin to desist; he argued that by taking such actions within areas under PA jurisdiction and without consulting him, Israel was threatening him in the eyes of his constituency.[40] For example, On 2 November, Rabin authorised the assassination of the Islamic Jihad leader Hani Abed in Khan Yunis, a city in the Gaza strip under PA rule. After their chiding by Fatah cadres, Arafat had been successfully attempting to cultivate a new dialogue with the Islamic opposition groups.[41] But the killing, which had been particularly spectacular, rendered Arafat's conciliatory efforts null and void. Attending Abed's funeral on 3 November, for example, the Palestinian leader was personally denounced as a collaborator and even physically attacked by angry crowds.[42]

The Israelis were not unaware of the need to strengthen their junior partner. 'Rabin felt that after Arafat's chilling experience in Gaza [at the Abed funeral] and in an effort to contain the constant erosion in Arafat's popularity, Israel should take some steps to enhance his personal position'.[43] At a meeting held with Arafat at the Erez checkpoint on the Israel-Gaza strip 'border' on 8 November, Rabin proposed that intensive negotiations should commence in Cairo, in order to resolve the remaining issues relating to the extension of Palestinian self-rule to areas in the West Bank outside of Jericho. At the Erez meeting, which has been described as the first truly successful personal meeting between Rabin and Arafat since the signing of the DoP in September

[40]Aburish, 286.
[41]Usher, 'The Politics of Internal Security: The PA's New Intelligence Services', 31.
[42]Aburish, 286-7.
[43]Segev, 364.

1993,[44] Rabin explained that the eventual Israeli redeployment of forces in the West Bank would be commensurate on Arafat's fulfilling of security requirements. Arafat in turn reiterated the PA commitment to curb acts of terrorism. He acted in response, for example, on 11 November when an Islamic Jihad suicide bomber on a motorcycle (who was acting in retaliation for the assassination of Hani Abed) killed 3 Israeli soldiers and left 12 injured at the Netzarim military checkpoint in the Gaza strip. The Palestinian police soon thereafter arrested more than 140 people suspected of supporting Islamic Jihad.

The most extreme PA responses against the Islamic opposition did not satisfy the Israelis. On 18 November, Palestinian police used live ammunition to break up a Hamas and Islamic Jihad anti-Oslo rally in Gaza city, killing sixteen and wounding over 200. The Palestinian police had been expecting these protesters affiliated with the Islamic opposition, some 2000 in number, who had begun marching after attending Friday prayers in the city's central mosque. The demonstrators had in particular been condemning Arafat's 'total complicity' in recent Israeli security operations and were demanding his resignation. In the wake of the event, Hamas leaders maintained that the Palestinian police had open fire against the protesters without provocation.[45] They claimed further that the PA head of police in the Gaza strip, Nasser Yousef, had planned the shootings and thus would be targeted for assassination.[46] The PA denied premeditative responsibility for the events and set up a commission of inquiry instead. While Hamas refused to participate in the commission, it did agree to the PA's proposal for a temporary truce on 20

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[44]Ibid.
[45]Hamad, 181.
[46]Segev, 365.

November. In a meeting in Washington with US President Bill Clinton on 21 November, Rabin was reported to have expressed his extreme frustration that Arafat had called a truce and had not 'finished the job' against Hamas instead.[47] During a personal meeting with Arafat in Madrid on 30 November, Rabin angrily rebuked the PA Chairman for his failure to 'curb terrorism', for not using the protests as a pretext to completely annihilate the infrastructure of the Islamic opposition.[48] Arafat was said to have declared his total commitment to the peace process, and pleaded for understanding of 'the critical situation facing all of us'.[49] He told Rabin 'I cannot do more without imprisoning all my people'.[50] Rabin showed no inclination to assist Arafat on this subject and instead limited the Palestinian leader's options.

The Israeli security positions and actions toward the PA during the tension-laden period in October and November 1994 can be viewed as very pronounced examples of an extra-dialectical condition. Contrary to the position of some Palestinian opponents of the Oslo Accords, the Rabin government was not wilfully out to 'destroy' Arafat.[51] The constant invocation and utilisation of the asymmetrical security relationship between Israel and the PA was simply the norm of a 'control society' form of governance. The guiding logic of this new condition was about recognition and empowerment of the PLO on Israeli terms. Evaluation of Palestinian performance was simply not open to Arafat's alternative system of satisfiers. For example, Arafat did not appear opposed in principle to the series of assassinations undertaken by Israel during this period, since those singled out by the Israelis were hostile to

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[47]Ibid.
[48]Ibid, 366.
[49]Aburish, 286.
[50]Ibid.
[51]Ibid., 366.

him as well.[52] Arafat's objection was more a matter of economy. He sought to be informed if such 'eliminations' were to occur in areas technically under his control so he could prepare the requisite damage control measures beforehand. But this was not an option Israel would consider. While the Israelis were cognizant of the need to keep Arafat strengthened, as the 8 November meeting in Erez shows, they refused to see any utility in his 'carrot' strategies concerning the Islamic opposition. Since the recognition of their Palestinian partners was not bi-national in orientation, their conflict management strategies were not a synthesis of opposing national perspectives, and they therefore did not accord equal weight to Arafat's means to attain stability and security. They simply expected a massive clampdown, for Arafat to have no qualms about gunning down his own people. The PA was expected to be just another deployment of force at the disposal of the Israeli state – not unlike its undercover assassination units, 'a product of the system itself'.

Arafat Changes Style

Arafat did decide to change his style of governance. The adjustment seems to have been prompted by a meeting that was held with Rabin and Peres in Oslo on 10 and 11 December, after the awarding of their shared Nobel Peace Prize. In light of the deteriorating situation, Rabin presented two alternative scenarios to Arafat.[53] The first stipulated proceeding with the Oslo Accords, but at a reduced pace, until Israeli security needs were met. The second proposed a 'symbolic' Israeli withdrawal from the major cities of the West Bank, so as to allow elections for the Palestinian legislative council to

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[52]Usher, 'What Kind of Nation? The Rise of Hamas in the Occupied Territories', 65-81.

[53]Segev, 366.

occur, but for the actual implementation discussions of the redeployment to resume afterward, again after Israeli security concerns had been satisfied. Arafat rejected both options and insisted on adherence to the original timetable. But the very real prospect of reformulations and delays to an agreement that he already felt was to his disadvantage appears to have prompted the Palestinian leader to modify his general style of management to give even greater consideration to Israeli security demands. This is not to say that the Palestinian leader intended to altogether abandon his non-coercive techniques of conflict management. Indeed, in the wake of the social upheaval following the massacre in Gaza, for example, Fatah, Arafat's unofficial arm in the autonomous areas, had procured a 'non-aggression' pact with the four main secular political movements in the PA areas on 25 November.[54] (The agreement, which was upgraded to include the PA as well as Hamas on 12 December, guaranteed the right to demonstrate and obliged all signatories to uphold public order.[55]) But once these efforts had achieved a basic stability, Arafat had resolved that the active use of force would have to feature more prominently in an attempt to create a loyal opposition.

Arafat altered the nature of his 'carrot and stick' approach towards Hamas and Islamic Jihad. 'At base, what Arafat sought to do was split Hamas so that the military wing could be more easily crushed while the political wing could be a partner in the political process'.[56] Indeed academic observers of Hamas believed during this period that if the Islamic movement's political

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[54]These included the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Palestinian Democratic Federation Party (Fida), and the Palestine People's Party (PPP).

[55]The full list of signatories included the PA, Fatah, PFLP, DFLP, PPP, Hamas, Fida, and the Popular Struggle Front.

[56]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 192.

leaders 'were to achieve what they consider a fair deal in terms of power sharing, they would find a way to join the Authority'.[57] Arafat merely intended to lower the threshold level of their demands through compulsion. (This refinement was essentially a reversal of his original strategy, which had been to emphasise common interests and cultivate a relationship with the Islamic movements, resorting to force only as a last resort.) His new, ongoing 'clobbering' tactic was enacted soon after a double suicide bombing killed 21 people at Beit Lid, near the Israeli town of Netanya on 23 January 1995.[58] The PA Chairman did intend to reinitiate contacts after several months, but only after the enormity of his resolve had been fully digested.

Extreme measures were implemented to deal with domestic opponents of the PA. In addition to the coercive means of control that he had previously employed, Arafat issued an executive decree creating 'special state security courts'. These notorious tribunals 'operate independently of the civilian judiciary system, allow secret evidence, brook no appeal procedures, and are 'judged' by PLO military personnel appointed by the PA'.[59] During 1995, the PA authorities gave no advance notice of these trials, all of which were held secretly and, except for one case, reportedly took place in the middle of the

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[57]Interview with Dr. Ziad Abu Amr, Beir Zeit University. Cited in Lindholm Schulz, 65. In a similar vein, Lindholm Schulz notes: 'In effect, Islamist movements in general and Hamas in particular, do not represent stubborn rejectionism, as often claimed. Hamas has different trends, with more or less conciliatory approaches. The moderate trend does not *per se* reject compromise solutions or negotiations, and its rejection of current agreements are not a principle but due to the perception that Israel has not gone far enough, while the Palestinians have not gained anything worth mentioning' (65).

[58]See Lindholm Schulz, 25-26. Referring to events in 1995, Lindholm Schulz notes that: 'Another change in official [Palestinian] nationalist discourse on Israel is reflected in the new sensitivity towards Israeli demands that the Palestinian Authority and Police takes (sic) actions against the Islamic movement in terms of preventing attacks and punishing those who carry them out. The turning point was the Beit Lid attack, when, as Nabil Sha'ath points out, a new Palestinian political discourse emerged. Israeli security became a Palestinian national concern'.

[59]Usher, 'The Politics of Internal Security: The PA's New Intelligence Services', 32.

night.[60] Rather than recount each particular incident, it suffices to say that mass arrests and security courts trials frequently occurred between late January and September 1995. As part of a general crackdown, but also in response to three suicide bomb attacks that took place against Israeli civilian and military targets, as well to special requests by the Israeli authorities, over 500 arrests were made, and the security courts were used more than 20 times.[61] In addition, PA security agencies provided crucial information to Israeli undercover assassination units, helping to enable, for example, the gunning down of Kamal Kaheel, a top leader of the Qassam brigades, on 16 April.[62]

The logic behind Arafat's reasoning seems to have been borne out. Ghazi Hamad notes that the continual arrest and torture of Hamas members by the PA's security forces during this period prompted a vociferous internal debate within the Islamic movement.[63] A number of Hamas leaders argued that a 'freeze', or *de facto* cessation, of acts of violence was more favourable than a self-defeating confrontation with the PA. It is true that the

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[60]See Amnesty International, 'Trial at Midnight: Secret, Summary, Unfair Trials in Gaza' (London, June 1995), cited in *Journal of Palestine Studies* XXV, no. 1 (Autumn 1995), 141-161. The PA Attorney General, Khalid al-Qidrah, maintained that the relevant authorities started examining these cases during the day, and by the time they were ready for trial it was the middle of the night (144). On 29 April 1995, PA Planning Minister Nabil Sha'ath commented on public protests of the court, 'It is very difficult to maintain security at the same time as maintaining all the regular legal precautions built into a civil court. The authority had to deliver a clear message that it will not accept or tolerate violations of this agreement or of its security. The State Security Court is a message, not a venue for the future behaviour of the Palestinian Authority' (144).

[61]This figure was ascertained from a timeline of events for 1995 that was compiled by the Palestinian Academic Society for International Affairs (PASSIA). See internet site, http://www.passia.org/palestine_facts/chronology/19941995.htm. It should also be noted that clashes between Hamas supporters and the PA police personnel implementing arrest orders were not uncommon during this period. For example, an exchange of fire occurred on 18 August when PA police surrounded a Gaza city house in which the suspected suicide bomber Wael Nassar was hiding. Four gendarmes and five civilians were injured as police were trying to disperse the crowd gathering at the site.

[62]Hamad, 182.

[63]Ibid.

implementation of this growing consensus was complicated by the autonomous structure of the military cells, which continued to receive support from Hamas centres based outside the occupied territories. But by the spring of 1995, PA security forces were increasingly uncovering and disabling the military cells. As a consequence, the Hamas political leadership's desire for accommodation with the PA grew even greater.

Arafat gradually reopened a dialogue with the political representatives of the Islamic movements. The first meetings, a kind of constructive engagement, represented immediate stabilisation goals and were not outwardly indicative of Arafat's long-term political strategy toward them For example, PA representatives met with Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaders on 14 and 16 April to discuss how attacks from cells based inside the self-rule areas might be non-violently prevented. But by August 1995, all Hamas attacks ceased and a rather intense internal debate began within the movement's forums about participating the political life of the PA, particularly the Palestinian legislative council elections scheduled for January 1996.

> Hamas's dilemma was the most acute because it dealt with questions of political survival for the Islamist movement. Oslo began a process which redefined the viability of political groupings. Fatah and its allies in the PLO now had the weight of Israel, the West, and much of the Arab world behind them in establishing the PA. For Hamas to ignore this new reality risked oblivion, as it would be outside all decision-making structures. However, the terms of the Oslo Accords were considered wholly inadequate by most Hamas members, and participation by the organization in the PA would be an implicit recognition of the legitimacy of the Oslo process. Thus barring a sudden collapse of the whole process, Hamas's conundrum was to participate at the loss of its convictions or to not participate at the loss of its viability over the long run.[64]

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[64]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 192.

Moderate elements of Hamas began to prevail at the end of this debate. For example, Imad Falouji, editor of the Hamas-affiliated newspaper *al Watan*, argued during this period that there was a new reality in Palestine, like it or not, and so for the sake of posterity, Hamas could not let Fatah and its notable allies win all the seats on the legislative council.[65]

Arafat began to achieve his goals after PA and Hamas representatives met for a summit in Cairo. On 12 September, the two sides announced a 'draft agreement' in which Hamas would 'cease all military actions in and from the PA areas' and would 'respect all agreements' between the PLO and Israel.[66] In return, the PA (with Israeli sanction) would grant Hamas a role in the self-rule government, likely in the form of an independent Islamic political party that could contest the PA elections. Indeed, it was noted by credible sources at the time that:

> If Hamas holds to its commitments, Arafat will hold to his, since his aim has never been to eliminate Hamas altogether. Rather, Arafat wants Hamas domesticated to accept his authority. The September draft agreement, if kept, amounts to that acceptance.[67]

A new shape of Palestinian politics was gradually emerging as a result of Arafat's efforts to fragment Hamas and incorporate its political arm. Within this changing dynamic, the political centre was evolving to include Fatah and the Muslim Brotherhood division of Hamas, while leftist and different Islamic elements began to coalesce into a loyal opposition.[68]

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[65]Ibid., 194.

[66]Usher, 'The Politics of Internal Security: The PA's New Intelligence Services', 31.

[67]Ibid. Arafat took a similar, yet somewhat deferred approach toward Islamic Jihad. Although Islamic Jihad had a different leadership than Hamas, Arafat believed that it would be greatly assuaged, if not reined in altogether, by the incorporation of the much larger Islamic movement into the PA. The PA would continue to act against Islamic Jihad's military cells, but Arafat reasoned that such moves would be increasingly unnecessary and that the smaller group would come to follow the political lead of Hamas.

[68]Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 192.

The Cairo meeting was additionally significant. In addition to its local representatives, the Hamas delegation had included leaders based outside the West Bank and Gaza strip. Even though the Diaspora Hamas was opposed to the PLO-Israel agreements, this group, like its 'internal' counterpart, had acknowledged that a new reality was taking hold in the self-rule areas and that its interests should therefore be heard and represented if a future Palestinian state were to emerge from the Oslo process. Arafat's assenting to the inclusion of this other leadership was a particularly astute political move. He correctly reasoned that a relationship with the 'external' Hamas would help to slacken external financial and logistical support for the Qassam brigades, thus reducing bombing attacks against Israel.

A Quasi-Gramscian Programme

Arafat's active incorporation of Israeli security criteria into his conflict management and state-building endeavours brought about a significant, yet simultaneously dubious, Israeli reward. In order to understand the nature of the Israeli response to the Palestinian leader's extensive efforts to 'divide and conquer' Hamas, it is necessary to return to Michael Hardt's critique, seen in chapter two, of the Gramscian utilisation of civil society for counter-hegemonic empowerment (pp. 82-6). Hardt's account is particularly relevant because it relates to 1) the nature of the PA, particularly its incorporation as a sub-sovereign entity operating under Israeli overlordship; and 2) the post-December 1994 decision of the PA to vigorously follow Israeli security guidelines in the hope of securing further territorial concessions.

Hardt's assessment of civil society after the assumption of 'control society' forms of governance pertains to the sub-sovereign status of the PA.

Although the PA was not part of Israel proper, an internal social force trying to harness Israeli civil society to shape the actions of the Rabin government, it nonetheless was, as will be recalled, situated within 'a space between the international and the domestic' (p. 48). In a sense then, the PA was 'inside' Israel. As a sub-sovereign entity using cooperative behaviour to try to shape and redirect the governance practices of the Israeli regime, the PA's relationship with Israel was more similar to that of civil society and the state than to one of bilateral relations between equal sovereigns. Within such a framework, the ability of the PA to sway Israel toward its favour through active co-operation mirrors the possibility of civil society developing along Gramscian lines in order to affect a higher state authority toward more enfranchising ends.

After his decision to change his style of rule, Arafat might be said to have adopted a quasi-Gramscian programme. It will be recalled that Gramsci advocated, in broad terms, an active cooperation between subaltern elements and dominant social groupings so as to bring about a 'compromise equilibrium' (p. 83). By participating in the imminent site of governance and assenting to basic rules, Gramsci believed that subaltern elements would demonstrate trustworthiness and thus be able to mollify their overlords. In this synergic realm, the forces embodying political power and legitimacy would then make organisational and structural concessions, which, if harnessed correctly by constructive actors, would assume a momentum of its own and lead to greater freedom. In this vein, Arafat changed in December 1994-January 1995 from a reactive to a proactive style of conflict management, in order to better deal with Israeli security concerns. He had appealed

unsuccessfully to Israel to understand his consensus-building strategies and subsequent reticence to use extra-punitive force against the Islamic opposition. No longer expecting the Rabin government to simply change of its own volition, the Palestinian leader chose to adopt Israeli security criteria. He undertook a wholesale pounding of the Hamas militant cells, combining these actions with the essence of his long-term political strategy - pushing the Islamic movement's political wing into the fold of the PA. These propitiatory actions were meant to bring Israeli concessions, extend PA rule over the remaining occupied Palestinian areas in the West Bank. The reasoning behind such deeds was indeed Gramscian in orientation; it presupposed that a dialectical synthesis of positions, a two-fold, equal advancement of political agendas, could be fostered by the initiative of a junior partner.

The Israeli Response

Israel acknowledged Arafat's newfound diligence, but in a 'control society' fashion. In this regard, it is important to reiterate Hardt's dismissal of the Gramscian programme: if the willingness of dominant forces to engage subalterns was due to a changing economy of power, then the latter's active participation and cooperation under the aegis of the former would be no guarantor of emancipation. Such a dynamic finds its equivalence in 1) the continued Israeli failure to recognise the value of Arafat's non-coercive component, or coalition-building strategy, toward Hamas; 2) the subsequent resumption of assassinations of Islamic militants; and 3) the nature of the Israeli reward, the substance of the Oslo II agreement, which did not correspond to the immensity of Arafat's (quasi-Gramscian) efforts.

A telling example of Israel's failure to see the value of the non-coercive component of Arafat's strategy can be seen in an episode involving the Hamas militant cell leader, Awad Slimi. On 15 August 1995, the Israeli internal security police informed the Palestinian leader that Slimi's cell was about to send a suicide bomber to Tel Aviv. Samuel Segev, an Israeli journalist who enjoyed access to the Rabin government, noted of this incident that:

> Arafat ignored the warning. Angered by this attitude, Rabin reimposed the closure of the Gaza strip. Only then did Arafat move. On 18 August, the Palestinian security services arrested three Hamas terrorists, including Slimi, and brought them to trial. Shortly afterward, however, Slimi managed to "escape" from jail. He was recaptured only a year later, when Benjamin Netanyahu became the prime minister.[69]

It is certainly true that Israeli leaders should have been concerned that a terrorist incident was about to occur, but it is wrong to claim that Arafat essentially condoned plans for this suicide bombing and only responded when forced to do so by the imposition of a closure of the Gaza strip. It should be borne in mind that Arafat had spent the last eight months battering Hamas, so it was not as if he simply decided to switch courses and condone violence against Israel. Moreover, this incorrect perspective ignores the different means at Arafat's disposal that could be used to pacify Hamas, such as pressure from Fatah cadres. It was these other devices that likely were being utilised as the Israeli demand for the arrest occurred just before the aforementioned PA-Hamas 'summit' took hold in Cairo, when the PA was in the midst of preparing to re-engage the political leadership of the Islamic movement. Suicide bombings are gruesome acts that should not be countenanced (and Hamas did in fact claim responsibility for such an act shortly thereafter on 21

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[69]Segev, 370.

August in Jerusalem). However, to suggest that Arafat was somehow complicit, as both Segev's words and Rabin's actions at the time convey, is largely ignorant, if not altogether oblivious, of the constructive efforts taken by the PA over the first half of 1995 that had the potential to provide long term stability. Such reasoning seems to confirm Hardt's belief that after the assumption of 'control society' forms of governance, even extraordinarily cooperative efforts of subalterns will never truly be recognised and thus will fail to sway ruling forces in a 'dialectical' way.

The political endeavours of Arafat were not acknowledged in their own right. In this vein, Israel continued to 'target' Islamic militants without coordination with the PA. On 26 October, for example, Israeli operatives assassinated the main political leader of Islamic Jihad, Fathi Shikaki, in Malta. Although the killing of Shikaki did not occur in areas under the jurisdiction of the PA, and thus did not leave Arafat open to charges of collaboration, the Israeli action would very much complicate Arafat's recent rapprochement with the Islamic movements. In a manner mirroring Hardt's dismissal of the Gramscian option, the continued assassinations demonstrated that Arafat's redoubled efforts to sell Israel on the value of his independent political initiatives, the stabilising power of the September PA-Hamas agreement, had come to nil. (It should also be noted that the Israeli policy of killings eventually led to the creation of new and independent militant cells that were beyond the control of the pacified Islamic opposition.[70])

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[70]Although this study is confined to an analysis of events that occurred from 1993-1995, it is also worthwhile to recount incidents that occurred in 1996 which appear to confirm that Israel's continued assassinations policy was fostering the creation of new groups who were beyond the control of Arafat's newly loyal Islamic opposition. For example, on 5 January 1996, Israel assassinated Yahya Ayyash, known as the 'Engineer', the leading Hamas bomb maker. In retaliation, a splinter group, 'The Cells of the Martyr Yahya Ayyash–the New

Arafat's security measures were 'recognised' by Israel. The Oslo II agreement was signed on 28 September 1995, on the heels of the PA's eight month-long efforts to contain and pacify Hamas. It is possible to argue accordingly that the Gramscian-type logic informing the Palestinian leader's actions during this period was impeccable. After all, Arafat had earned his kudos by making a prolonged, concerted endeavour to meet Israeli security needs. Israel, in turn, granted him control over the remaining Palestinian areas of the West Bank, an enormous structural concession virtually guaranteeing an independent state under his stewardship. But this was not the case and the scope of Israeli concessions far from matched Arafat's extensive actions. As was relayed in chapter four, the Oslo II agreement did not provide the Palestinians with any territorial contiguous areas of control within the West Bank (See Map II, p. 260). In this regard Robinson has noted that:

> The PA finds itself in charge of a geographically fragmented area. The West Bank in particular under Oslo II is a crazy patchwork of distributed control. Even assuming that a final agreement consolidates Palestinian control of large areas of the West Bank, it is likely that the Palestinians will end up with three geographically parts of their state: the northern West Bank, the southern West Bank, and Gaza. Supporters of the agreement are already referring to "cantons," while opponents use the less generous "bantustans" to describe this fragmentation.[71]

Even if Robinson were correct in asserting that a Palestinian state was the intended end result of the agreement, the term 'state' would have to be used in its loosest semantic meaning. This view resonates with ideas of Raz-Krakotzkin that were noted in chapter one: the concept of a state, which once

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Pupils' committed four sensational suicide bomb attacks in the span of nine days, killing over 60 Israelis. It is significant that the group issued communiqués claiming credit for the bombings in its own name, not in the name of the Qassam brigades. 'When both Hamas political leaders and leaders of the Qassam brigades disavowed the attack but promised a ceasefire anyway, the Ayyash cells issued a further communiqué ordering that their 'brothers' not speak for them' (Robinson, *Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution*, 195).
    [71]Ibid., 198.

expressed the desire for emancipation, became a repressive idea that served to fulfil Israeli political goals (p. 56). The map of Oslo II, Israel's 'concessions' to the PA, aptly demonstrates the relative empowerment of the 'control society'. Hardt's reproof of the Gramscian programme as a counter to 'modulatory' forms of governance once again seems to have credence. The fruit of Arafat's rather extensive efforts to placate Israel on security issues was plentiful, but extremely bittersweet.

Amelioratory Concerns

The preceding chapters have employed insights from Deleuze and Hardt to reconstruct the mechanics of the Oslo Accords under the Rabin government. It has been seen how Rabin and Peres acted upon propensities toward complex co-optation and how the extra-dialectical condition that was created as a result affected the efforts of Arafat to find satisfiers to meet Israeli security needs and consolidate his own authority. It is now necessary to apply what has been discerned from this critical reconstruction to the somewhat deficient conflict resolution remedies for Oslo that were recounted in chapter one.

Chapter Six
Implications for Conflict Resolution

This Chapter returns to themes that were introduced in chapter one, premises that have renewed significance in light of the theoretical and empirical insights that were subsequently gleaned. Specifically, it re-engages the conflict resolution prescriptions of Andrew Buchanan and Deiniol Jones. Building on notes of the misreading of the Oslo power dynamic, the chapter argues that Buchanan's proposal that 'the spirit of the agreement should be more important than the letter' can only be given credence if, ironically, Israeli tactics akin to complex co-optation had initially been more refined and sophisticated. While this possibility is rejected, it does, however, suggest certain theoretical consequences that might be utilised to foster normative change. The chapter then goes on to assess the use of Jones's recommendations to aid 'systemically excluded' peoples such as the Palestinians. It maintains that 'cosmopolitan mediation' would in fact create a Palestinian state, but at the same time would allow 'control society' forms of governance to operate on a supra-national level. Although the long-term efficacy of this programme is questioned, it is begrudgingly endorsed due to its ability to provide immediate relief to the Palestinians.

Improved Co-optation?

Buchanan advocates what might be deemed 'attitudinal corrective measures' for the deficiencies of Oslo. These prescriptions, inherent to his entire analysis, are an outgrowth of a reconstruction of events that saw the principal actors involved in Oslo as being guided by rational choices and with a normative end goal in mind. For Buchanan, the Israeli-PLO act of mutual

recognition meant that a viable and basically fair process of conflict resolution had begun. Despite gross structural asymmetries, the logical conclusion of Oslo was to be the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state. It was not the motives of the Rabin government that 'derailed' the peace process:

> The good intentions stated by the original principals who initiated the Middle East peace process have been diluted by various factors, such as violent events, changes in personnel, and changes in the direction of political imperatives.[1]

Buchanan's understanding is thus that the benign core of the Oslo Accords can be revitalised. His reference to 'violent events' and 'changes in personnel' is meant to suggest that it was only later occurrences – gruesome, rapid waves of suicide bombings committed by Islamic militants in February and March 1996 and the intransigence of the 1996-99 Likud government of Benjamin Netanyahu – that were the primary 'negative catalysts'. But Buchanan is mistaken. Indeed it is not necessary to address these subsequent episodes, not only for the reason that they occurred beyond the chronological scope of this investigation, but also because they were only symptoms, and not the primary causes, of the Oslo problematic. Buchanan's pronouncement of blame, and thus his ensuing remedy, overlooks the entirety of the power dynamic that initially shaped the Oslo Accords.

Buchanan's presentation of events is straightforward and seemingly convincing. To recap, he argued that the Rabin government found itself in an environment in 1992 and 1993 in which there was not only a loss of superpower conflict by proxy, but also where Iraq no longer posed an existential threat to Israel. A regional political compromise was thus desired at

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[1] Idem Andrew S. Buchanan, *Peace with Justice: A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements* (London: Macmillan, 2000): 344.

a time when Israel was at its strongest, both militarily and politically. Once the secret channel in Oslo emerged and was subsequently borne out, it seemed prudent to seek the first breakthrough on the Palestinian track because 1) the *intifada* had begun to radicalise under the influence of the Islamic movements and was increasingly difficult to manage; and 2) the PLO was materially exhausted and so more willing to make initial concessions than, say, Syria. For Buchanan, the resultant DoP signified Israeli recognition of the Palestinians' right to self-determination. Indeed, it provided 'for the denial of the assertion that Israel was never really intent on pursuing a meaningful peace with the Palestinians, demonstrating an Israeli willingness to negotiate an alternative to military occupation and repression and regional isolation'.[2] The interim nature of the Oslo Accords, designed to gradually acculturate the PLO to the role as Israel's security partner, would, if pursued sincerely, eventually translate into an independent Palestinian state.

Buchanan's survey of the Rabin government's interpretation of the international situation immediately prior to the Oslo negotiations, in terms of short-term opportunities and long-term considerations, is somewhat wanting. As was conveyed in chapter two, a truly complete analysis of national decision-making should seek to account for the impact of immaterial elements of power, the influence of past guiding beliefs, even in the midst of a period of profound change or if these former ideas no longer seem to be relevant phenomena. Buchanan makes a crucial omission of this very sort and, accordingly, paints a picture of Rabin and Peres's life-long positions toward the Palestinians and the PLO as having transformed far more than in fact was

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[2]Ibid., 341.

the case. It is true that Rabin and Peres's decision to recognise the PLO was motivated by rational considerations, in the sense of making use of methods of analysis and planning to bring about a projected result, but since their thinking was still predicated upon an assumption of Israel's permanent asymmetrical rights vis-à-vis the Palestinians, it cannot be said to have been nationalistically dispassionate in nature or motivated by cosmopolitan normative concerns.

Rabin and Peres recognised the need transform the nature of Israeli nationalism. But they sought structural innovations precisely in order to preserve, *not to forego*, the post-1967 Israeli settlement presence in the West Bank and Gaza strip. As was relayed in chapter three, there were less obvious, but equally important issues peppered among the desire of Rabin and Peres to secure regional peace agreements within the political climate that was favouring Israel in the early 1990s. Rabin was convinced that the Israeli population had become too fatigued by protracted conflict and as a result might therefore 'force' a future government to eschew lands that he considered to be Israel's historical birthright. He wanted to retain the West Bank and Gaza strip, but not the Palestinian inhabitants who resided within these territories. Whereas his predecessor Yitzhak Shamir had chosen to stealthily attain this goal over a prolonged period of time, Rabin sought the opposite temporal approach: to achieve such an aim through active diplomacy. Since annexation of the occupied territories would change the Jewish national character of the Israeli state and a forced depopulation of the territories would bring about international isolation, a 'third way' of sorts was required. Rabin had come to understand that addressing the Palestinian question would be the springboard to peaceful relations with the Arab states that neighboured Israel.

But he lacked the political sophistication needed to devise an agreement that could 'exist in a space between the international and the domestic'. Had it not been for the slightly underhanded efforts of Shimon Peres, who grasped the general principles of complex co-optation, this programme might never have assumed a mechanism of diffusion. Yet the long-time Israeli political rivals were able to reconcile through the crafting of the Oslo Accords. Both leaders agreed that by recognising the PLO on its own terms, Israel would both have an outlet to the Arab world and be able to secure a permanent presence in the West Bank and Gaza strip.

An acknowledgement of the changing shape of Israeli nationalist thought during the 1993-1995 period directly affects Buchanan's prescriptions for conflict resolution. For example, Buchanan typically notes that 'the fundamental flaw of the Israeli-Palestinian particular peace process...is that it has no inbuilt mechanism to redress or resolve the asymmetrical nature of the power relationship'.[3] But if it is understood that the meta-logic underpinning Israeli nationalism assumed 'control society' forms of governance under the Rabin administration, then the only way to avoid discarding Buchanan's general recommendation is to note that the Israeli devices analogous to complex co-optation were not distilled enough to be effective. For if these tactics had truly been successful, the asymmetrical nature of the power relationship would have seemed much less bothersome to the Palestinians, who would have been considerably mollified, if not assuaged altogether, by Israel's system of substitute satisfiers.

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[3]Ibid., 367.

Israel's rigid security criteria hampered the long-term success of complex co-optation within the Israeli-Palestinian setting. It will be recalled from chapter five that even as Israel devolved powers to the PA, and sought to prop up the autonomy regime, additional measures were taken, in response to a number of security crises, that jeopardised its new economy of power (pp. 191-2). The Rabin government's curious practice of undermining its partner in peace was emblematic of the somewhat conflicting trends that embody the 'control society', in which greater freedoms and forms of recognition are enacted, but at the same time, the characteristics of preceding systems of order are only outwardly transformed and do not completely disappear. Reflecting these tensions, Israel's security responses often made it seem to Palestinians that life was not palpably better than before the onset of PLO-led self-rule. Despite recognising the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people, the Rabin government did not recognise Palestinian validity claims as being equal to those of Israel. Subsequently, its approach to security gave value only to the immediate safety concerns of Israeli citizens and did not recognise the comprehensive security value of Arafat's attempts to placate and incorporate the Islamic opposition. Even the substantially intensified efforts undertaken by Arafat between January and August 1995 were not able to fundamentally alter the evaluation and response of the Rabin government in this regard. Taken as a whole, the overall environment promoted in 1994 and 1995 does not seem amenable to successful complex co-optation. If his constituents felt the Oslo Accords had enfeebled more than empowered them, and the most extraordinary of efforts failed to move Rabin and Peres toward a more flexible middle ground, why would Yasser Arafat ever have the

incentive to readily accept a future final-status arrangement that offered a 'virtual state' or permanently sub-sovereign entity?

Was it ever possible for the Rabin government to have succeeded with complex co-optation? Since 'control society' types of governance are tenuous in general – because of the interplay of new forms of empowerment and the retention of past devices of rule that essentially act to obfuscate and contain them, how could Rabin and Peres's strategy for dealing with the PLO have been refined, akin to the analogous forms of 'control' that Deleuze noted as having taken hold in other places? In order to make such a speculation, it is necessary to consider that there still might be a degree of leeway and manoeuvrability within the 'extra-dialectical' condition that characterises the 'control society', that the somewhat precarious relationship of past and present forms of population management can nonetheless be loosely managed so as to secure the long-term hegemony of the new system of rule. In the Israeli case, this understanding would have meant that Rabin and Peres were aware that their nationalist predilections could interfere, on a deliberative level, with ostensibly tenable policy positions taken toward their Palestinian junior partners.

The Rabin government might have succeeded with complex co-optation under different circumstances. Rabin and Peres seem to have grasped the need for increased sensitivity toward the PA and for an ongoing improvement of life on the Palestinian street. Rabin's later speeches and pronouncements began to reveal more awareness of the complex political balance within the Palestinian self-rule areas. After a suicide bombing in Jerusalem on 21 August 1995, for example, Rabin commented that:

> [Israel's efforts against Hamas and Islamic Jihad are being conducted] to a certain extent with the cooperation of the Palestinian Authority. These enemies are also its enemies, and the time has come to make a distinction between the murderers among the Palestinians and those who want to reach a political settlement. We will cooperate with those who seek a political solution...[4]

Shimon Peres understood as well that it was crucial to rigidly differentiate between the PA and the Islamic opposition, to recognise that Arafat had to balance between his DoP commitments to Israel and the bonds he felt for his own people. After leaving office, Peres commented:

> You see we [Rabin and Peres] tried to look upon Arafat as a partner...Arafat cannot exist as an agent. You cannot give him orders. You have to offer him incentives, too. Many people have asked me if Arafat is trustworthy. What do they mean by that question? He didn't become a Zionist, neither will he become a Zionist. It's nonsense. He's the leader of the Palestinians, and that's what he will remain. We can meet as partners for peace, but we cannot make out of him an instrument to realize our policies.[5]

Rabin and Peres's intentions were not met by their actual deeds, as was demonstrated at length in chapter five. Moreover, it will be recalled that complex co-optation is to some extent guided by immaterial elements of power that are beneath the level of reflection of its instigators. But if the two Israeli leaders had been more aware of the confluence of factors shaping the extra-dialectical condition that came to define Israeli-Palestinian relations in 1993 (i.e. that they were unwittingly undermining their own long-term agenda with regard to the Palestinians), they would have likely been able to better implement their programme.

The Rabin government should have been more mindful of the comprehensive security value of Arafat's attempts to integrate the Islamic

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[4] Yitzhak Rabin, 'Reaction to Terrorist Attack, 21 August 1995', at Yitzhak Rabin Center for Israel Studies, Tel Aviv University, internet site, http://www.rabincenter.org.il:81/english/fs_speech.html.

[5] Idem Shimon Peres and Robert Littell, *For the Future of Israel* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998): 95-6.

opposition, instead of just evaluating the performance of the PA by direct policing standards. Similarly, a unilateral assassinations policy and an inflicting of collective punishment through the closure of the Palestinian territories served to undermine those efforts of Arafat that could have been used to Israel's favour. Praise and consideration should have been offered instead, especially since Arafat had gained increasing influence over the Islamic opposition by September 1995. In general, Israel could have implemented greater gestures of recognition and done more to promote the Palestinian perception of empowerment. For as Buchanan notes, '[p]eace is not an indivisible commodity: there are minimum requirements that must be fulfilled in order that both sides may live with the settlement'.[6] If Rabin and Peres had been more circumspect about taking such alternative measures, especially in tandem with continued diminishing concessions (i.e. the Oslo II agreement), then their desired end goal would have been given a better avenue for success.

The overall utility of complex co-optation is in the eye of the beholder. A sustained vigilance for sensitivity on the part of leaders and policy makers might be all that is required for the phenomenon to prosper in different international settings, but the nature of the ensuing tranquillity will fall short of justice. A normatively oriented perspective would therefore argue that the Rabin government's imperfect 'control society' endeavour merely caused an inequity to become glaringly obvious, and that it is unenlightened to try to lure the leadership of an injured and oppressed people into accepting less than what the consensus of the international community holds are due to them. This

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[6]Buchanan, 345.

point of view would further maintain that a more equitable alternative would be of benefit to the Israeli people, who have become the victims of their own occupation as well. Even if the Rabin government had fully succeeded with its aims, it would argue that the Israelis could only attain moral liberation by agreeing to divide the land with the Palestinians as *equals*.

Neither Rabin nor Peres ever had to confront his own boundaries. Both men did believe in making peace with the Palestinians, but as has already been relayed, simply took for granted that the asymmetrical relationship being implemented with them was 'natural'. They never seem to have pondered that their vision of peace was less prudent than building a genuinely equal partnership with the Palestinians. (Instead, they were repeatedly praised by elements of the international community that supported the notion of an Israeli-Palestinian negotiated settlement, further perpetuating a belief in the rightness of their ideas.) It is also not clear what traditions or internal resources Rabin and Peres could have turned to in order to make such a conceptual leap in their relationship with the Palestinians. Indeed, the guiding perspective of the thesis, which builds on Raz-Krakotzkin's view of the Israeli national consciousness, seems to suggest that this kind of change would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to implement. Neither the analysis of 'empty land' that was relayed in chapter one nor any of the subsequent references to this theme made any mention, for example, of an alternative vision of peace that could serve as the basis of a genuine Israeli perceptual transformation toward the Palestinians. Nonetheless, a normative remedy would have at least tried to locate, or recreate, such a tradition. Rather than allowing Rabin and Peres to grapple with constraints that had not been

considered so that they could maximise their authority, this alternative vision might have been used to confront the two leaders over their shared belief of the need to reformulate Israeli nationalism at the continued expense of the Palestinians, in order for them to engage in a kind of self-critique and be fully aware of the dubious value of this form of 'peace'.

Strategic Cosmopolitanism

The issue of intervention as a normative counter to complex co-optation must now be addressed. It is for this reason that is necessary to re-examine the proposals of Deiniol Jones that were discussed in chapter one. It will be recalled that Jones sought to ensure basic human justice for the 'systemically excluded' parties to international conflict, such as the Palestinians. In order to so, he proposed a new form of mediation that could supersede the inviolable rights traditionally extended to sovereign states (pp. 39-40). There is thus the possibility that 'cosmopolitan mediation' could be used to neutralise and redirect complex co-optation endeavours toward a more equitable final outcome. However, the following section cautions against implementing Jones's programme, *unless there is absolutely no alternative.* It argues that if the impact of 'control society' forms of governance are still borne in mind, the structural changes proposed by Jones could in fact come to serve an invidious purpose, and it is doubtful that the ensuing environment would truly result in a 'higher level of universality and difference'.

There is a connection between the criticism, relayed in chapter one, that Jones's analysis of the motives of the Rabin government was not exhaustive and a new concern, to be explored below, that 'cosmopolitan mediation' could have highly aberrant results. It will be recollected that Jones

focused on the flawed Norwegian mediation at the expense of other phenomena, and so was prevented from grasping the entirety of Israeli end goals with regard to the PLO (pp. 50-1). Jones might retort that his primary interest was to critique the conceptual foundation of the Oslo mediation, to demonstrate a negative exemplar and offer an alternative, normative vision, and since he was successful in this regard, the crux of his conflict resolution programme remains valid and it is thus not necessary to dwell on the empirical paucities of his study. But this is an investigation guided by Deleuze's notion of the 'control society'. Its critical backdrop prompts scrutiny of changing relationships and forms of interaction, areas where 'governmentalised' power can become newly consolidated. Jones was not guided by such an approach and incorrectly argued that the Norwegian mediation was the root cause of a 'negative peace'. Indeed, it was shown otherwise, that the Oslo Accords merely served as the *outlet* for a changing economy of power that had already begun to coalesce and was searching for a final form. A similar kind of inattentiveness appears to mark Jones's conflict resolution proposals. After all, he suggests modifying international legal boundaries to make them more permeable. Jones's proposed good intentions could be 'appropriated' in a way similar to those of the Norwegian mediators. If implemented, 'cosmopolitan mediation' risks providing newly emerging, supra-national, 'control society' forms of governance with more systematic means of actualisation.

Supplementary Applications

Thus far, this investigation has only been interested in the general principles of the 'control society', which were applied to the Oslo Accords. But others studies have begun to apply the same principles of 'control' in

disparate fashions. While these other empirical applications were not relevant for the analysis found in previous chapters, it is now necessary to incorporate them in order to evaluate 'cosmopolitan mediation' as a possible means to offset complex co-optation. It should be noted beforehand that a discouraging prognosis is given. The impact of these supplementary applications of Deleuze's ideas suggest that Jones's conflict resolution programme is effectively a variation of the overarching phenomena seen in the 'control society'. This understanding is primarily shaped by the work of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000), who apply the concept of the 'control society' to emerging practices of global governance.[7] But insights from a complementary analysis by Michael Dillon and Julian Reid (2000) will also be relayed.[8]

A New Form of Sovereignty

For Hardt and Negri, the onset of the 'control society' translates into a fundamental reconfiguration of the nature of sovereignty. Moving beyond Deleuze's general principles and Hardt's earlier theoretical expansion of these ideas, they proceed to empirically outline what they see as the current paradigm of rule and its forms of governmentality or population management:

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[7]Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000). It should be noted that Hardt and Negri translate 'control society' as 'society of control'. See especially pp. 23-27, 198, 318-319, 329-332.

[8]See Michael Dillon and Julian Reid, 'Global Governance, Liberal Peace, and Complex Emergency' *Alternatives* Jan-March 2000, Volume 25, No. 1, 117-143. Dillon and Reid do not explicitly frame their discussion around the concept of the 'control society', but the notion can nonetheless be said to be implicit in their work. Mirroring Deleuze, for example, they attempt to update the Foucauldian notion of governmental power, identifying cybernetic technology and non-predictable *autopoiesis* as the exemplars of a new logic of rule (125, 136, 137-8). (For Deleuze's analysis, see chapter two, 70) A second point of convergence can be found in Dillon and Reid's use of Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998) to guide their analysis (See Dillon and Reid, 127-7). It will be recalled from chapter two that Michael Hardt had utilised Agamben's earlier work, *The Coming Community* (Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press, 1993), to explain Deleuze's notion of control (See chapter two, 89-90). It is significant to note in this regard that the central theme of *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* is prefigured in *The Coming Community* (see Agamben 1993, especially pp. 85-7).

Our basic hypothesis is that sovereignty has taken a new form, composed of a series of national and supranational organisms united under a singular logic of rule. This new global form of sovereignty is what we call Empire...By "Empire," however, we understand something altogether different from "imperialism"...In contrast to imperialism, Empire establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers. It is a *decentered* and *deterritorializing* apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the global realm within its open, expanding frontiers.[9]

Nation-states still exist, but their function and purpose has changed. It was noted in chapter two that the 'removal' of internal border controls within the European Union (EU) was exemplary of the selective boundaries of the 'control society' that 'phase' between fixed and open states (p. 77). But Hardt and Negri suggest that this kind of complex alteration of borders has moved beyond legal or treaty-based mechanisms toward perfected, unbounded forms of regulation.

Hardt and Negri's global understanding of the 'control society' may initially seem to be at variance with the application of the concept that was seen in previous chapters. Whereas chapters four and five identified 'control society' forms of governance as taking hold at the level of the state, Hardt and Negri appear to be positing that 'control' has shaped a rather different system of political order. But these differing readings need not be conflicting. It is simply necessary to understand that that they emanate from differing empirical sources of 'modulatory' logic and the related techniques of rule. This study identified the application of 'modulation' in the writings of Shimon Peres, who favoured having a higher, sovereign force that could constantly redirect the subaltern political forces that fell under its hegemonic sway. But Peres was operating from a premise that the traditional nation-state would remain the

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[9]Hardt and Negri 2000, xii.

highest form of sovereignty, with subaltern political forces assuming a permanently sub-sovereign role. In contrast, Hardt and Negri extrapolated an application of 'modulation' from the legacy of US constitutionalism and the related concept of the open-ended American frontier.[10] Their focus produced a similar, two-fold understanding of 'modulation' as the ability to forever amend or modify the base of rule and a complex alteration of the boundaries of political authority. Gauging the American constitutional and historical experience via Deleuze seems to have allowed Hardt and Negri to move beyond an assumption of the relative fixity and the ultimate primacy of the nation-state – even with the conventionally acknowledged caveat of 'complex interdependence' – toward a different, supersessive notion of sovereignty. But Hardt and Negri's understanding still remains compatible with the application informed by the writings of Shimon Peres. It is perfectly feasible that while principles of 'control' were manifesting under the aegis of the Israeli state from 1993-1995, the 'new forms of sovereignty' that Hardt and Negri believe to be the primary dynamic of control could also have been gradually emerging, simultaneously on a supra-national level.

The Impact on Jones's Proposals

An acceptance of Hardt and Negri's basic contentions immediately begins to affect the viability of Deiniol Jones's proposals. Jones had concluded that conflict resolution could neither be left to the power-political role of the United States, whose subjective, strategic interests – and not normative commitments – prefigured its involvement in international mediation efforts, nor to small states like Norway that were unable to democratically re-craft the

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[10]Ibid., 160-182.

dynamics of a conflict. He believed instead that mediation should be undertaken by a coalition of states (or an international organisation representing a coalition of states) that was guided by a normative ideological commitment (p. 49). This programme is essentially invalidated by Hardt and Negri, who posit that 1) global structural transformations have superseded the kinds of subjective differences that Jones notes as existing between the US and a possibly more enlightened coalition of states; and 2) the clarion call of cosmopolitan-inspired intervention is part and parcel of this change:

> The United States does indeed occupy a privileged position in Empire, but this privilege derives not from its similarities to the old European imperialist powers, but from its differences...We use "Empire" not as a *metaphor*...but rather as a *concept*...The concept of Empire is characterized fundamentally by a lack of boundaries: Empire's rule has no limits. It...seeks to directly rule over human nature...[and]..is always dedicated to peace–a perpetual and universal peace outside of history.[11]

Jones's rejection of American geostrategic mediation and small-state facilitation is moot because these measures involve a kind of relationship among states that has becoming increasingly defunct within a changing economy of power. In a sense, the changes that Jones desires to be made to the international system (including the pacifying effects of Kantian cosmopolitan law) *already exist*: 'sovereignty, as the traditional principle of political formation whose science is law, is being supplemented by a network based account of social organisation whose principle of formation is 'emergence' and whose science is increasingly that of complex adaptive systems'.[12]

The principles of governmentality have become restructured in the emerging forms of sovereignty: 'The difference today lies in the fact that,

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[11]Ibid., xiv-xv.
[12]Dillon and Reid, 119.

whereas in modern regimes of national sovereignty, administration worked toward a *linear* integration of conflicts and toward a coherent apparatus that could repress them, that is, toward the rational normalization of social life with respect to both the administrative goal of equilibrium and the development of administrative reforms, in the imperial framework administration becomes *fractal* and aims to integrate conflicts not by imposing a coherent social apparatus but by controlling differences'.[13] Conceptually paralleling the understanding in chapter two that on a national level this logic manifests as complex co-optation, Hardt and Negri identify its supra-national expression as a network of relatively autonomous, but manipulable authorities. In this system of 'instrumental multifunctionality', governance operates via heterogeneous and indirect means:

> [I]t is created by conforming to the structural logics that are active in the construction of Empire, such as the police and military logics (or really the repression of potential subversive forces in the context of peace), the economic logics (the imposition of the market, which in turn is ruled by the monetary regime), and the ideological and communicative logics. The only way that administrative action gains its autonomy and legitimate authority in the imperial regime is by following along the differentiating lines of these logics. This authorization, however, is not direct. Administration is not strategically oriented toward the realization of the imperial logics. It submits to them, insofar as they animate the great military, monetary, and communicative means that authorize administration itself.[14]

Dillon and Reid phrase this understanding in terms of its practical consequences:

> [Classical] [s]overeignty remains an important aspect of the organisation and operation of international power, including that of contemporary liberal peace, because liberal states especially, but others to the extent that they effect structural adjustments economically and sign-up to good governance criteria politically, are deeply implicated as key nodes in the networks of global governance. Hence the state

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[13]Hardt and Negri 2000, 339-340.
[14]Ibid., 340.

form – whose strategic principle formation is sovereignty – becomes just one form of subjectification upon which global liberal governance relies. It may not enjoy the exclusivity that traditional accounts of international relations once said that it enjoyed, but it nonetheless remains a key mode of subjectification. However, it is now supplemented by many others.[15]

In a manner analogous to the relationship between feudal lords and the sovereign in Medieval Europe, as well as the link between mafia organisations and state structures during the modern period, an environment of relative autonomy is frequently punctuated by active collaboration with, and deference to, a higher authority with which a common interest is shared.[16]

The overall functioning of the new system of sovereignty is occasionally disrupted by micro-level breakdowns and/or gross nonconformities. Such circumstances necessitate a curtailment of local autonomy, which takes the form of outside intervention. In this regard, Hardt and Negri note:

> For lack of a better term we continue to call these "interventions". This is merely a terminological and not a conceptual deficiency, for these are not really interventions into independent juridical territories but rather actions within a unified world by the ruling structure of production and communication. In effect, intervention has been internalised and universalised...The arsenal of legitimate force for imperial intervention is indeed already vast, and should include not only military intervention but also other forms such as moral and juridical intervention.[17]

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[15]Dillon and Reid, 127.

[16]Hardt and Negri 2000, 342. The analogy to Medieval Europe can be said to resonate with Hedley Bull's concept of neo-medievalism. See Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1977): 254-266. Bull had speculated on the structure of potentially new forms of sovereign organisation that might eventually replace or supplant the Westphalian state system. He saw *prima facie* evidence of neo-medievalism within five global trends: 1) the regional integration of states; 2) the disintegration of states; 3) the restoration of private international violence; 4) the rise of transnational organisations; 5) and the technological unification of the world. But it must be noted that the structural logics of Hardt and Negri's supersessive form of sovereignty are not at all synonymous with the diplomatic traditions and historical practices identified by Bull as constituting informal forms of international order or an 'anarchical society' in the modern period: 1) the balance of power; 2) international law; 3) diplomacy; 4) war; and 5) the existence of the great powers. See Bull pp. 95-222.

[17]Hardt and Negri 2000, 35.

It is in the specification of the 'arsenal of legitimate force' that the 'control society' is especially manifested. The criteria for intervention in this decentred and deterritorialised environment can be understood as being 'modulatory' in nature. Intervening authorities continually redefine the demands and exceptions that constitute intervention. This exclusive ability to define political conditionality, to assess what are the aberrations that compel intervention, can be understood as a kind of right to police.[18] In other words, the capacity of the police to establish and uphold order provides the basic approximation of this new paradigm of rule. Indeed, there is a mutually dependent relationship between the legal power to determine exceptionality and the ability to exercise police force. 'The legitimacy of the imperial ordering supports the exercise of police power, while at the same time the activity of global police force demonstrates the real effectiveness of police ordering'.[19]

The right to police can be viewed as a kind of monopoly over normativity. For example, the conventional political lexicon tends to refer to events warranting intervention, usually protracted intra-state conflicts that threaten to spill over into the international arena, as 'complex emergencies'. The notion of an emergency, a state of things unexpectedly arising and urgently demanding immediate attention, conveys that the conflicts requiring outside intervention were generated by the failings of internal actors; they were the end-result of developmental deficiencies, irrepressible historical hatreds, etc. But it can be argued alternatively that such reasoning

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[18]Ibid., 17.
[19]Ibid.

disassociates macro-level causes from micro-level effects. In other words, changing forms of authority and economic practice brought about by globalisation can also be said to have played a role in generating 'complex emergencies'.[20] Although the term 'complex emergency' does help to justify intervention, it is conceptually inaccurate because it ascribes fault exclusively to one tier of actors instead of positing 'a terrain of disorder in which some states are powerful, some states are in radical dissolution, traditional societies are collapsing and civil conflict is endemic, where international corporations and criminal cartels are deeply involved and where international organisations and non-governmental organisations are inextricably committed as well'.[21] (Dillon and Reid prefer the term 'emerging political complexes' because it more accurately reflects the understanding that military, political, and economic practices of global governance are shaping such phenomena in tandem with local factors.[22]) Continual intervention would hardly be justifiable if there ever was an admission that espoused global governance practices actually help to ferment destabilising micro-level turbulence.

Interventions are not indiscriminate stabilisation mechanisms. They intimately reflect and undergird a new type of authority. Hardt and Negri note in this regard that 'we are dealing here with a special kind of sovereignty—a discontinuous form of sovereignty that should be considered liminal or marginal insofar as it acts "in the final instance," a sovereignty that locates its only point of reference in the definitive absoluteness of the power it can

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[20]See Mark Duffield, *Aid Policy and Post-Modern Conflict: A Critical Review* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, School of Public Policy, 1998). See also David Keen, *The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1998).
    [21]Dillon and Reid, 117.
    [22]Ibid.

exercise'.[23] Interventions demonstrate the irrevocability of the new form of sovereignty, ensuring that that the economic and political criteria of global liberal governance are imposed *in toto*. '[P]reventive action constructs...new territorial and political formations that are functional (or rather more functional, better adaptable) to the constitution of Empire'.[24] While global liberal governance does function through tactical differentiation, it will not sanction what might be deemed 'independently generated expressions of political difference' (i.e. 'rogue states', feuding warlords, terrorist networks). In this sense interventions are emblematic of the 'extra-dialectical' condition that is characteristic of the 'control society':

> ...the contending life-forms of emerging political complexes are
> 'persuaded' into assuming that political adaptivity that global liberal
> governance requires of them in the process of pacifying them so that it
> is not continually disturbed by them. That way it too does not have to
> examine how its very own practices ferment the turbulence that is so
> much deplores.[25]

Interventions thus guarantee that all forms of identity and political expression remain essentially 'a product of the system itself'.

Issues relating to the promotion of cosmopolitan values and democratic international law are tremendously affected by even the slightest acceptance of Hardt and Negri's understanding of the new form of sovereignty. First of all, they note that the theme of cosmopolitanism has become distorted and is increasingly used to serve a strategic function.

> [S]upranational subjects that are legitimated not by right but by
> consensus intervene in the name of any type of emergency and
> superior ethical principles. What stands behind this intervention is not
> just state a permanent state of emergency and exception, but a
> permanent state of emergency and exception justified by *the appeal to*

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[23]Hardt and Negri 2000, 39.
[24]Ibid., 37.
[25]Dillon and Reid, 139.

essential values of justice. In other words, the right to police is legitimated by universal values.[26]

But there is an additional factor within this occurrence that directly relates to the conflict resolution programme offered forth by Jones. Hardt and Negri observe that the interplay of the continual prefiguring of the criteria of intervention with the exercise of policing powers has not only transformed classical international law but also has begun to permeate, as a diffuse process, *into the administrative law of individual societies and nation-states.* The juridical power of the state is no longer absolute and increasingly can be overridden by supposedly higher principles. 'Through its contemporary transformation of supranational law, the imperial process of constitution tends either directly or indirectly to penetrate and reconfigure the domestic law of the nation-states, and thus supra-national law powerfully overdetermines domestic law'.[27] Jones's basic programme thus already exists in a distorted, proto-institutional form. The very cosmopolitanism and active public international law that Jones sees as the base of future emancipatory instruments have begun to emerge, but because of their association with, or appropriation by, the new form of sovereignty, these devices have become tokenistic or largely emptied of normative content.

'Governmentalised' intervention is evolving juridical components. Hardt and Negri take pains to stress that the legal underpinning of the new networks of rule will be highly original in nature:

> [T]his juridical model cannot be constituted by the existing structures of international law, even when understood in terms of the most advanced developments of the United Nations and the other great international organizations. Their elaborations of an international order

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[26]Hardt and Negri 2000, 18.
[27]Ibid., 17.

could at most be recognized as a process of transition toward the new imperial power.[28]

It is also important to note that Hardt and Negri are uninterested in speculating the precise shape that this new, facilitative juridical formation might take, and prefer to emphasise how whatever does emerge will be logically contextualised in the new paradigm of rule.[29] But they do hint that international/supranational courts, which have increasingly become reconstituted as moral agents to justify the logic of intervention, will move beyond offering mere retroactive justification to some kind of future administrative role:

> The active parties supporting the imperial constitution are confident that when the construction of Empire is sufficiently advanced, the courts will be able to assume their leading role in the definition of justice. For now, however, although international courts do not have much power, public displays of their activities are still very important. *Eventually a new juridical formation must be formed that is adequate to the constitution of Empire.* Courts will have to be transformed gradually from an organ that simply decrees sentences against the vanquished to a judicial body or system of bodies that dictate or sanction the interrelation among the moral order, its exercise of police action, and the mechanism legitimating imperial sovereignty'.[30]

The current system of intervention that is tantamount to a non-formal precursor of Jones's programme is moving toward a more proper, but just as normatively denuded, legal equivalent.

It is increasingly possible that 'cosmopolitan mediation' could serve as the crux of a formal legal framework used to justify the state of permanent exception and police action legitimating the new techniques of rule. In other words, Jones's proposal to officially modify international boundaries in order to allow intervention and democratic mediation of ethnic conflicts faces

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[28]Ibid., 40.
[29]Ibid., 41.
[30]Emphasis added, Ibid., 38.

'appropriation' by the new form of sovereignty. In this scenario, 'cosmopolitan mediation' would become the overriding principle justifying intervention, a kind of peremptory norm or *jus cogens*. But in a move not anticipated by Jones, two corollary forms would likely emerge as well. It would be explained that military and juridical intervention are in fact the facilitating arms of 'cosmopolitan mediation'. In order for mediators to ensure the genuine well being and justice for all parties involved in a protracted or other kind of destabilising conflict, it would be necessary to actively supervise the implementation of the decreed settlement. This situation is admittedly only a change of the *status quo* on intervention from a *de facto* to a *de jure* status. It is also true that Jones would likely oppose the use of his recommendations in such a crude manner. But it must be borne in mind that Jones was unaware of the new 'liminal' form of sovereignty discerned by Hardt and Negri. He would not necessarily see such an implementation as a betrayal of his ideas, but rather as a positive development that preserved the essential aim of fulfilling cosmopolitan ideals. After all, the gist of his proposals would remain: 'independent minded' actors use new powers to promote relations that conformed to a 'democratically constituted' international law. But Jones would fail to understand that the coalition of non-American states conducting the mediation would be just as much implicated within a new economy of power. To recap Hardt and Negri's note in this regard:

> [T]he coming Empire is not American and the United States is not its center. ...The fundamental principle of Empire...is that its power has no actual or localizable terrain of center. Imperial power is distributed in networks, through mobile and articulated networks of control. This is not is to say that the US government and US territory are no different from any other: the United States certainly occupies a privileged position in the global segmentations and hierarchies of Empire. As the powers of boundaries of nation-states decline, however,

differences between national territories become increasingly relative. They are now not differences in nature (as were, for example the differences between the territory of the metropole and that of the colony) but differences of degree.[31]

Jones would not see his mediators as comprising just another network of power, nor would he assume that their universal commitments in fact constituted a strategic function.

Any future system of 'cosmopolitan mediation' will embody the relative empowerment of the 'control society'. It would provide the Palestinians, for example, with an outcome that in many ways would resonate with the character of the Oslo Accords. The cruel irony of this situation is that the instrument of the Palestinians' disempowerment would be the awarding of the very sovereignty they have so long coveted. They would attain independence (not merely the 'virtual' equivalents of Rabin and Peres's political imagination), but their new status would still be a kind of qualified emancipation. This independent Palestine would be subject to what Hardt and Negri refer to as 'differential racism', an overarching order that 'integrates others...and then orchestrates those differences in a system of control'.[32]

> The general apparatus of imperial command actually consists of three distinct moments: one inclusive, another differential, and third managerial. The first moment is the magnanimous, liberal face of Empire. All are welcome in its boundaries, regardless of race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, and so forth. In its inclusionary moment Empire is blind to differences; it is absolutely indifferent in its acceptance. It achieves universal inclusion by setting aside differences that are inflexible or unmanageable and thus might give rise to social conflict....Setting aside differences means, in effect, taking away the potential of the various constituent subjectivities. The resulting public space of power neutrality makes possible the establishment and legitimation of a universal notion of right that forms the core of Empire.[33]

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[31]Ibid., 384.
[32]Ibid., 195.
[33]Ibid., 198.

The cosmopolitan 'award' of Palestinian statehood would thus function in a manner tantamount to the Israeli government's recognition of the PLO in 1993, as the prelude to what can be viewed as a supranational form of complex co-optation:

> The second moment of imperial control, its differential moment, involves the affirmation of differences accepted within the imperial realm. While from the juridical perspective differences must be set aside, from the cultural perspective differences are celebrated....These differences are imagined to be "cultural" rather than "political," under the assumption that they will not lead to uncontrollable conflicts but will function, rather, as a force of peaceful regional identification.[34]

The state identity conferred upon the Palestinians would be very different from, say, the self-determined, independent identity created by the PLO that, as was noted in the Introduction, was so admired by Gilles Deleuze (p. 12). Through recognition and incorporation, the affective potential of this identity will be utilised for reactive ends:

> The differential moment of imperial control must be followed by the management and hierarchization of these differences in a general economy of command....The reemergence of ethnic and national differences at the end of the twentieth century, not only in Europe but also in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, has presented Empire with an even more complex equation containing a myriad of variables that are in a constant state of flux. That this equation does not have a unique solution is not really a problem—on the contrary. Contingency, mobility, and flexibility are Empire's real power. The imperial solution will not be to negate or attenuate these differences, but rather to affirm them and arrange them in an effective apparatus of command.[35]

'Cosmopolitan mediation' will allow repressed or marginalized subaltern identities to be given expression, but only under the inescapable tutelage of the new form of sovereignty.

It is tempting to minimize the diffuse detrimental effects of the new form of sovereignty and stress its advantages instead. Under its aegis, for

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[34]Ibid., 199.
[35]Ibid., 199-200.

example, 'cosmopolitan mediation' would indeed prevent complex co-optation from taking hold in the Israeli-Palestinian context. Jones had called for mediators with contextually specific understanding of conflicts to be given the authority to implement restructuring, normatively oriented peace settlements. If implemented, such a framework would bring about the ultimate expression of Palestinian cultural and nationalist ideals: 1) a state in part of geographic Palestine; 2) the right of refugees to resettle in this state; 3) a seat of government in East Jerusalem and 4) jurisdiction over the Muslim and Christian holy sites therein. Jones's programme would thus tangibly deliver to the Palestinians, not just secure substitute arrangements couched in ambiguities. So even though the newly emerged Palestinian state would be bound by developmental standards set by others, it can be argued that 'no state is an island in an interdependent world', and after attaining its long awaited sovereignty, it would be simply prudent for Palestine to be in sync with the global consensus on good governance and economic development.

The Palestinian state that would emerge from the 'cosmopolitan mediation' process would be able to adapt to the developmental and governance criteria of the new form of sovereignty within the parameters of its new national identity, but it would not have the option to either fundamentally alter or outright reject them. Dillon and Reid comment on the evolution of this phenomenon of the 'democratic' application of hegemonic principles:

> The Chief Economist of the World Bank (Joseph Stiglitz) attacks the Washington Consensus on liberalisation, stabilisation, and privatisation in the world economy, for example, as too technical and too narrowly framed a development strategy. He espouses a new intensive as well as extensive policy committed to the unqualified and comprehensive modernisation and "transformation of traditional societies." "Honesty, however, requires me to add one more word. In calling for a transformation of societies, I have elided a central issue," Stiglitz had

the candour to conclude, "transformation of what kind of society and for what ends?" The impact on modernisation on modern as well as traditional societies is, of course, as violent as the impact on global resources and global ecology. The values, practices and investments that propel such development nonetheless, however, are precisely what protect it from pursuing the key question, locally as well as globally, that Stiglitz posed in terms other than those that underwrite his very problematisation of it.[36]

World Bank development strategies should not be seen as a 'master plan' but rather as emblematic devices of global governance that implicitly reflect the structural logics of the new forms of rule. It is important to understand that 'cosmopolitan mediation' would operate as a similar kind of supranational ordering device. It would bestow transformation and material deliverance upon its recipients in an immediate sense, but at a deeper level, exclude them from any type of consultation or debate. This strategy would not have a genuinely pluralistic outlook. If after attaining independent statehood, formerly 'systemically excluded' peoples such as the Palestinians are limited in how they function within the world by prefigured rules of interaction over which they have no input, can such a situation really be said to resonate with Jones's explicit normative priorities or have created a 'higher level of universality and difference'?

Dilemmas

The notion of creating just alternatives to Oslo must be understood in relative terms. Normative considerations invalidated the conflict resolution option that was discerned from Andrew Buchanan's analysis, an improved or more refined form of complex co-optation. Yet Deiniol Jones's explicitly normative programme poses additional dilemmas. Jones's proposals would engender a Palestinian state, thereby countering the complex co-optation

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[36]Dillon and Reid, 118-9.

endeavour that was at the heart of the Oslo Accords, but would also help (albeit unwillingly) to further a new type of power relations that is equally inimical to notions of universal human freedom. However it is also necessary to ponder the outcome if circumstances had come about in which an international coalition of states had intervened to create a Palestinian state just before, or in the midst of, the Oslo process. Had this occurred, many would argue that Jones's proposals were essentially sound; they produced a situation far more preferable to Oslo and especially the *status quo ante*. Even if Jones did not grasp the enormity of the international environment to which his changes were proposed, 'cosmopolitan mediation' would have at least interceded to create a Palestinian state, finally remedying the suffering borne of continued Israeli occupation. Since the Palestinians would have had no other alternatives to 'cosmopolitan mediation' except continued armed struggle – which provides no guarantee of emancipation, this intervention and its end result would have to be understood as an necessary evil. Such a view may seem somewhat unpalatable, but it also one that prioritises the immediate safety needs of the Palestinians over what are ultimately abstract ideals.

Sobering Insights

This chapter has uncovered two very daunting implications for conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian context. The first insight reflected earlier themes about the nature of complex co-optation. It was shown that the principal Israeli decision-makers in the Rabin government had not fully grappled with their intentions toward the Palestinians. One consequence of this phenomenon was that a kind of overriding, deep reflection could have hypothetically been used as the basis of a much needed self-critique, a genuine

reconciliation with the Palestinians. Yet the sources of such a programme, one rooted in an alternative Israeli vision of peace that eschewed the notion of 'empty land', were as of then unknown. The second insight of this chapter was that even if the international community had felt compelled to intervene in order to create a Palestinian state, the Palestinians would not truly have had a say over the conditions in which their state emerged. The notion of creating a more equitable alternative to Oslo could only be understood in a relative sense.

The conclusion will address the key issues of external intervention and the need for perceptual transformation. It will move beyond the 1993-1995 period of investigation and contextualise these concepts within the current Israeli-Palestinian environment, in which the peace process has completely deteriorated.

Conclusion
Circuit Breakers

The status of the Oslo Accords is unresolved to date. The source of this condition cannot simply be traced to the excessive hawkishness of Likud-led governments in Israel, such as Andrew Buchanan wished to suggest. It should be noted that Ehud Barak, who was elected Israeli Prime Minister in 1999, vowed to continue the 'peaceful legacy' of Yitzhak Rabin. In July 2000, under the mediation of US President Bill Clinton, Barak's Labour government agreed to the creation of a Palestinian state as the crux of a final status arrangement with the Palestinians. To the surprise of many, Yasser Arafat rejected Barak's offer. Israeli government spokesmen subsequently bemoaned the Palestinian leader's 'recalcitrance': a refusal to forego the right of return of Palestinian refugees to lands inside Israel and claim that the proposed concessions on Jerusalem (the first ever offered by an Israeli government) were still inadequate. Arafat is certainly not without faults, but it is likely that these particular objections were for domestic consumption, a smokescreen to cover more substantive concerns. Members of the Palestinian negotiating team later noted that the precise reason for Arafat's position was that the West Bank portion of the proposed Palestinian state would have been divided into three, un-contiguous cantons that were completely surrounded by Israel.[1] Rather than admit humiliatingly that the post-Oslo entity being offered was a state in name only, Arafat tried to salvage his domestic credibility by claiming that he would not compromise over Jerusalem or the refugees' right of return. But Barak can

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[1] Geoffrey Aronson, 'Examining Camp David' *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories*, Vol. 10, No. 5: September-October, 2000, http://www.fmep.org/reports/2000/v10n5.html. See also Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, 'Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors' *The New York Review of Books*, 9 August 2001, http://www.nybooks.com/articles/14380.

still rightfully claim to be Rabin's protégé and successor. In a sense, this is why the Palestinians rebuffed him. Barak was continuing with a legacy that is simply inadequate to bring about a viable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The only way to foster a lasting Israel-Palestinian peace is to truly 'override' the extra-dialectical condition that came to define the relationship between Israel and the PLO at Oslo. It will be recalled from chapter five that the Rabin government's recognition of the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people and as its partner in the interim self-government arrangements did not in any way countermand long-standing Israeli wishes that the Palestinians would accept a permanently sub-sovereign political status. The Rabin government still aimed to consolidate Israeli predominance over the land and so a synthesis of the two opposing national claims, or a recognition that Israeli and Palestinian ties to the land were truly comparable, did not come about (pp. 188-214). This new situation did not engender a peace between equals, but rather one in which the PLO-run PA came to be viewed as 'a product of the system itself', a mere subcontractor of security that was simply expected to accept Israeli dictates. It must be noted that all of Rabin's successors, Shimon Peres (1995-6), Benjamin Netanyahu (1996-9), Ehud Barak (1999-2001), and Ariel Sharon (2001-present), accepted this guiding principle produced by the Oslo Accords. It is thus the enduring extra-dialectical relationship between Israel and the Palestinians, and not the inhospitable attitudes of Likud-led governments or the supposed recalcitrance of the Arafat regime, which is the *primary obstacle* to a final-status peace agreement.

Multilateral Intervention

In order to begin to fix the untenable situation produced by Oslo, it is necessary to endorse calls for multilateral intervention in the latest Israeli-Palestinian violence. At the time of writing, suggestions are being floated within policy-making circles for a coalition of external powers to intercede in the fighting and to firmly guide a final status agreement on the two parties. For example, the Brussels-based International Crisis Group (ICG) recommends:

> The first step is for a fair and comprehensive final political settlement to be laid on the table by the international community. The vicious cycle in which Palestinians will not lay down their arms until they are persuaded that their political aspirations will be addressed, and Israelis will not contemplate political concessions until the violence has died down, can only be broken by the collective presentation of such a plan by key regional and international actors.[2]

Intervention of this sort would halt the present violence between the two peoples, and more importantly, bring about a viable Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza strip. It should be recalled from chapter six, however, that such an action would not be a selfless, benign act based on cosmopolitan ideals. Nor can it simply be explained as a pragmatic attempt to prevent a spillover of the latest Israeli-Palestinian violence into the international arena. While the advocates of this initiative do in fact make these arguments, it was earlier shown that an extensive action of this sort is likely to advance dubious practices of global governance. It is relevant to note that the above ICG proposal calls for interveners to determine the borders of a future, non-militarised Palestinian state and to establish a multinational force that will manage security therein.[3] From the critical perspective of this study, this sort

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[2]International Crisis Group, 'A Time to Lead: The International Community and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', Middle East Report, No. 1, 10 April 2002 (Amman/Brussels): ii.
[3]Ibid., 12.

of formula not only excludes the Palestinians from key decision-making processes regarding the conditions in which their state will emerge, but also creates a juridical precedent for this kind of normatively questionable intervention to occur elsewhere. Mindful of the possible consequences of such an endeavour, this study nonetheless endorses intervention. It was noted in chapter six that, despite its many flaws, external intervention should have been taken, had it been possible in 1993-1995; it still would have been a better alternative to Oslo (p. 243). This reasoning is even more pertinent at the present time, when an international response has become a very real possibility. Intervention is less than an ideal remedy, but it is the best existing option to address the immediate safety needs of the Palestinians.

Lingering Effects of 'Control'

The two-state framework is not a panacea. It does provide a much needed disengagement between Israelis and Palestinians but it is ultimately only a temporary stabiliser. Indeed a critical perspective would point out that this externally imposed solution is somewhat flawed because it does not guard against the residual effects of the form of power that manifested as complex co-optation in the first place. In other words, there still might be some lingering aspects of 'control' within Israeli-Palestinian relations. It was noted earlier that 'control' is like a modulation; it is an ever-adapting, adjusting, self-transmuting phenomena. So even though a Palestinian state will have been created and complex co-optation of the Oslo variety would be defunct, there is no guarantee that Israel, for example, would not once more try to domineer the Palestinians though a changing economy of power (i.e. attempt to institute a 'proper' neo-colonial relationship with its sovereign neighbour).

Clues for means to eliminate any lingering effects of 'control' within the

Israeli-Palestinian relationship might be drawn from Gilles Deleuze's

reflections about possible ways out from the 'control society':

> It definitely makes sense to look at the various ways individuals and groups constitute themselves as subjects through processes of subjectification: what counts in such processes is the extent to which, as they take shape, they elude both established forms of knowledge and the dominant forms of power. Even if they in turn engender new forms of power or become assimilated into new forms of knowledge. For a while, though, they have a real rebellious spontaneity. This is nothing to do with going back to "the subject," that is to something invested with duties, power, and knowledge. One might equally well speak of new kinds of events, rather than processes of subjectification: events that can't be explained by the processes that give rise to them or into which they lead. They appear for the moment, and it's the moment that matters, it's the chance we must seize.[4]

Deleuze is neither concerned with the usurpation or the accession of state

power. He is more interested in the forms of social change that take place

alongside or 'beneath' the state. He favours the accommodation and influence

of minorities but not in a conventional political sense, such as through

programmes of multicultural inclusion or by the creation of autonomy or

consociational regimes. Deleuze understands a minority as having a

qualitative, rather than a quantitative meaning: 'The minor is that which

deviates from the majority or standard which is the bearer of the dominant

social code'.[5] For Deleuze, this process of 'becoming minor', which he also

refers to as 'deterritorialisation' and as 'the lines of flight', represents the hope

of revolutionary politics.[6] These terms are meant to convey that if changing

circumstances bring about a move away from dominant ordering mechanisms

and belief systems, new outlets and forms of human subjectivity can be

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[4]Idem Gilles Deleuze, 'Control and Becoming' in *Negotiations 1972-1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995): 176.

[5]Idem Paul Patton, *Deleuze and the Political* (London: Routledge, 2000): 7.

[6]Ibid., 7.

generated and so the potential for emancipation may increase. This is the paradox of the 'control society'. The rigid systems of ordering of the past are done way with in favour of new, co-opting systems marked by a greater perception of autonomy and recognition. But as a slackening of past methods of population management occurs, opportunity spaces may come to emerge where the new networks of 'control' lack their efficacy. These opportunity spaces, what Deleuze called 'circuit breakers'[7], are instances where social actors are free to explore, and engage in, the process of collective self-definition.

Deleuze's notion of 'circuit breakers' does not provide a ready or at hand programme to redress deep-seated views within Israeli-Palestinian relations. His understanding does not suggest a clear outline of action, in praxeological terms. The idea can only intimate the first steps needed for this enormous task. It has been argued in this study that the guiding impetus of the Israeli national consciousness, the notion of 'empty land', underwent transition to 'control society' types of governance in the Oslo Accords. It was also suggested that while there was no discernible alternative national 'voice' that the Israeli leadership and population might have relied upon to help normatively shape their new relationship with the Palestinians in 1993, it was nonetheless worthwhile to try to invent or recreate such a legacy for the sake of future peace (pp. 224-5). In this vein, any future 'circuit breakers' must relate to the rejection of the idea of 'empty land', in both its original and post-1993 form. These 'circuit breakers' would utilise this alternative vision of

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[7]Deleuze, 'Control and Becoming', 175.

peace to foster a much needed critical introspection about the ultimate causes of the collapse of Oslo as well as to serve as the basis of genuine reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

In the Israeli-Palestinian context, 'circuit breakers' might be conceived as a rediscovery or a reinvention of bi-national ideals.[8] It will be recalled from Raz-Krakotzkin's critique in chapter one that the Israeli national narrative has decontexualized the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from its Middle Eastern setting. Its discourse and historiography is grounded in a teleological view of 'the return of the nation to the homeland', one that produced a conception of land as being 'vacant' or 'empty' – as exclusively associated with Jews – and so prevented identification with the indigenous Palestinian population as having a common attachment to the territory. Accordingly, the mainstream Israeli conception of identity is not based on recognition of the *bi-nationality* of the land. The Oslo Accords, as was shown, 'advanced' this understanding to 'control society' forms of rule. But even as Israel sought to co-opt the PLO, it created a potentially transformative conceptual space in which 'circuit breakers' can emerge. The Accords have formally introduced the Palestinians into Israeli discourse, but in a distorted sense, as a 'whatever identity' – to use the parlance of Giorgio Agamben and Michael Hardt. Oslo might be said to represent a kind of improper bi-nationalism. There is an official acknowledgement of the presence of the Palestinians, but as sub-nationals – not as equals to the Israelis. Yet an improper bi-nationalism is better than pure

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[8]Bi-nationalism need not be construed in a strict political sense, whereby two nations are equally represented in one entity (such as the Walloons and Flemish in Belgium). It can also be understood in an ideational sense, so that even if the partition of a territory into two sovereign states occurs, it is maintained that the two separate peoples continue to share an equal right and attachment to the same land.

chauvinism, for it provides a base of sorts to revisit a genuine proponent of bi-national thinking, an alternative national voice who might be used as a guide to normatively redirect Israeli perceptions of, and dealings with, the Palestinians.

The Legacy of Martin Buber

The ideas of the Israeli philosopher and theologian Martin Buber (1878-1965) provide direction for potential 'circuit breakers'. It is recommended that Buber's variety of bi-national thought should be revisited as the crux of an alternative vision of peace that Israelis can draw upon to shape their post-Oslo relationship with the Palestinians. From the earliest years of the Zionist movement, and in a marked departure from most of his contemporaries, Buber argued that the new Jewish identity that was being established in Palestine would be inherently marred without an active empathy with the collective yearnings of the country's Arab population:

> Jewish settlement in Palestine, which was embarked upon in order to enable the Jewish people to survive as a national entity, and which, in its social, economic and cultural aspects, constitutes an enterprise of universal significance, suffered from one basic error, which handicapped the development of its positive features. This basic error consisted of the tribute paid by political leadership to the traditional colonial policy, which was less suitable for Palestine than any other region of the globe and certainly less fitting for the Jewish people than any other nation. Hence, political leadership was guided by international and not intra-national considerations. Instead of relating the aims of the Jewish people to the geographical reality, wherein these aims had to be realized, the political leaders saw these aims only against the background of international events and in their relation to international problems. Thus, Palestine was embedded in international entanglements and attempts toward their solution, isolating it from the organic context of the Middle East, into the awakening of which it should have been integrated in accordance with a broader spiritual and social perspective.[9]

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[9]Martin Buber, 'The Bi-National Approach to Zionism' in Paul R. Mendes-Flohr ed., *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983): 208.

Buber was very much committed to a just reconciliation of contending Palestinian Arab and Jewish national claims. Although he made specific political proposals in this regard (the most noteworthy being his 1942-7 commitment to a bi-national state in Palestine[10]), 'the substance of Buber's challenge to the Zionist leadership was not that he had a more judicious policy to offer, but rather his demand that it introduce into its political thinking a moral tension or, as he preferred to call it "direction" (Richtung)—a moral direction which he deemed necessary to quicken the insights leading to a more judicious policy.[11]

Before the establishment of the State of Israel, Buber argued that the Palestinian Arabs' competing claim to sovereignty could not be deferred or neutralised by tactics of power politics because such actions would undermine the moral and spiritual core of Zionism. Unlike the mainstream Zionist leadership, he refused to dismiss the Palestinian Arabs' opposition to Zionism as the tragic consequence of a 'greater good'. He did not see this tension in zero-sum terms and felt it was possible to allay Arab concerns without yielding those Zionist priorities, grounded in authentic need, that were deemed to be morally compelling. This monumental task involved mutual compromise and accommodation, a willingness to reduce the aspirations of the respective national movements to the minimum necessary to secure the basic and morally tenable interests of the Jewish and the Palestinian Arab people. Buber was very much aware that such a programme required good will and self-sacrifice

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[10] See, for example, Martin Buber, Judah L. Magnes, and Moses Smilansky, *Palestine: a bi-national state* (New York: Ihud (Union) Association of Palestine, 1946).

[11]Paul Mendes-Flohr, Introduction in *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs*, 12.

from both sides. He also conceded that there were not a significant number of Palestinian Arabs who had responded to his call. 'But as Buber repeatedly emphasized, the requisite political altruism assumes mutual trust, and thus as the "interlopers"–the intruding, invading party–the burden of creating trust is, nonetheless, on the Zionist movement'.[12]

It is worthwhile to recount the kinds of compromises that Buber was willing to make in order to uphold the principle of bi-national claims to Palestine. He opposed, for example, the official Zionist policy of creating a Jewish majority in Palestine as the guiding strategy of response to the 'Arab question'. For the sake of accommodation with the Palestinian Arabs, Buber was prepared to limit Jewish immigration into the country:

> In terms of the fundamental principles of Zionism, this was an extremely radical position, for free immigration of Jews into Palestine was from the founding moment of Zionism deemed the *conditio sine qua non* for the realization of the movement's supreme moral purpose, namely, the solution of the Jewish question. Moreover by rendering *aliyah* [Jewish immigration] subject to Arab sensibilities and consent, Buber and his comrades contradicted the most passionate vision of Zionism to reconstitute the Jewish people as a sovereign nation invested with the dignity and freedom to determine its own destiny.[13]

Buber argued that these mainstream Zionist sentiments, which he appreciated and even shared to an extent, were nonetheless politically unsound. Because he genuinely sought a political compromise on the basis of equal national claims, he believed that the insistence upon a Jewish majority was unrealistic and reckless, an inflexible ideological demand that only served to exacerbate Arab fears and intensify tensions in Palestine.

While the establishment of the State of Israel rendered much of his earlier criticisms of Zionist policy irrelevant, Buber remained true to his bi-

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[12]Mendes-Flohr, 14.
[13]Ibid., 15.

national convictions. He took the stance that the 1948 war could have been avoided and that the pursuit of political sovereignty had been a fatuous, unwarranted extravagance.[14] More importantly, he continued to maintain that the 'Arab question' posed the central moral challenge to Zionism. He demanded that Israel grant its own Arabs citizens 'truly equal rights' and argued that Arab refugees from the 1948 war had the right, and should thus be given the choice, to return to their former homes inside Israel.[15] But it is fair to speculate that had Buber witnessed future events – the rise of the PLO, the Israeli occupation and the response of the *intifada*, he would have remained unwavering in his convictions, calling for a just solution that was grounded in a wholly bi-national vision of peace.

Buber's voice and legacy must be revisited. This call should not be misconstrued as an endorsement of Buber's once proposed bi-national state or his past call to limit Jewish immigration for the sake of compromise. Such ideas were only feasible within the political circumstances that prevailed before 1948. These past proposals, however, reflect a genuine bi-national spirit that must be revisited, even after the recommended intervention and imposition of a two-state solution by outside powers. Buber's perspective can foster a much needed critical introspection about the ultimate causes of the collapse of Oslo. For example, many Israelis have vilified the Palestinian

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[14]See, for example, Martin Buber, 'Let Us Make an End to Falsities!' in Paul R. Mendes-Flohr ed., *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs.* In October 1948, Buber declared: 'And now–we say–"we have been attacked." Who attacked us? Essentially, those who felt that they have been attacked by us, namely by our peaceful conquest. They accuse us of being robbers...And what is our answer? "This was our country two thousand years ago, and here it was that we created great things." Do we generally expect this reason to be accepted without argument? Would we do so were we in their place?' (227).

[15]See Martin Buber, 'We Must Give the Arabs Truly Equal Rights' and 'Letter to Ben-Gurion on the Arab Refugees' in Paul R. Mendes-Flohr ed., *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs.*

leadership for the egregious violation of its DoP commitments, fomenting the current tensions in order to pressure Israel to make greater final status concessions.[16] These accusations are not completely unfounded. At the time of writing there is even evidence that the PA, and not just the militant groups under its jurisdiction, is fostering violence against Israeli targets.[17] On the other hand, this view feeds into the hegemonic domination of the Israeli perspective because it continues to refuse a constructive engagement with the root causes of Palestinian grievances. Understood in this way, the Palestinian position countenancing violence should be seen as a kind of relative culpability. Violence is a disgraceful, but understandable last resort. Arafat's basic sincerity and commitment to peaceful negotiations were long before rendered null and void by Rabin and Peres's practices akin to complex co-optation and by the *de facto* similar policies of successive Israeli governments. Buber would say that the burden of creating trust lies ultimately on the State of Israel. Updating and expanding Buber's message, it can be said that while Israel has a right to exist in peace and security, its military and settlement policies in the West Bank and Gaza strip were not legitimate actions and, even after Oslo, it continued to intrude upon and oppress the Palestinians. If Israelis want the Palestinians to acknowledge and accept their rights, they must be willing to fully reciprocate. Although a greater share of responsibility lies with the Israelis because they exercised disproportionate control, this does not excuse the Palestinians of the need to change themselves. If the Israelis reach

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[16]See, for example, David Makovsky, 'Middle East Peace Through Partition' *Foreign Affairs* March/April 2001.

[17]See, for example, documents captured by Israeli forces during their re-occupation of Palestinian towns and cities in April 2002 ('Operation Defensive Shield'), posted at Israeli army internet site, http://www.idf.il/arafat/english/index1.stm. These papers directly link PA Chairman Yasser Arafat to Palestinian militant groups engaged in violent actions against Israeli military and civilian targets.
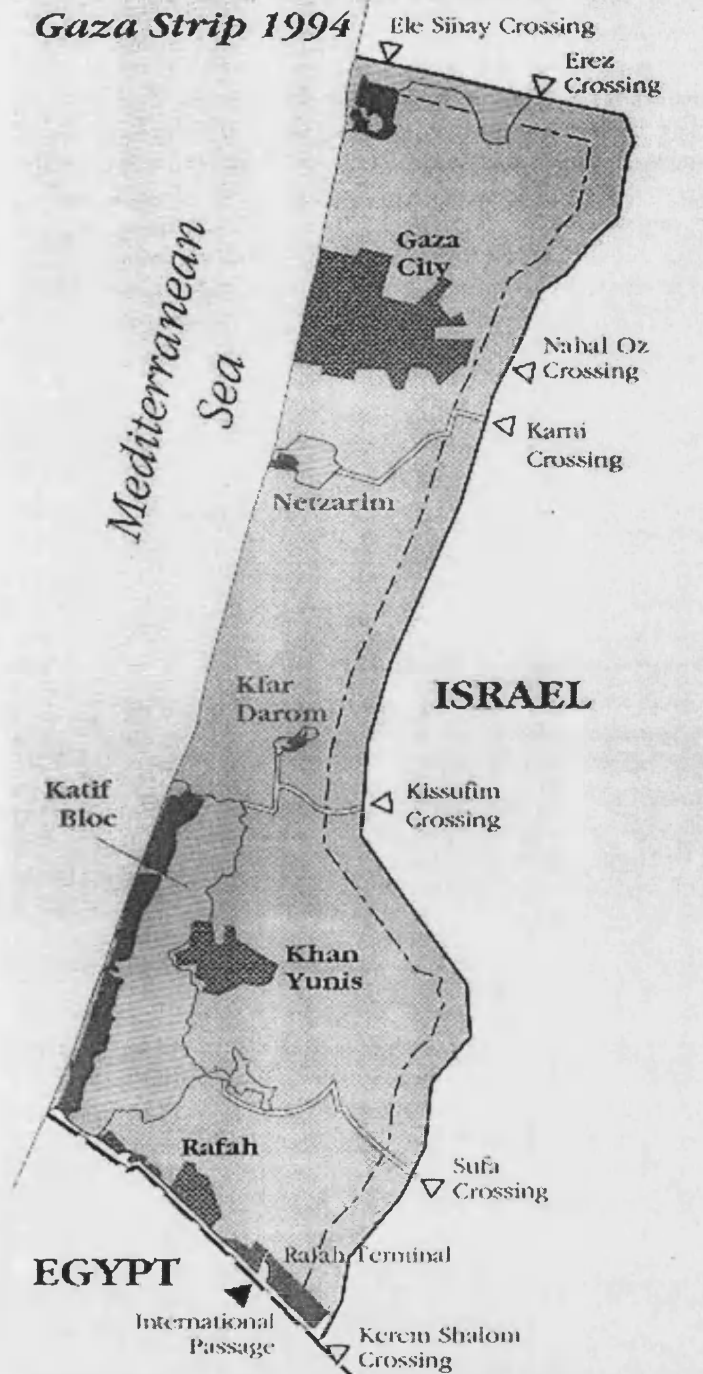
out as equals, the Palestinians must seize the opportunity and respond in kind. Otherwise, the failure to achieve peace will not reside with Israel alone.

'Circuit breakers' can help foster a bi-national conception of peace. There have long been Israeli advocates of dialogue and negotiation with the Palestinians. But too many of these voices were content to accept the distorted and unequal conception of peace offered by Oslo. It was not enough for Israel to make modified 'functional compromises'. Such formulae were simply new ways to consolidate its hold over the land. A lasting peace must instead reflect the fact that the Israelis and Palestinians have truly equal national claims. Ironically, there is a chance for such a vision to take hold after the current environment of violence and recrimination. In the wake of the collapse of Oslo, the Israeli people have become increasingly confused and are looking for ultimate explanations. Both the 'concessionary' approach of Rabin-Peres-Barak and the unapologetic hawkishness of the Likud have failed to bring deliverance. It is at this time that critical voices in Israel must once again raise the banner of bi-nationalism. It must repeatedly be said that the violence borne of Oslo was because Israel did not treat the Palestinians as equals. Such endeavours would mirror Buber's efforts to introduce a tension or moral direction into political debates, but would possess one decisive advantage that the philosopher-theologian did not have. One of the key reasons that Buber's message seemed alien to the Israeli population of his time was that it found no practical correlation with the political facts on the ground. Such circumstances would not be the case if multilateral intervention were to bring about the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. Intervention would produce a sort of begrudging legitimating space for the Palestinians within the Israeli

national consciousness. This relative acceptance of the Palestinians must be harnessed, developed into a 'circuit breaker'. The task ahead is to convince Israelis that true peace can only ensue by substantially upgrading their relationship with the Palestinians, by recognising the full bi-nationality of the land.

Map I

Palestinian Autonomous Area —
Gaza Strip 1994

Ele Sinay Crossing

Erez
Crossing

Mediterranean Sea

Gaza
City

Nahal Oz
Crossing

Karni
Crossing

Netzarim

Kfar
Darom

ISRAEL

Katif
Bloc

Kissufim
Crossing

Khan
Yunis

Rafah

Sufa
Crossing

Rafah Terminal

EGYPT

International
Passage

Kerem Shalom
Crossing

▨	Israeli settlement area.
▨	Palestinian autonomous area.
——	The Delimiting Line.
- - -	The Security Perimeter (Palestinian police responsible for security between the security perimeter and the delimiting line of the Gaza Strip.)
▢	Military installation area.
·····	Roads patrolled by Israel (Lateral road).
■	Yellow area (Israel responsible for security. Palestinians responsible for civil affairs, except for settlements.)

0   2   4 Kilometers

0   1   2 miles

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Map II

Oslo II Map
Outlining Areas A, B, and C

LEGEND

■ Area A –
Palestinian Cities

▨ Area B –
Palestinian Villages

□ Area C – Settlement
and military areas,
roads, State lands

▲ Israeli Settlement

0   5   10   15 kilometers

0   5   10 miles

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