

Bernd Schoch

The Islamic Movement A Challenge for Palestinian State-Building



PASSIA

Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs

Bernd Schoch

THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT

**- A Challenge for Palestinian
State-Building**

PASSIA

Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs

PASSIA, the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, is an Arab, non-profit Palestinian institution with a financially and legally independent status. It is not affiliated with any government, political party or organization. PASSIA seeks to present the Question of Palestine in its national, Arab and international contexts through academic research, dialogue and publication.

PASSIA endeavors that research undertaken under its auspices be specialized, scientific and objective and that its symposia and workshops, whether international or intra-Palestinian, be open, self-critical and conducted in a spirit of harmony and cooperation.

Bernd J. Schoch, a German-born journalist, holds Master degrees from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, the London School of Economics, and the Parisian Institute for the Studies of Political Science. He studied and worked for two years in the Middle East and is currently a Ph.D. student in the US.

This book represents the free expression of its author and does not necessarily represent the judgement or opinions of PASSIA. It is presented as part of the PASSIA Research Studies Program of 1999, which is kindly supported by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), Jerusalem.

Cover Photo: Courtesy of Adel Hana, Photographer, Gaza

Copyright © PASSIA Publication
November 1999

Tel: 972-2-626 4426 ♦ Fax: 972-2-628 2819
E-mail: passia@palnet.com
Website: <http://www.passia.org>
PO Box 19545, Jerusalem

Contents

Acknowledgments	1
Introduction	3
I. The Importance of Democratic Legitimization	7
1.1 The Strategy of Inquiry: Methodology	7
1.2 The Areas of Inquiry	15
1.3 International Implications	19
1.4 Strategies Deployed by the Actors for Articulating Their Grievances	28
1.5 The Actors	30
1.5.1 The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)	30
1.5.2 Hamas - Islam as a Constitution	41
1.5.3 The Islamic Jihad and Minor Islamic Movements	44
1.6 A Peace Process Rejected by the Islamic Fundamentalists	46
1.7 Elections and Democratic Legitimacy	50
1.8 A Challenge to Arafat's Authority: Radical Islamic Fundamentalists	54
1.9 The Importance of the Democratic Transition of the PLO	59
II. Conflicting Model of Legitimacy	63
2.1 The Concept of Liberal Democracy	63
2.2 How to Measure Democracy?	67
2.3 Why Minorities Rebel in Palestine?	78
2.4 Two Concepts of Legitimacy Confront Each Other: Religious and Secular Theories	81
2.5 The Palestinian Authority and the Muslim Brotherhood	87
2.5.1 Electoral Legitimacy vs. Hamas Religious Legitimacy?.....	87
2.5.1.1 Professional Elections	87
2.5.1.2 Student Elections	89

2.5.2 Sharing Responsibility with Hamas to Improve Control of the Islamic Movement?	93
III. Autocratic Movements and Democracy: PLO and Hamas vs. Democratic Elections	99
3.1 The Importance of the Elections of 20 January 1996	99
3.2 The First Democratic Palestinian Elections	104
3.2.1 Free Elections	104
3.3 Election and Their Implications for Communal Conflicts	105
3.4 Power-Sharing Mechanisms between Institutional Actors	110
3.4.1 The Palestinian President vs. the Palestinian Council	110
3.5 The Institutional Opposition	112
3.6 Hamas and Islamic Jihad: The Opposition Outside the Institutions	114
3.6.1 Hamas - A Strategy of Confrontation and Cooperation	114
3.6.2 Cooperation between Hamas and PLO Until Victory	119
3.7 Islamic Disunity: Salvation for the Palestinian President?	127
3.8 The Civil Society in the Center of a Communal Mobilization	130
IV. Principles of Intra-Communal Conflict and the Potential for Regional Instability	136
4.1 The Transnational Challenge: Muslim Brotherhood without Borders	136
4.2 The Colonial Legacy	139
4.3 The Wye River Memorandum	144
4.3.1 An Alliance against Islamic Fundamentalism?	144
Conclusion	149
Bibliography	156

To my parents and Schnuck

A c k n o w l e d g m e n t s

The pages that follow would not have been written without the help of many individuals from the Middle East, Europe, Asia, the United States and Canada. I am grateful for the time they gave me and for the passionate interest in my subject that they stimulated. My special thanks go to Professor Rémy Leveau from the Parisian Institute for Political Studies who supervised my first joint research project, which dealt with racism and the destruction of the Muslim prayer hall in Charvieu-Chavagneux near Lyon in France.¹ Professor Leveau gave me the necessary inspiration to go ahead with a new project, which this time deals with democratic developments in the Palestinian society following the signing of the Oslo Agreement. I will always be sorry for not having taken up his offer in 1996 to write my Ph.D. with him as a supervisor.

Particular thanks go to Professor Herbert C. Kelman from Harvard University and to Professor Fred Halliday from the London School of Economics for the insight they gave me into the Arab World and the Arab-Israeli conflict. I would also like to thank Professor Moshe Ma'oz from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem for the research facilities granted at the Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace, and my French Professors Bertrand Badie and Gilles Kepel from the French Institute for Political Studies in Paris for their introduction to the studies of Muslim societies.

I am grateful to all the following for the efforts they made either to teach me Arabic or to improve my understanding of the Middle East: Ms. Yael Cohen from the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Professor Badawi from the Arabic Institute of the American University, Cairo, Professor Mo'in Halloun from Bethlehem University and, last not least, Professor William Granara from the Harvard University Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

¹F. Vézard and B. Schoch. *Charvieu-Chavagneux, Août 1989 - Genèse d'un Affrontement Communautaire* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, July 1990).

Other people deserving of my thanks include Ms. Petra Schmidt from the United Nations for the effort she made during my time at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy to give me the necessary stamina to keep on track with my research in addition to all my sponsors. There are many in the Middle East and beyond who gave me their friendship and time in order to help me better understand the issues I am writing about. They are all in my heart, and I can only hope that they will forgive me for not mentioning them individually.

I am grateful to Ingrid Kasper from the United Nations, Miriam Seltzer from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and Patience Whitten, Ross Lipson and Barak Orbach for their assistance during the final editing of this book. Brian Allan's proofreading of my drafts helped me to express my thoughts more clearly and I appreciate his efforts in showing me the complexities of the English language.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi, the Head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA) in Jerusalem for the insights he gave me during my research. I am also grateful to Sawsan Baghdadi of PASSIA for her patience and help in making the last changes and corrections, and Deniz Altayli, Program Director at PASSIA, for her input in finalizing the book, including its overall layout and the cover design.

Since I write as a German about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I am acutely aware of the legacy of the Holocaust and trust that I can make a valuable contribution to a better understanding of the issues at stake.

Peace should prevail in the Middle East, but it has to be a democratic peace characterized by equal rights for all. Bombs do not constitute a credible solution to any conflict, and my writings should be understood as an effort to contribute to the overall discussion concerning the advancement of peace and the coexistence of different concepts and ideas. I am most grateful to all those who supported my quest for academic freedom and intellectual tolerance in sometimes difficult conditions. Last not least, I assume the sole responsibility if there should be any misinterpretations of facts or errors in this book.

Bernd Schoch

Introduction

The beginning of the first official direct negotiations between the Israeli Government and representatives of the Palestinian people on 30 October 1991 in Madrid marked the start of a transitional period for Israeli-Palestinian relations. A historic moment was reached when the Oslo Agreement was signed on 13 September 1993 and the longtime foes Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat shook hands on the White House lawn. An exchange of letters between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) led to mutual recognition and the Middle East appeared to be marching toward peace.¹

The return of the PLO to the front page of the Middle Eastern political scene was surprising since the organization had been chased out of the Middle East in 1982 by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and the decision of Arafat to side with Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War of 1990 had further weakened the Palestinians. However, the return to prominence of the historic Palestinian resistance movement did not fully reflect the developments in the Occupied Territories, where the strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood and its splinter group, the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, have focused on an increasingly popular militant fight against Israel since the 1987 Palestinian uprising, the *Intifada*.

Hamas was founded by the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1987 at the beginning of the *Intifada* and has emerged, during the past ten years, as a key player with the ability to exert considerable influence on the agenda of the peace process. The wave of suicide terror attacks² that took place prior to and after the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995 by a radical Jewish militant were a key factor in the Israeli election campaign of May 1996. On 29 May 1996, the Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu became the first directly elected Prime Minister of Israel and only very slowly softened his opposition to the

¹Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), *1996 Agenda*, pp. 306-323.

²Several suicide attacks were launched against Israeli civilians and military. The following is not an exhaustive list: 25 February 1996, 26 people killed in Jerusalem and in Ashqelon; 26 February 1996, a Palestinian driver steers his car into a Jewish crowd in Jerusalem and is shot; 3 March 1996, suicide attack against a civilian bus from the Egged company (line 18) on Jaffa Road in the very heart of West Jerusalem results in 18 deaths - the bus served the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus; 4 March 1996, suicide attack close to the Dizengoff Shopping Center in the heart of Tel Aviv results in 12 deaths. The attacks have continued: 1996, several suicide bombings in Israel kill 46 people; 21 March 1997, suicide bombing in Tel Aviv kills three women; and 30 July 1997, suicide attack on the Jewish market in Jerusalem results in 25 deaths including the bombers, according to the *New York Times*, 10 September 1997, late edition, p. 1.

Oslo Agreement and the redeployment of the Israeli armed forces until his replacement by Labor Party leader, Ehud Barak in the May 1999 elections after losses in catastrophic proportions.³ To put it in the words of Nabil Sha'ath, one of the key Palestinian negotiators: "The fact that the Israelis are bargaining over two to three percent [of the West Bank territory] is one of the most traumatic aspects of the whole process." For these reasons, amongst others, including the fact that Hamas has been able to realize its declared strategic goal of interrupting the peace process, the peace process had come to a virtual standstill during the government of Netanyahu.⁴ The suicide attacks on Israeli civilians played right into the hands of Israelis opposed to the peace process and weakened Arafat's authority. After making various promises in the election campaign, Netanyahu adopted a policy that the American administration now holds responsible for bringing the peace process to a state of deadlock.⁵ US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright put things bluntly when she said: "Don't believe those who say there is a peace process; that's not the situation." Albright did not stand alone in her harsh criticism of Netanyahu's government.

Kofi Annan, the first UN Secretary General to ever visit Israel in an official capacity, criticized harshly Prime Minister Netanyahu's government, blaming it for the stalemate. Reflecting the view of the majority of UN members, Annan said that Israel had disobeyed the Security Council and dodged the Oslo Agreements. He referred to the Israeli settlements, the hardship imposed on Palestinians by various restrictions on their movement and other actions "that take from Palestinians their homes, their land, their jobs, their residence permits - their very dignity." He added that Arab governments suspected that Israel's conditions for an ongoing peace process "mask an unwillingness to carry out your [Israel's] side of the bargain."⁶

The vicious circle of politically sponsored terrorism entered a new round with the assassination of a radical Islamic activist in Ramallah,⁷ which provoked calls from Hamas for retaliation against Israel. Prime Minister Netanyahu continued to deny any Israeli involvement in the assassination of the activist, whom it accused of having masterminded several bomb

³See B. Rubin. "MERIA News Special Report: Elections/ Government in Israel & Turkey." *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA)* (<http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria/index.html>), 6 July, p.3.

⁴Netanyahu firmly resisted the continuation of the peace process during the recent British-sponsored meetings to advance the peace process. US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright met both leaders separately in a bid to break the deadlock. "The fact that the Israelis are bargaining over two to three percent [of the West Bank territory] is one of the most traumatic aspects of the whole process," said Nabil Sha'ath, a senior Arafat aide. *Financial Times*, 5 May 1998, p.7.

⁵ *International Herald Tribune*, 2 April 1998, p.10.

⁶ *New York Times*, 26 March 1998, p. A7.

⁷"Al-Quds," 13 April 1998 in *Jerusalem Post*, press review, 14 April 1998 (<http://www.jpost.co.il/Columns/Article-1.html>).

attacks against Israeli civilians. Hamas threatened Israel with bloody revenge, reminding the public of the assassination of one of its leading members, Yahya Ayyash; Israel, according to the Palestinians, had masterminded the January 1996 attack in Gaza in which Ayyash was killed by a booby-trapped cellular phone. "They paid 60 coffins for Ayyash," said a Hamas leaflet, "and we are telling them now to prepare for more." Israel has never admitted responsibility for the execution of Ayyash although Shimon Peres described the attack as 'necessary' in light of the fact that Israeli sources had revealed that Ayyash was preparing for a new terror attack. Since the Palestinian Authority had not acted taken action against the leading terrorist, Peres argued that Israel had been left with no alternative but to kill him.⁸

The lack of progress in the negotiation process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority has created an explosive situation in the Middle East and mutual threats are once again common. Prime Minister Netanyahu warns the Palestinian Authority of reprisals if it fails to control the radical Islamic movement Hamas and its splinter group, the Islamic Jihad. The Israeli Prime Minister wants to prevent Islamic militants from renewing suicide bombings in Israel, and the Palestinian Authority itself contacted Hamas to urge the organization to refrain from carry out any acts of retaliation.⁹

In view of the difficult discussions between the Palestinian Authority and Israeli Government officials concerning the extent of a third Israeli withdrawal from the occupied West Bank, the future of the peace process is clearly at stake.¹⁰ Will Arafat's PLO and the Fateh-dominated Palestinian Authority prevail over the radical Islamic fundamentalists that are represented by the militant group Hamas, a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood and its offspring the Islamic Jihad, or will the future Palestine be Islamic?

After the Muslim Brotherhood set up its military branch, Hamas, in 1987, the latter was to rise very rapidly to the position of the second most important political movement in the Occupied Territories, where other Islamic movements began challenging the exclusive authority of the PLO. The religiously motivated conflict between Arafat's Palestinian Authority and

⁸Quoted in *International Herald Tribune*, 3 April 1998, p. 5.

⁹*New York Times*, 11 April 1998.

¹⁰Israeli and Palestinian representatives discussed a re-launch of the Israeli redeployment from the West Bank at a British-sponsored meeting in London. Washington had persuaded the Palestinians in February 1998 to accept only 13 percent of West Bank territory on the understanding that Israel would respect its commitment to a further troop redeployment and stop building Jewish settlements on Arab land before the beginning of the 'final status' negotiations. Netanyahu initially conceded publicly only nine percent but agreed after intense negotiations with Palestinians and American officials to withdraw from an additional 13 percent of the West Bank and to re-launch a process that had already been agreed upon in the Oslo Agreement. S. Erlanger, "Mideast Accord: The Overview", *New York Times*, 24 October 1998, p. 1. See also: "Arafat put further pressure on the Israelis". The *Financial Times* concluded "Palestinian desperation could indeed lead to the 'chaos' Mr. Arafat is signaling", 5 May 1998, p. 7.

the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, is closely linked to the peace process. Netanyahu's resistance to making any further concessions to the Palestinian Authority has weakened Arafat's authority in the territories and created an authority vacuum that the Islamic movement is eager to fill. Arafat's interests, meanwhile, have remained partially linked to the potential of these movements to serve, should the negotiations fail, as allies in a war of destruction against Israel. Consequently, he postponed the making of a decision regarding whether or not he should go to war against Hamas.

In order to avoid anarchy and to compete with Israeli democracy, the Palestinian Authority has developed a sense for the skillful use of democratic concepts. The Palestinians, for example, have tried to undermine Western support for Israel - especially that of the United States - by employing, in some cases, opinion polls that challenge the American support.¹¹ In the United States, the public battle between supporters of Israel and those favoring the Palestinian Authority has already begun: 81 of 100 US Senators wrote to President Clinton saying that the administration should not put pressure on Israel to make further concessions to the Palestinian Authority. On the other hand, according to a poll commissioned by the Arab American Institute, 54.4 percent of Americans would support the American president if he used "public diplomacy to pressure Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to comply with the peace process."¹² After the failure of Likud leader Netanyahu to win the general elections of May 1999, the new Labor Prime Minister Ehud Barak announced his decision to rapidly restart negotiations with the Palestinian Authority. The success of this negotiation round has yet to be determined, and it is unsure whether Barak's self-declared deadline for a final settlement will be met next year.¹³

The analysis presented in this book will focus on the period prior to Ehud Barak's ascension to power and evaluate the challenge that Islamic fundamentalism poses today to Palestinian state-building. First, we will discuss the methodology and importance of the democratic legitimization for the Palestinian leadership in the confrontation with Islamic movements; second we will assess the conflicting models of legitimacy displayed in the intra-communal conflict; and third, we will evaluate the rivalry between secular and Islamic movements in Palestinian Authority elections and those that take place at universities. Fourth, the author will evaluate the impact intra-communal conflict could have on regional stability and security and discuss possible risks and opportunities should the US Government play a more active role in the peace negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians.

¹¹ *Financial Times*, 5 May 1998, p. 7.

¹² Published in the Saudi newsmagazine *Al-Majalla* on 4 May 1998.

¹³ Rubin, B. Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA), Internet edition: <http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria/index.html>.

I. The Importance of Democratic Legitimization

1.1 The Strategy of Inquiry: Methodology

The idea of a clash of civilizations is a popular subject among political scientists. The search for a new concept that can explain the post-Cold War situation includes a return to ideas that once seemed to belong to a past age: ethnic and religious conflicts.¹ Horowitz's theories on ethnic and religious conflict will help to explain the intra-Palestinian confrontation. He presents the limits of cultural pluralism to explain the emergence of conflict, cultural pluralism being defined as different beliefs in contradictory value systems with mutually exclusive aspects within a single community.² The ethnic communities will form very close units, and any conflict based on cultural differences has the potential to become very disruptive and violent.

Sámuel Huntington has also adopted a cultural perspective to explain conflicts. He evaluated the potential of conflicts that have their origins in differences caused by different civilizations, going on to argue that culture and cultural identities shape the patterns of cohesion and disintegration in the post-Cold War period and that modernization is distinct from Westernization. Huntington affirmed that Third World countries, for example, are looking to shape their own patterns of cohesion, which are different from colonial structures. Future conflicts are shaped, according to Huntington, along the fault lines of the major civilizations, which he himself admits are not clearly visible.

Huntington's definition of civilization is cultural and holistic since he takes into consideration the longevity, cultural features and religious characteristics of different civilizations. The major civilizations that fit into Huntington's scheme are as follows: Japanese, Sinic, Islamic, Western, Latin American, and African.³ Huntington is convinced that driven

¹ S. P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996, pp. 252-265 & 312-318.

² D.L. Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, p.135.

³ *Ibid.*; S. P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations*, op.cit., pp. 40-47.

by globalization and modernization, people and countries with similar cultures are coming together and that countries with different cultures will drift further and further apart. In the context of this study, Huntington's assessment of Islam is of particular interest since the author used the concept of a unified Islamic threat to Christian societies that is not reflected in reality. For example, he does not account for the good relations between France and Morocco or for the coexistence of large Muslim minorities in Christian societies such as the British, French, or German. His approach has several additional weaknesses.

Indeed, Huntington offered only a limited definition of Islam. As tempting as the description of a unified Islamic civilization and culture may be for an American scholar, the assessment does not reflect reality. There are essential cleavages within the Islamic civilization, such as the division between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims. This historic division within Islam explains why, for example, the export of the Iranian revolution failed. Huntington also fails to account for the rejection of Khomeini's revolution by the Iraqi Shi'ite Muslims. The Shi'ite Muslims of Iraq did not attempt to change sides in the Iraqi-Iranian war of 1980-1988, but instead gained the reputation of being ferocious opponents of the Iranian forces. These are just a few of the criticisms we can make regarding Huntington's approach to Islam. The most interesting aspect of Huntington's book is that he attributed to culture the key function in future conflicts. He deals with the issue of modernization in a cultural framework and detects the variety of issues motivating group conflict, thus avoiding a weakness of modern political science, which was criticized by Horowitz: "By failing to attend to the un-modernized strata, modernization theories of ethnic conflict tend to neglect the potential heterogeneity of conflict motives."⁴

Indeed, the fight between the secular legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority and the Islamic models of the religious legitimacy represent two exclusive value systems. The popular legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority is based on elections and is in competition with the model of the Islamic resistance movement, which refers to Allah and the Qur'an as supreme values. Therefore, the question arises of whether or not the Islamic resistance movement will submit to the authority of the secular Palestinian Authority. There are different issues to be considered before answering such a complex question. The stage for a radical conflict was set in the early days of the 1993 Oslo Agreement and dissenting values

⁴ D.L. Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, op.cit., p. 105.

may eventually open the door for such a conflict. The Oslo Agreement did not consider religious movements as legitimate actors for Palestinian interests despite the key-role they played during the Intifada. These powerful cultural forces, however, cannot be neglected since they are generated by beliefs systems such as Islam. Horowitz argues in favor of a more attentive assessment of cultural pluralism and the forces it causes.

However, the cultural explanation of conflicts does not deal effectively with factors such as the intense violence of ethnic conflict. Horowitz's answer is the analysis of the role of kinship in ethnic conflict, in which he argues that political power has become increasingly measured in the extended family of the leader. The situation of the Alawites in Syria is an extreme example of such a situation.⁵ Syria's Alawite community represents only 12 percent of the population, yet it has produced the Head of State, Hafez Al-Asad and a significant number of the elite. The extended family groups fulfill social needs, and the privileged minority becomes the preferred target of forces opposing the system. The political power in Palestine is limited to a small segment of the ethnic group and concentrated in the organized movement controlled by Yasser Arafat and the Fateh-controlled PLO.

In my view, important consideration should be given to the influence of the colonial powers, which created a power structure that survived the colonial order. Their role, and the influence of the United States, are driving forces in the emerging conflict between Hamas, the major group in the Islamic movement in Palestine, and the Palestinian Authority of Yasser Arafat.⁶ In the case of the British colonial power, the issuing of the 1917 Balfour Declaration in favor of a Jewish homeland in Palestine was an exceptional event in the history of British foreign policy, as it led, after the Holocaust, to the founding of Israel in 1948 and to the beginning of a massive Palestinian refugee exodus during and after the War of 1948. The colonial rule and the British immigration policy combined with the events of World War II led to a massive inflow of Jewish refugees to Palestine, and the ethnic and religious differences, which had become more apparent after the 1936 Palestinian revolt against Jewish immigration, increased steadily. The search for a Palestinian strategy to confront the Israelis failed to achieve any significant objectives; even if Palestini-

⁵ P. Seale. *Asad, The Struggle for The Middle East*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988, pp. 453-457.

⁶ *Ibid.*; Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, op.cit., pp.155-157.

ans perceived Israelis as colonists in their home country, public opinion in the United States and in the most industrialized countries backed Israel.

The 1987 Palestinian uprising in the Occupied Territories, the *Intifada*, represented a major watershed in the Israeli-Palestinian relations and for the whole Middle East. The *Intifada* expressed the political consciousness of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, who had finally overcome the feeling of despair and helplessness that the Israeli victory in the Six-Day War of 1967 had created.

The overwhelming Israeli victories of 1948, 1956 and 1967 had indeed shaped the way in which the Israelis and Palestinians perceived each other. Images of the 'enemy' confined Israelis and Palestinians in their mental prisons, and misperceptions and mirror images prevented any improvement in the mutual relations. A study of the Soviet-American relations, for example, revealed, that the Russian's distorted picture of the Americans was very similar to the American view of the Russians - a true mirror image.⁷ A similar assessment can be made concerning the way in which Israelis and Arabs in general perceive each other.⁸ Mutual trust could not develop in such a climate and the next catastrophe in the relations between Arabs and Israelis was just around the corner.

The Egyptian army's successful crossing of the Suez Canal in the 1973 Yom Kippur War dispelled for the first time the image of an invincible Israeli army in the minds of many Arabs. The image of a self-confident Egypt eventually opened up a road to peace and the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty at Camp David in 1978. Nevertheless, as far as Egypt is concerned emotional military broadcasts celebrate every year the anniversary of the war and images of the Israeli enemy are kept alive in the Egyptian press. Similarly, Israel did not resist the temptation to see every Palestinian as a potential terrorist.

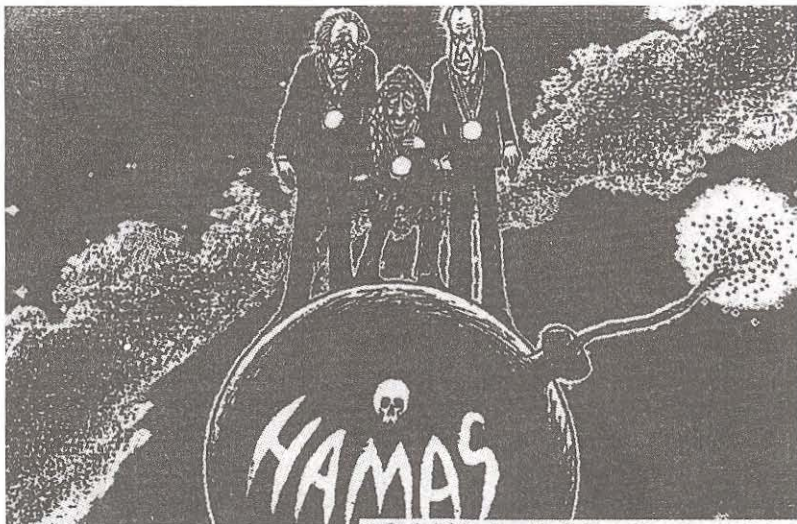
⁷U. Bronfenbrenner. "The Mirror-Image in Soviet-American Relations: A Social Psychologist's Report." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 45-56.

⁸ R.R. Holt and B. Silverstein. "On the Psychology of Enemy Images: Introduction and Overview." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 45, no. 2, 1989, pp. 1-11.



Cartoon published by the French artist TIM, who refers to the attack of a Palestinian commando on Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics. *Les Cahiers de l'Express*, no. 37 (1996), p. 31.

The misperceptions were to change only very gradually. Following the 1993 Oslo Agreement, Arafat, Peres and Rabin were now considered to be equally threatened by Hamas in the public opinion.



Cartoon published in *De Telegraaf*, Amsterdam, referring to the impact Islamist attacks have on the peace process. *Les Cahiers de l'Express*, no. 37 (1996), p. 90.

The 1982 invasion of Lebanon did not bring Israel the peace it desired at its northern border, and the continuing guerilla war in the Israeli Security Zone in Southern Lebanon remains a tiresome burden for Israel. In his analysis, Horowitz differentiated between an ethnic conflict that is rather spontaneous and one that is forced into an institutional framework: "The tension between these two imperatives can result in the violent overthrow of the institutional system when it fails completely to reflect ethnic sentiment."⁹

Horowitz's scheme allows for a better assessment of the issue of the Palestinian Israelis and the emerging conflict between the PLO-led Palestinian Authority and Hamas. Israeli Palestinians are bound to an officially American-styled democratic system that reduces them, however, to second-class citizens. The more rigidly the institutional arrangements are enforced – for example, with regard to the impossibility of Israeli Palestinians being allowed to serve in the army – the more the institutional arrangements will be challenged. It seems however too far fetched to compare

⁹ Ibid.; Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, op.cit., p.228.

the system in Israel with the former apartheid regime of South Africa.¹⁰ Since Israeli Palestinians participate in elections and study at Israeli universities.

Arafat is facing a similar dilemma *vis-à-vis* the role of the opposition in the Palestinian Authority or the role of the extra-parliamentarian groups such as Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. In Horowitz's words:

"We have seen that some groups try to make states ethnically homogenous by expelling members of the other groups, and we shall not be surprised if some territorially separate groups try to achieve homogeneity by withdrawing from the State."¹¹

In other words: If the Palestinian Authority would try to exclude all concerns of the Islamic militants, they could turn against the emerging state and provoke an international conflict or a military confrontation that would weaken the Palestinian society.

Emotions play a crucial role in the communal conflict and in the end, ethnic and religious conflicts lead to a deep loss of trust. The social-psychological dimensions of international conflict contribute in this context to a better understanding of the intra-Palestinian religious and ethnic conflict. The social-psychological approach deals with subjective factors, which play a crucial role in such conflicts. H. Kelman and J. W. Burton adopt a multidimensional approach¹² that explores subjective factors. The State is not simply considered a so-called unitary actor, and international conflict is perceived "as a dynamic process, shaped by changing realities, changing interests, and changing relationships between the conflicting parties."¹³ The intra-communal conflict between the secular Fateh-dominated Palestinian Authority and the Islamic resistance movement is

¹⁰ M. Marshall. "Rethinking the Palestine Question: The Apartheid Paradigm." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXV, no. 1 (Autumn 1995), pp. 15-22.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, op.cit., p.228.

¹² For additional information see: J. W. Burton. *Global Conflict: The Domestic Sources of International Crisis*. Brighton, Sussex: Wheatsheaf, 1994; and J.W. Burton. *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unsolved Social and Political Problems*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979. H.C. Kelman outlines fundamental considerations of his approach in "Patterns of Personal Involvement in the National System: A Social-Psychological Analysis of Political Legitimacy." In J. R. Rosenau, ed. *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory*. New York: Free Press, 1969 (rev. ed.), pp. 276-288; and in "An International Approach to Conflict Resolution." *International Interactions* 6, no. 2 (1979), pp. 99-122.

¹³ H.C. Kelman. "Social-Psychological Dimensions of International Conflict." In I.W. Zartman and J.L. Rasmussen, eds., *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*. Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace (USIP), 1997.

within the scope of this definition of an international conflict. Certainly, the conflict has an impact on the regional peace process and the regional conflict is shaped by changing alliances, for example, American support for the Palestinian Authority as opposed to the traditional American-Israeli strategic alliance.¹⁴

Changing interests amongst Palestinians and the impact of external factors such as Iran or Hamas leaders based in Jordan also determine the extent to which the intra-communal Palestinian conflict will have its impact on regional stability. The active promotion of terrorism against Israel by Jordanian-based Hamas might in turn lead to a deterioration in the close Jordanian-Israeli cooperation; the Israeli and Jordanian security services started to cooperate following the signing of the Israeli-Jordan Peace Treaty in 1996. The deterioration of this interstate relationship could overshadow talks with the Palestinian Authority and, for example, Jordan.

The multifaceted process of mutual influence is yet another distinguished criteria of international conflict. Local and international events are both driving forces of such a conflict, which turns in an interactive process with an escalating, self-perpetuating dynamic. A military confrontation between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas could, for example spill over to Jordan, in which case Jordanian-Palestinian relations would suffer. Horowitz argues that the best thing to do in such a situation remains to rely on a member of the family since the rifts spread across villages and regions. A functional equivalent of kinship, he claims, is having origins in the same village or region.¹⁵ The common ethnic origins of Hamas and PLO leadership could be seen as a factor preventing such an escalation. Furthermore, we may argue that the recruitment of the elite from a group such as Fateh will create a reliable elite for the Palestinian Authority. Yasser Arafat's belief that this is indeed the case was clearly reflected in his intervention in the January 1996 election process.¹⁶

Since the settlement of the intra-Palestinian conflict cannot be achieved by kinship considerations alone, Gurr's¹⁷ study of 233 politically active minorities and the evaluation of the role of minorities at risk in the Mid-

¹⁴ *New York Times*, 13 May 1998, p.A8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*; Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, op.cit., p. 553.

¹⁶ See "Arafat Causes Chaos as Campaigning Starts." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1986), pp. 8-9.

¹⁷ Gurr, *Minorities at Risk*. Washington, DC: USIP, 1993, pp. 89-138.

dle East offer a new perspective with regard to the settling of communal conflicts. After analyzing thoroughly the factors responsible for the mobilization of groups, the author will analyze strategies for settling communal disputes. The concepts of power sharing in the unranked Palestinian community, in which more or less autonomous groups coexist today, offer a possibility of integrating opposition forces in the Palestinian Authority. As, for example, the experiences in Malaysia or Liberia proved, weak power-sharing arrangements can lead to communal fighting and civil war, designed to remove the government from power.

Gurr remains skeptical concerning a settlement of ethnic-political and intra-communal conflicts in the Middle East. A solution might be, he argues, to conceive socially and politically innovative policy that bridges the gaps between minorities and states. Since the Palestinian Authority reflects the emerging Palestinian state governing authority, Arafat would have to conceive policies that enable at least the partial integration of a more radical opposition. However, as Gurr wrote, states and their leaders rarely have the foresight and political will to avoid an ethnic-political or ethnic-religious confrontation before it emerges.¹⁸

1.2 The Areas of Inquiry

The recent suicide attacks against Israeli civilians¹⁹ are largely the outcome of a political struggle and an ethnic-religious conflict between Palestinians and Israelis that is overlapped by a confrontation between the secular Palestinian Authority and the Islamic resistance movement. The current peace process between Israelis and the Palestinian Authority is deadlocked and the killing of an Islamic militant in Ramallah²⁰ next to a Palestinian police station may result in the next suicide attack by Hamas activists.²¹ This book will focus in particular on the challenge Islamic fundamentalism represents to the state-building efforts of the Palestinian Authority. The strategic interests of countries hostile to any arrangements between Israel and the Palestinians, in particular Libya and Iran interfered

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

¹⁹ Several suicide attacks were launched against Israeli civilians and military personnel. See for details the introduction of this paper.

²⁰ A suspected bomb-maker belonging to Hamas, Muhiyeddin Ash-Sharif, 32, was shot in Ramallah and put in a car, which was subsequently blown up from a distance. Palestinian officials accused Israel of state terrorism. *New York Times*, 2 April 1998, p. A10.

²¹ The killing of Ayyash, the mastermind of a terror campaign against Israelis, in January 1996 was attributed to the Israelis, even though the Israeli Government never officially accepted responsibility. *New York Times*, 11 April 1998, p. 3.

in the ongoing peace process by - according to American sources - sponsoring international terrorism.²²

More than 200 Israelis have been killed since the rounds of successive suicide bombings by Islamic activists began with an attack on an Israeli bus in the city of Afula in April 1994. Neither tough words nor the initial refusal of the new Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to meet with Yasser Arafat ended suicide bombings committed by Islamic militants. The 1982 invasion of Lebanon was supposed to carry a deadly blow to the state-like structure the PLO had set up in Southern Lebanon and to bring peace to Northern Israel. The opposite was the case: In 1982, the invasion of Lebanon caused the death of more than 600 Israeli soldiers. Given the unwillingness of the Israeli population to pay such a high price in order to fight cross-border terrorism by a continued invasion of a neighboring country, the Israeli army subsequently withdrew gradually from all but the so-called 'Security Zone' in Southern Lebanon. The aim of maintaining such a 'security zone' was evident: The Israeli army wanted to fight potential terrorists in Lebanon before they were able to cross the border.

The so-called 'Security Zone' has however turned into a nightmare for the State of Israel since the death toll continued to rise over the years and a constantly increasing number of Israelis and Lebanese died on both sides of the border.²³ The continued occupation of the Security Zone by the Israeli army, designed to prevent renewed terror attacks from Lebanon, has proved to be extremely costly in terms of human life. A low-scale war has been waged in Southern Lebanon between the Iranian-sponsored Hizbollah movement and Israeli armed forces. This is but one of the reasons behind Prime Minister Netanyahu's initiative to withdraw fully from Lebanon, although continued suicide attacks in Israel could affect such an attitude and heighten the tension at the Lebanese-Israeli borders, which at one time seemed destined to decrease as a result of the Israeli-Syrian red line agreement. In the agreement,²⁴ which was mediated by the United States in 1975, Israel agreed that Syria should intervene in order to help put an end to the civil war in Lebanon.

²² P. C. Wilcox, Jr. Coordinator for Counterterrorism. *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, 1994. US Department of State, April 1995. Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism. (from the State Department gopher at <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/dosfan.html>).

²³ "Israel Mourns More War Dead in Lebanon", *New York Times*, 24 February 1999, p.3.

²⁴ P. Seale. *Asad of Syria*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, Berkeley, p. 279.

Due to the stalemate in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, security arrangements remain difficult in the Middle East and key Arab leaders such as the Egyptian President Mubarak are now accusing Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of having deliberately brought the peace process to an end with his provocative policies: "By God, this is the worst situation in the peace process since 1977 (...) You have succeeded in frightening the world. You have pushed us all into a very difficult situation."²⁵ The attempted assassination of Hamas leader Khaled Masha'al in Jordan and declarations made by Ariel Sharon concerning the political assassination of terrorists are adequate proof of the aggressive Israeli attitude.²⁶ It should be noted that Jordan worked in close cooperation with Israel and that the two countries often exchanged confidential information.²⁷

The second area of inquiry deals with the intra-communal nature of the emerging conflict between the secular and religious Palestinian movements. The numerous suicide attacks on Israeli civilians are also a sign of a fight for legitimacy between the two leading groups of Palestinians. The unity of Palestinians was overrated when they were referred to as "a stateless people with a strong sense of national identity," dispersed among a multitude of countries.²⁸ Hamas and its offspring the Islamic Jihad have opted to employ a violent strategy to destroy the peace process, which started with the Oslo Agreement of 1993 signed by the PLO and the Israeli Government, arguing, for example, that the concerns of four million Palestinian refugees²⁹ were not taken into consideration.

The militant organizations attempted to undermine the authority of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and to destroy the historic breakthrough reached in the Israeli-Palestinian relations with the signing of the 1993 Oslo Agreement. According to Gurr, the Oslo Agreement expresses the search for a greater degree of autonomy and the eventual independence of the Palestinians. The level of Palestinian mobilization during the *Intifada*

²⁵ *New York Times*, 2 April 1997. Jordan's Queen Noor confirmed during a speech at the Harvard JFK School of Government remarks of the late Jordanian King Hussein. King Hussein had said that Netanyahu has to be careful to avoid wearing a gas mask again. The King's statement was an allusion to a CNN broadcast that had shown Netanyahu during the Gulf War of 1990 wearing a gas mask as Iraqi missiles targeted Tel Aviv. 8 October 1996, 7 p.m.

²⁶ *New York Times*, 25 March 1998, p. A23.

²⁷ *New York Times*, 15 October 1997, p. 1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*; Gurr, *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p. 218.

²⁹ *Financial Times*, 6 May 1998, p. 7.

had surprised both the PLO and the Muslim Brotherhood, both of which attempted to control the mobilization of the masses.³⁰

The *Intifada* was a milestone on the way toward a greater degree of unity amongst the Palestinians and illustrated the difficulties that Israel was facing in dealing with the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. However, without a genuine desire on the part of the United States to settle the long-standing Arab-Israeli conflict, the Madrid negotiations might have never begun. The financial resources of the PLO were rapidly vanishing as a result of its decision to take the side of the loser in the 1991 Gulf War. Dr. Mohammed Abu Koash, an economic advisor to PLO Chairman Arafat during the Oslo negotiations, described the situation within the PLO in dramatic terms:

“We were ready to accept almost anything after we had to leave Lebanon and lost the support the Gulf monarchies after the Gulf War. The Islamic movement gained more and more supporters. If they [the Israelis] had not asked us...”³¹

Abu Koash argued that the PLO was losing its authority in the Occupied Territories and that the Islamists exploited its absence. Shortly after the signing of the Oslo Agreements and the historic meeting between Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin in September 1993 in Washington, the Islamic tide seemed to have come to a stop, as became evident in the first Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996 when Yasser Arafat was elected President with 87.1 percent of the votes.³²

The first part of this book involves evaluating the issue of democratic concepts such as elections and power sharing in the conflict between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. At first sight, to apply concepts such as democracy, elections and popular sovereignty might reflect a universalistic approach in analyzing the region. The approach applied in this paper attempts to reject a concept termed orientalism,³³ the reason being that it precludes the application of rationality and comparative judgment in regard to the evaluation of developments in Islamic societies.

³⁰ Ziad Abu Amr. *Islamic Fundamentalism in Gaza and the West Bank*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, p.59.

³¹ Interview with the author, 17 January 1996, Adam Hotel, Gaza.

³² S. Kanaana. "First Elections Called success." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 35 (24 January 1996), p. 1.

³³ E. Said. "Orientalism and After" (Interview). *Radical Philosophy*, 63 (Spring 1993).

The argument made by orientalist that the only way to understand the behavior and political process of Middle Eastern societies is through the analysis of 'Islam' is not valid in the contemporary context. The temptation to single out negative characteristics is often the result of a desire to justify, for example, the absence of democracy in Arab societies by referring to a unique set of conditions that only materialized in the Middle East. The approach applied in this paper attempts to replace this analytic relativism by a critical approach toward the actors covered by its scope.

Second, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was never just a limited regional conflict because of the involvement of the super powers and the pivotal role Palestine has played for three major religions. As an example, we may quote US-President Bush and his description of the Israeli-American alliance: "Our continuing search for peace in the Middle East begins with a recognition that ties uniting our two countries can never be broken."³⁴ The settlement of the conflict is subject not only to the goodwill of the people involved but also to mutual recognition between the states in the region and non-interference by foreign powers. The international dimension of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is symbolized by the noticeable intervention of UN peacekeeping troops in Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and the territories under Palestinian control and their efforts to preserve peace by attempting to protect the civilian population.

1.3 International Implications

The international community has been concerned with developments in the Middle East – at the core of which lies the Arab-Israeli conflict - since the earliest days of the founding of Israel. The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) came into being after fighting erupted between Israeli forces and neighboring Arab countries shortly after the founding of the State of Israel in 1949.

Since 1948, there have been five major wars³⁵ directly connected with the Arab-Israeli conflict. The longest military conflict between Israel and an Arab state was the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The earlier wars lasted three days or six days - 13 days in 1973 - but the military fighting

³⁴ Advertisement of the American Jewish Committee, *New York Times*, 7 April 1998, p. A19.

³⁵ The five major wars are as follows: The War of 1948, the 1956 invasion of the Sinai by French, British and Israeli troops, the June 1967 Six-Day War, the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. We will not count the War of Attrition between Israel and Egypt that followed the Six-Day War.

during the invasion of Lebanon, according to Arafat, lasted 88 days. The Israeli casualties reached unprecedented levels and the ongoing war of attrition in Southern Lebanon continues to result in a regular increase in the number of deaths. This is a high price to pay for an invasion that was supposed to do away with the state-like structures that the PLO had established over the years in Southern Lebanon. The ongoing warfare in Southern Lebanon makes the United Nations peacekeeping mission UNIFIL a critical witness to warlike activities.³⁶

The UN Security Council established UN missions with different objectives according to local conditions.³⁷ The first UN observer mission was created in 1948 in the context of the Arab-Israeli war but to enforce peace was not a part of its mandate; the first UN peacekeeping forces were established in 1956 in the context of the Suez Crisis, when the goal was to keep the Israeli and Egyptian forces apart by forming a buffer between them. The extent of the peacekeeping missions cannot be elaborated upon in any detail in this thesis. However, the frequency of the operations confirms the direct impact that any military conflict has on regional security.

The 1973 Yom Kippur War led, amongst other things, to the appearance of the 'oil weapon'. The oil producing Arab countries in the OPEC decided not to sell any more petrol to states that supported Israel, a decision that targeted Israel's Western supporters. The boycott had serious economic consequences for the Western economies as the recession in the 1970s illustrated. The 1973 Middle Eastern crisis showed once and for all that even distant economies were affected by the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict.

Following the cease-fire on 23 October 1973, the UN Security Council established a new peacekeeping force, the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF II). Again, the UN did not decide to intervene as a fighting force between the enemy armies. The ongoing Cold War and the American-Soviet rivalry for influence in the Middle East did not allow for such a move in the Security Council. Three of the UN operations established in

³⁶ Yasser Arafat. Interview by A. Gauhar. *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 2 (April 1986), pp. 399-401.

³⁷ For a review of the UN peace-keeping forces in the Middle East see the publication of the UN *Blue Helmets*, New York: United Nations, 1986 (3rd ed.), pp. 13-127. T. G. Weiss, *The United Nations and Civil Wars*. Boulder, Co., 1995, presents a critical assessment of the multifunctional second generation UN peace-keeping missions and the challenges that confront the UN in the future. Weiss demonstrates in particular the implications of the current US government's lack of leadership for UN action in civil wars. He laments the growing acceptance of the idea of military intervention only in the areas of interest for the major powers. Pp. 193-195.

the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict are still functioning today, namely, The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), an observer force on the Golan Heights, and The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), a peacekeeping operation in Southern Lebanon.

The third force, UNIFIL was established by Resolution 425 (1978) because of the first Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which began on 14/15 March 1978. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon has led to the creation of a continued peacekeeping mission in Lebanon that is active. The invasion was, according to the Israeli Government, in retaliation for a PLO commando raid on Tel Aviv that left 37 Israelis dead and 76 injured.³⁸ Indeed, the PLO had established a stronghold in Southern Lebanon from where the organization launched its attacks on Israel. Security Council Resolution 425 called for the respect of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon. Still, tension prevailed and in 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon again because of the assassination of an Israeli diplomat, for which the Israeli Government held the PLO responsible.

The goal of the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon was the elimination of the PLO in the southern part of the country. In the context of the continued military confrontation between Israeli forces and Palestinian guerilla fighters and later Hizbollah militants, UNIFIL was repeatedly exposed to direct shelling by Israeli and South Lebanon Army (SLA) forces.³⁹ The task of the UN peacekeeping force, namely, to protect the civilian population from the consequences of the warfare in Southern Lebanon, seems almost impossible to fulfill in light of the heavy fighting and the strategy of the guerrillas that involves using villages as shelters. In addition, UNIFIL cannot act as a peace enforcement unit since it still does not have the necessary forces to block any Israeli advance into Lebanon or prevent Hizbollah from attacking Israeli settlements. UNIFIL, in aspiring to fulfill its mandate, depends on the goodwill of the warring parties.

The UNIFIL area constitutes a 650-square-kilometer buffer between the opposing forces, divided into two parts, with about 15 kilometers between them. Israeli forces confronted Palestinian troops, the authority of the Lebanese Government having ceased to exist in Southern Lebanon. The so-called Israeli Security Zone in Southern Lebanon remains a war zone due to the attacks of the Iranian sponsored Hizbollah forces against Israeli

³⁸ *New York Times*, 19 April 1978, p. 24.

³⁹ United Nations. *Blue Helmets*. New York: UN Publications Services, 1996.

soldiers. The deeper cause of the conflict is once again rooted in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the state of war between Israel and Syria. Since Syria has roughly 30,000 troops in Lebanon and has de facto annexed the country,⁴⁰ it could control Southern Lebanon and stop the activities of Hizbollah, but it appears to be using the continued terror in Southern Lebanon to pressure Israel into renewing talks concerning the issue of the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights. In January 1996, negotiations were certainly underway between Syria and the former government of Yitzhak Rabin but they came to an end following the change of government in Israel in May 1996. The slowdown in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations had blocked once again any improvement in the diplomatic relations between Israel and Syria.

The continued intervention of foreign powers in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and in the emerging conflict between the Islamic resistance movement Hamas and the Palestinian Authority prevents a clear pattern of the conflict from emerging and makes it difficult to assign responsibilities to local actors. Indeed, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has never been simply an internal or regional affair. The interference of the superpowers - the US and, until its disintegration, the Soviet Union - prevented the regional actors from finding a local solution to the conflict since they were locked in the bipolar Cold War. In the words of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, the international implications of the Palestinians' situation are evident: "(...) we know that we are not dealing with a local problem; we are dealing with a problem of global implications."

The impact of the Cold War, the 1978-79 Iranian Revolution, the American-Israeli relationship and the legacy of Western colonialism and imperialism shaped the framework in which secular and religious Palestinians confront each other, while national politics and the attitudes of Arab governments toward Islamic fundamentalism shape the form of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians and also amongst Palestinians themselves. The conflict is far from being determined by external factors alone; regional crises in the Middle East frequently result from internal contradictions. The war that began in Lebanon in 1975, for example, was the terrible consequence of the long unresolved crisis that had gradually emerged within the country since it gained its independence from France in 1943. An initial attempt to modify the power-sharing national pact, the

⁴⁰ A senior member of the European diplomatic corps in Beirut considered the Syrian army forces in Lebanon occupation troops whose aim was to make sure that Lebanon would not continue to exist as an independent state. Author's conversation with a civil servant, confidential. Beirut, 16 July 1998.

base of the Lebanese State, had ended abruptly when America intervened in 1958 at the request of the Christian President Camille Chamoun. However, social change continued whilst the constitutional arrangements were prevented from changing.⁴¹ As a result of this intervention, the 1975 outburst was all the more violent.

Islam has also shaken the political foundations of neighboring Egypt, which plays a crucial role on the side of the PLO in the peace negotiations. Mubarak has displayed great skill in diffusing the protest of Islamists by allowing a secular opposition to voice complaints and to diffuse the tensions in the society. The incorporation of elements of the *Shari'a* in the Egyptian Constitution⁴² was a counterattack by an increasingly secular state, and reclaiming Islam helped to weaken the opposition of radical Islamists. As will be shown in the assessment of the PLO, the incorporation of references to Islam in the official PLO discourse reflects the increasing influence of Islamic movements but also reveals an attempt to reclaim the religious sphere from an exclusive radical Islamist movement.

Confronted by a powerful Egyptian government closely allied with the military, the radical Islamists such as Al-Jihad focus their attacks on Christian Copts, who form about ten percent of Egypt's population. The militant Islamic sects are wholly defined by their religious beliefs.⁴³ In the large Sunni Islamic community in Egypt, the radical sects form a minority that is attempting to conquer power and impose its ideas about Islam on a largely moderate Sunni population. The adaptation of a radical Islamist to the modern urban setting is remarkable - from the use of modern weapons and communications technologies to mass protest.

Until his death in 1999, King Hussein of Jordan adopted a more daring approach toward the Islamic challenge. The admission of the Muslim Brotherhood to multiparty elections in 1989 allowed the King to combine secularist and Islamist input in his state⁴⁴ and to control the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood after the bread riots in the late 1980s weakened his regime. Following the first multiparty elections in 1989, the Muslim

⁴¹ Fred Halliday. *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1996, p. 16-22.

⁴² Article 2 of the Egyptian Constitution of 1971 specifies that the *Shari'a* is the main source of legislation. See O. Roy. *The Failure of Political Islam*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994, p.127.

⁴³ T. R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p. 21.

⁴⁴ L. Sadiki. *Progress and Retrogression in Arab Democratization* Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), 1992, p. 6.

Brotherhood controlled a third of the seats in Parliament and five Islamists entered the Cabinet, although they won fewer seats in the 1993 parliamentary elections. Jordan, which provided until recently refuge to one of the key Hamas leaders, Khaled Masha'al, has displayed a far more open approach toward the Muslim Brotherhood than Syria, and the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood remains a challenge to Israel since the organization continues to act freely in Jordan.⁴⁵

The failed attempt to assassinate Khaled Masha'al damaged the relations between Jordan and Israel, which led to a temporary suspension of any cooperation between the two secret services. Political terrorism is a key problem of the Middle East and a challenge to its stability. The use of terror in the Middle East is not uncommon, but hardly anyone boasts of being a 'terrorist'. Indeed, the term terrorism or international terrorism is generally used in a political agenda. Terrorism is not the easy, bad-guy situation that allows for a clear-cut definition of the term. The following events will illustrate the complexity of the problem: In June 1914, a man kills the Archduke Franz-Ferdinand of Austria. Within weeks, World War I erupts. In August 1945, the first nuclear weapon is used and more than 190,000 Japanese die, most of whom were civilians. Which of these events can be qualified today as terrorism? Moreover, who is a terrorist? The suicide bomber, a member of the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua before it seized power, or a member of the Algerian FLN during the war of independence against French troops from 1954 to 1962? The point is, the rebel or guerrilla may be for one person a terrorist but for others someone who is fighting for freedom and liberation.

In practice, the term terrorist is frequently used today as a part of a political strategy to designate an act as criminal and to justify the very same act when the act is used in counterinsurgency measures taken by regular armed forces. To Israelis, the suicide bombers in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem and the Hizbollah in Southern Lebanon are terrorists; to the vast majority of Arabs, the Israeli Defense Force, the fully legitimate and uniformed Israeli army, acted like terrorists during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. The notion of terrorism contains in all cases two elements that distinguish it from other violent acts: terrorism aims at spreading terror and is directed primarily toward civilians.

⁴⁵ The young successor of King Hussein, King Abdallah changed recently his father's policy of tolerance in regard to the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas. He ordered two Hamas leaders - Khaled Masha'al and Ibrahim Ghosheh - to be arrested and expelled a third, Abu Marzouq. All three had been welcomed before by King Hussein. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 September 1999, p. 8.

Terrorist activities do not always have the desired outcome: The killing of Palestinian villages at Deir Yassin by Israelis fighting for the establishment of *their* country or the killing of Israeli athletes by Palestinians during the 1972 Olympic Games did not hamper political careers: Menachem Begin, former Israeli Prime Minister, and Yasser Arafat, not so long ago, were considered terrorists.⁴⁶ Terrorism has various causes and pursues different targets: Terrorizing populations, for example, to pressure governments to change a policy or simply as bloody revenge for a government's policy. Therefore, no single definition of terrorism has gained universal acceptance as the US Office of counter-terrorism admits.⁴⁷

In order to discuss the political nature of terrorism and its role in international relations, the definition used in the US Department of State report about terrorism is helpful. The report refers to Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f(d).⁴⁸ The Code represents a broad definition of terrorist activities and makes distinctions between national and international terrorism:

- The term 'terrorism' means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. Military personnel who are the time of the attack are not on duty or are unarmed are considered noncombatant.
- 'International terrorism' is simply defined as terrorism that involves citizens from more than one country. No links are established between foreign governments and terrorist groups.

The report concludes that in many countries active insurgency has a higher impact on the level of political violence than international terrorism. The report established however the link between local insurgencies and international terrorism. In the case of Colombia, the report mentions the presence of Hizbollah fighters and attempts to establish a link between their presence and an attack on the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires in July 1994 that killed nearly 100 persons and injured more than 200. Yet, the report is also eager to diffuse

⁴⁶"What is Terrorism?" *Economist*. March 1996, pp. 19-21.

⁴⁷*Report Patterns of Global Terrorism, 1994*. P. C. Wilcox, Jr, Coordinator for Counterterrorism US Department of State. Washington, DC, April 1995. (From the State Department gopher at <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/dosfan.html>). pp. 1-63.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 3.

any accusation that it may be selective or focus on one target group since the author notes that only a small group of radical people is devoted to terrorist activities. Furthermore, the report illustrates the distinction between various levels of political violence as a continuation of politics. In other words, not every attack will be qualified by *all* observers as terrorism but will be evaluated according to the ideological and political motivations of the actors. Terrorists try to implement their goals by the massive use of violence – violence and terror as a continuation or rather beginning of politics.

The dilemma that confronts the American lawmakers is evidently moral or to say it in their terms: “Civilized people everywhere are outraged by terrorist crimes. The scars are long-lasting, and there is no recompense for victims.”⁴⁹ Yet the report discriminates between violent actions and reveals the dilemma faced by authorities battling with guerrilla violence. Whereas the report for 1994 states that “on 9 October, Israeli Army Corporal Nachshon Wachsmann, while hitchhiking in central Israel, was kidnapped by Hamas terrorists”, the term ‘terrorist’ was initially not applied in the case of Baruch Goldstein who killed 29 worshippers at Hebron’s Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in February 1994. The report mentions only that “a member of the Jewish extremist group Kach attacked Palestinian worshippers (...)” before specifying the number of dead. The Israeli Cabinet outlawed the movement Kach only after this massacre. The affiliated group Kahane Chai was also declared to be a terrorist organization.⁵⁰ The report fails to mention that the radical Islamic movement Hamas launched its first suicide attacks only after the attack on the Hebron mosque.

The discussion about terrorism in politics suffers also from the double standard used for the evaluation of state-sponsored terrorism. The American Government accuses Libya, Iraq, and North Korea of sponsoring terrorism yet appears to turn a blind eye to massive undercover activities of various allies.⁵¹ Not all state-sponsored violence is equally criticized and the involvement of politics in the fight against terrorism explains the rather disconcerting results of counterinsurgency and traditional anti-terrorism measures.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-33. Melman, Y. reports, for example about the darkest secrets of the Israeli secret service and the counterinsurgency measures of Mossad. *New York Times*, 25 March 1998, p. 23.

Netanyahu's cabinet minister Ariel Sharon caused widespread uproar with the following comment on Israeli TV's Channel 2: "We will assassinate Mr. Masha'al in Amman." Never before had such a high-ranking cabinet member so publicly challenged Jordan and the Muslim militants. The Palestinian observer at the United Nations, Dr. Nasser Al-Qidwa, referred to Sharon's statement as "reckless" and accused Israel of promoting the idea of a 'Greater Israel' that might stretch from the Euphrates to the Nile. The systematic campaign to eliminate leaders of the PLO caused a crisis in the organization because there was soon a lack of qualified leaders.⁵²

In neighboring Syria, a city called Hama⁵³ was the traditional stronghold of the Muslim Brotherhood. When the forces of Hafez Al-Assad launched an attack by air and ground on Muslim militants in 1982 to put an end to the Islamist danger in Syria, the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, which in contrast to the Palestinian branch had used military force from its early beginning,⁵⁴ suffered a serious defeat and a major setback. In spite of the fact that an estimated 15,000 to 25,000 people were killed in the 1982 attack on Hama, it was hardly mentioned by the media, which was focusing on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. In the dictatorial regime of Al-Assad, the Muslim Brotherhood serves as a pretext to eliminate all opponents.⁵⁵ Al-Asad sticks to a policy that favors the Alawites, a minority sect, and their control of the political power. The continued terror in Syria may thus be an expression of external and/or internal forces. The Syrian Government quickly accused Israel of being responsible for an explosion at a bus station in Damascus in which 11 people were killed,

⁵² It is generally known that Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir ordered all terrorists involved in the massacre at the Munich Olympics to be killed, which resulted in the death of 11 members of the Black September group. In 1988, Abu Jihad, who was Arafat's deputy in the PLO was killed in Tunis. *New York Times*, 25 March 1988, p. 23. The leader of the Islamic Jihad, Fathi Shiqaqi, was killed in 1995 in Malta and Abbas Moussawi, the Secretary General of Hizbollah, in 1992 in Lebanon. The Israeli dilemma was that despite being a Western-style democracy, the Jewish State was challenged in a military way by a wide variety of terrorist acts but conducted in the 1970s and 1980s operations to kill Palestinian. The reaction to terror is a challenge to democracies: Germany and Italy were confronted by the Red Army Faction (RAF) and the Red Brigade respectively, and the terror led to the adoption of restrictive laws that endangered the basis of a liberal society. Even though the RAF disbanded itself in April 1998, terrorism rocked the German society in the late 1970s and early 1980s. *Boston Globe*, 20 May 1990, p. A15.

⁵³ Even if most buildings were reconstructed in the city center in July 1995, the damage at the centuries-old walls of the Museum of Hama was a constant reminder of the vigorous fighting that had taken place. Author's visit.

⁵⁴ In 1964, the Muslim Brotherhood launched a first uprising from its stronghold Hama but Syrian military forces subsequently crushed it. *Ibid.*; P. Seale, *Asad of Syria*, op.cit., pp. 92-94.

⁵⁵ Asad's brother, Rifa'at confirmed: "Celui qui n'est pas avec nous est avec les Frères musulmans" meaning 'the one who is not with us is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood'. In D. Le Gac, *La Syrie du Général Asad*. Paris: Editions Complexe, 1991, p. 120.

although it failed to present evidence to give credibility to its argument. Critics argue that the violent explosion could also have been the result in fighting between factions within the Syrian regime.⁵⁶

1.4 Strategies Deployed by the Actors for Articulating Their Grievances

Following his broad analysis of communal grievances, Gurr concluded⁵⁷ that two major dynamics generally drive the political grievances of minorities. First, political and economic disadvantages push minorities to seek better access to the political system and greater economic opportunities. Second, they challenge the system by attempting to modify the distribution of wealth.

The Shi'ite community in Lebanon fits in with the theoretical analysis of the author. Rapid population growth and ecological stress contribute to the redressing of grievances in the system and secondarily, in the Middle East, to demands for autonomy. The Shi'ite community in Lebanon was an integrated part of the Lebanese society that grew from accounting for 17 percent of the population during the French Mandate period to becoming the largest community in the 1980s. Their quest for a fair share of power was stimulated by the Iranian revolution, and the Shi'ites now have an increasing chance of obtaining a fair share of the national wealth and power, assuming that they accept the idea of a united Lebanon under Syrian control.

In principle, members of aggrieved communities have three choices when it comes to expressing their complaints. In the words of Alfred Hirschman,⁵⁸ it sounds simple: exit, voice, and loyalty. The fight of the Lebanese Shi'ites for a larger share of power is the equivalent of 'voice' and the desire for more autonomy represents the equivalent of 'exit', the withdrawal from the national community. Because of their sheer size, the Lebanese Shi'ites have a better chance of gaining a larger share of the power than the Israeli Palestinians can gain and they cannot be ignored numerically without challenging the foundations of the regime. Due to their rapidly increasing number, the Lebanese Shi'ites have no longer

⁵⁶ *New York Times*, 8 January 1997, p. 15.

⁵⁷ T. R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p.88.

⁵⁸ A. E. Hirschman. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Response to Decline in Firms: Organizations and State*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970, pp. 55-58.

accepted their exclusion from power. Palestinians also aspire to establish their own national structure and state. The future of the Palestinian Authority will also be decided by the way that the government will realize the Palestinian national aspirations. In other words: Arafat will have to reconcile his ambition to build a Palestinian state with a continued affirmation of his legitimate place in the emerging institutions.

Therefore, the Palestinian Authority with Yasser Arafat at its head has today reached a crossroads, which may result in a confrontation with the radical fundamentalists in the territories under its control. The recent American package deal presented in London to Arafat and Prime Minister Netanyahu is clear; the United States calls for a phased Israeli withdrawal from 13 percent of the West Bank in exchange for increased Palestinian efforts to crack down on Islamist activists.⁵⁹ Any further territorial concessions are linked to Yasser Arafat making a declaration in which he vows to abstain from declaring an independent Palestinian state.

Any agreement between the two politicians will probably provoke a confrontation with the Islamist movement in the territories. As long as the Likud government links a continuation of the peace process to its demand for almost absolute security in Israel, the radical Islamic movements will continue to hinder the peace process. A commitment by Israeli and Palestinian leaders to continue with the peace process could put an end to the cycle of violence as happened in the civil war in Northern Ireland, where IRA splinter groups that carried out two massive terror attacks were unable to put the agreement between the warring parties into question. Indeed, the Irish population condemned the two bombings by IRA activists who tried to derail the peace agreement signed on Good Friday in 1997. Hamas could try to continue to challenge Arafat's authority by raising its 'voice' by organizing a continued street protest. The military option could enable Hamas to 'exit' Arafat's sphere of authority, but should the organization opt for 'exit', it would find itself facing a huge dilemma and any violent confrontation with the Palestinian Authority would be doomed to failure. Even if Hamas opts for such a confrontation instead of a forced 'loyalty' to the Palestinian Authority, Israel will keep its army stand idly by, ready to intervene after a possible failure of the Palestinian Authority to put an end to the radical militant movement.

In order not to risk losing the support of the majority of Palestinians, the Palestinian Authority will have to justify any military action against the

⁵⁹ *Financial Times*, 6 May 1998, p. 1.

militant Hamas networks. To counterbalance the likelihood that any action of Hamas may serve Israel's purpose, the Palestinian Authority should explain the gains that could justify any suppression of Hamas. The current discussion between Israel and the Palestinian Authority about a nine or 13 percent withdrawal of Israeli forces from the West Bank may eventually not be sufficient to satisfy Palestinian claims for more autonomy, and Arafat may lose the 'loyalty' of the Palestinians as a result of insufficient Israeli concessions. His position could be further weakened while a civil war could challenge his authority and plunge the Occupied Territories into chaos, resulting in the likely intervention of neighboring Arab states. The strategies of the actors are certainly bound to the narrow limits of 'exit, voice and loyalty'. Hamas, for example, will lose a chance to confirm its legitimacy if the movement continues to refuse to run in general elections and opts instead to exit from the electoral competition. In other words, if Hamas is unable to rally a majority of Palestinians behind its rejection of the negotiations between the Palestinian Authority and the Israelis, it will fail. The movement might not choose the 'exit' option but attempt to reach an understanding with the Authority to avoid further alienation with the Palestinian people and the elected authorities.

1.5 The Actors

1.5.1 *The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)*

The realistic approach of the PLO was slow in developing, and for a long time, the umbrella organization that regrouped leftist groups such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the secular Fateh movement kept a revolutionary profile. Since its founding in 1964, the PLO had gained its historic legitimacy by pursuing the military option to liberate Palestine. The PLO proved itself in international relations during the 1970s. After the Camp David agreements, the PLO was gradually recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.⁶⁰ Former German Chancellor Willy Brandt and the Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky issued statements in 1979, calling for an inclusion of the PLO in Middle East peace talks. Moreover, the European Council started to support the claims of the Palestinians with a declaration at the 1980 Venice summit, which recognized the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. The

⁶⁰ M. Tessler. *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 535.

picture that the PLO had drawn was, however, far from perfect. Bloody attacks on Israeli civilian targets such as the massacre of the Israeli Olympic team in Munich in 1972 and the Ma'alot massacres were not helpful in promoting the Palestinian issue in international relations: As a result of the PLO military campaigns, Palestinians were generally considered terrorists with no exceptions. Yasser Arafat summarized the image problem of the Palestinians:

"You have the Red Brigade in Italy, the Baader-Meinhoff Gang in Germany, the Red Army in Japan but that does not make all Italians, Germans and Japanese terrorists. It is only the Palestinians who are terrorists without exception."⁶¹

Palestinians did not appear for a long time as an ordinary national minority that aspires to a state.

The organizational structure of the PLO needed to accommodate various different components of the Palestinian movements. In 1965, the PLO was simply a creation of the neighboring Arab countries to promote the Palestinian cause, and there were some 40 other organizations that claimed to represent the Palestinian people. The PLO gained a new standing in international relations when Yasser Arafat was selected as chairman of the organization in 1968. Initially the Arab states used the Palestinian issue in the first years of the PLO for domestic purposes. Arafat's attempt to promote an independent Palestinian policy was opposed by Syria and Libya, which, in 1983, launched an attack on Arafat's leadership.⁶² The fact that Arafat tried to promote the interests of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories and the refugee camps deprived Arab countries of the opportunity to manipulate these interests to their own benefit. Arafat succeeded, but only very slowly, in affirming the independent political interests of the Palestinians. The organization structure of the PLO was refined over the years by elaborating the Palestinian Charter and the Basic Law that transformed the PLO into a model government for a future independent state.⁶³ The Palestinian Charter and the Basic Law were revised during a meeting of the Palestinian National Council in Cairo in 1968 and later upon Israel's request in 1998 to adjust

⁶¹ Yasser Arafat declared in an interview made by A. Gauhar, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 2 (April 1986), pp. 404-405.

⁶² F. Halliday. *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation*. London: I. B. Tauris, 1995, pp. 32-35.

⁶³ S. F. Mussallam. Document "Les structures de l'OLP." *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, no. 21 (Spring 1986), pp. 79-115.

it to the requirements of the Oslo Agreement. The state-structure that the PLO developed before the 1993 Oslo Accord was based on the following key elements:⁶⁴

- The Palestinian National Council (PNC): Official body charged with the legislative function. Article 7A defined the PNC and Article 5 stipulates that the members of the PNC are elected in direct elections, although the existence of the Palestinian Diaspora made this difficult. In the Palestinian National Council, the representatives of political-military organizations, the mass organizations, the national liberation army and the representatives of the Palestinian communities in the refugee camps were gathered under one umbrella. The following distribution of seats was calculated on the basis of the 17th PNC in Amman:
 - 1) The political-military organizations: Arafat's FATEH (33), Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, FPLP (12), Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, DFLP (10), SAIQA (12), Armed Liberation Front, FLA, (8), others (8). These political organizations control nominally about 19.3% of all seats.
 - 2) The mass organizations such as trade unions and associations, be they grassroots organizations or official ones: 112 members.
 - 3) The largest group of the PNC is represented by 191 members, who represent the Palestinians living abroad (44 percent of all members). The refugees in Egypt (5), Gulf countries (24), Jordan (27), Lebanon (12), Saudi Arabia (6), and Syria (9), as well as the Bedouin tribes and major Palestinian personalities, are represented with 83 seats.
 - 4) The Palestinian National Liberation Army (PLA) accounts for 44 seats or 10.2 percent.

In addition, 188 seats of the PNC are reserved for the representatives of the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ We refer to the presentation given by S. F. Mussallam in "Les structures de l'OLP." *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, no. 21 (Spring 1986), pp. 83-99. All references to the Charter and the Fundamental Law of the PLO refer to the text published by the PLO in January 1979.

⁶⁵ "The Palestinian National Covenant." Special Supplement in *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 36 (2 February 1996), pp. 17- 24.

- The political structure of the PLO should represent the whole spectrum of the Palestinian society in the Occupied territories and the Diaspora. The Charter also stipulates that the executive and legislative power must be separated. From 1964 to 1967, when Ahmed Shuqeiri was the President of the Executive Committee and the President of the PNC, this was not the case. The Executive Committee of the PLO: According to Articles 13 and 15 of the Fundamental Law, the PNC elects the Executive Committee, which is responsible before the PNC. Article 15 limits the number of Executive Committee members to 15. The Executive Committee is in charge of the executive decisions that are taken in other countries by the government. The Executive Committee is certainly responsible in front of the PNC but there are no mechanisms to enforce such a rule. The president of the Executive Committee, albeit elected, also controls the Palestinian National Fund, which was created according to Article 24 of the Fundamental Law by the first PNC. Therefore, the Executive Committee of the PLO enjoys a unique situation of bureaucratic autonomy.⁶⁶ It enjoys structural autonomy - for example, there is no competing level of political supervision - and financial autonomy - for example, the continued support of the oil monarchies until Arafat's support of Saddam Hussein, granted the Committee financial autonomy. Finally, the President of the Executive Committee - since 1968 Yasser Arafat - enjoys legal autonomy since he can make decisions that will modify the constitutions of the Palestinian society.

Such a large bureaucratic autonomy of the Executive Committee of the PLO has never been without risks and the conduct of the PLO and its various factions has been subject to criticism by PLO followers and supporters as well as by the Palestinian public in general.⁶⁷

Various modified articles of the Fundamental Law and the Charter reflect the fact that the Palestinians were aware of the problems created by an insufficient separation between the executive and legislative bodies of the PLO. During the 1970s, the powerful Executive Committee resisted changes and modifications to the PLO's strategy that would make the

⁶⁶ Bureaucratic autonomy is defined as the formal exemption of an agency head from full political supervision by a minister. J. Christensen. "Bureaucratic Autonomy as a Political Asset." Paper presented at the workshop Politicians, bureaucrats and institutional reform, ECPR Joint Sessions Workshops, Mannheim, 26-31 March 1999, p. 9

⁶⁷ Z. Abu Amr. *Emerging Trends in Palestinian Strategic Political Thinking and Practice*. Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1992, pp. 35-37.

executive more accountable, introducing some checks and balances into the PLO hierarchy.⁶⁸

Arafat wasted an opportunity to gain early diplomatic recognition when he maintained his warlord appearance at the General Assembly meeting in 1974 where, although a guest of the Assembly, he addressed it with a pistol clearly visible at his side. The PLO had fixed its absolutist strategy and aims in the National Covenant⁶⁹, which is the basic outline of its principles and political targets.

The 1968 National Covenant calls in Article 15 for the elimination of Zionism and for the elimination of Israel, which is qualified as a constant threat to the Middle East and the whole world in article 22.⁷⁰ The rejection of Israel's right to exist is spelled out in Article 19. The long refusal by the PLO to rewrite the National Covenant and to delete the articles calling for the destruction of Israel were serious obstacles to any negotiation between Israelis and Palestinians. Under the Oslo Agreement of September 1995, the Palestinian President is obliged to change the National Covenant, which the Israeli press refers to simply as 'Covenant' to avoid the term national, within two months of convening the newly elected Palestinian Council.

The defeat in Jordan, the 'Black September' of 1970, and the subsequent departure from Jordan to Lebanon did not yet destroy Fateh's hopes of regaining Palestine by force. However, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the encircling of the PLO in Beirut brought an end to the territorial base of the PLO in the Middle East. Deprived of its solid Arab backing,⁷¹ the PLO had to move its headquarters to Tunisia where Arafat narrowly escaped an Israeli air attack in 1985.⁷² A terror attack on the Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro*, carried out by the Palestinian faction led by Abu'l Abbas on 9 October 1985, resulted in the killing of the disabled American Jew Leon Klinghoffer and angry condemnations by a vast number of countries including Egypt and other Arab states.

⁶⁸ S. F. Mussallam in "Les structures de l'OLP." *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, no. 21 (Spring 1986), p. 85.

⁶⁹ "The Palestinian National Covenant." Special Supplement in *Palestine Report*, op.cit., pp. 17-24.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-21.

⁷¹ Syria supported the Fateh dissidents Abu Nidal and Abu Musa in their war with Arafat. P. Seale. *Asad of Syria*, op.cit., p. 436.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 472.

The PLO, which was founded in Jordan by Arab states in 1964 and gained its independence in 1968 when Yasser Arafat took control of the umbrella organization, would not have gained anything from a prolonged violent confrontation with Israel, especially following the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Palestinians welcomed the 1990 initiative of US Secretary of State James Baker. The subsequent Palestinian elections gave the PLO a new form of legitimacy, and Arafat, his popular support now confirmed, was thus able to receive jointly with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres the Nobel Peace Prize for the Oslo Agreement.

Following the *Intifada*, civil society issues became more important among Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and the PLO seemed to lose control of the West Bank and Gaza, where the freedom of the press and human rights became major concerns of the local population. Today, two NGOs in Gaza and Ramallah monitor the violations of human rights by the Palestinian Authority, namely, Al-Haq in Ramallah and The Palestinian Center for Human Rights in Gaza. The Palestinian Authority has yet to accept the existence of these organizations as independent units. The director of The Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Raji Sourani, has experienced the harsh security measures often taken by the Palestinian Authority. He confirms that the Palestinian Authority does not appreciate critical comments: "I was interrogated several times by the security forces of the Palestinian Authority because we did not agree with the treatment of prisoners and the interference of Arafat in the election campaign."⁷³

As surprising as it may sound, the Palestinians had the opportunity to develop these civil associations under Israeli occupation. Israel established the Civil Administration in 1981, thereby introducing a differentiation between pure military operations and the administration of the population living in the Occupied Territories. However, the Civil Administration remained subordinated to the Israeli Military Command, which preserved all its legislative and judicial powers.⁷⁴ Consequently, Palestinians in the Occupied Territories did not experience Israeli democracy, only the effects of living under an occupying power. They certainly noticed that while the leaders of Israel and neighboring states altered regularly, the same could not be said of the Palestinian leadership.

⁷³ Interview with the author, January 1996.

⁷⁴ *PASSIA Agenda 1996*. Jerusalem: PASSIA, p. 196.

An Israeli-Palestinian student praised the advantages of Israeli democracy as follows:

“Israel is a democracy and the leaders change. Here, I can study and I can say what I think even if we live apart from the Jews. No one will arrest me if I criticize the government. Yes, many things are bad here but I can still speak up.”⁷⁵

Other Palestinians with a more negative attitude toward Israeli democracy argue that the Israeli elections do not change anything in their daily life. Complained Lutfi Abu Omar⁷⁶ in his small shop in East Jerusalem: “Nothing is changing for us. We still cannot travel around our country. They have already come to me so often, so I won’t speak anymore. I am a photographer and I continue to do my work.” Lutfi rejects both the rule of the current Palestinian leadership and the Israeli occupation without being able to present any alternative solution. Somewhat surprisingly, he even denies that Palestinians established grassroots organizations during the Israeli occupation.

In fact, Palestinians in the Occupied Territories developed a network of professional organizations⁷⁷ following the War of 1967 that were to become the arena for competitive elections with Hamas. In 1972, for example, at the tenth meeting of the Palestinian National Council, the PLO promoted with an ever-increasing effort the creation of labor associations for Palestinians. The PLO had realized that it was necessary to provide assistance and organizational help to the emerging labor movement.

The existing tensions between the PLO leadership and the Palestinian notables living in close contact with the Israeli occupation forces could otherwise have increased. The PLO frequently accused local notables of being too cooperative with the Israeli military authorities. Indeed, the local notables often tried to improve the living conditions of the Palestinians and had to manage daily affairs. Such tasks were different from the long-term goals of the PLO to fight and destroy Israel. Therefore, the strategy of the national liberation movement, the PLO was set to collide slowly

⁷⁵ Author’s conversations with Palestinian students at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Mount Scopus, academic year of 1994, and 28 June 1997.

⁷⁶ Author’s meetings with Lutfi Abu Omar who claimed he was beaten up by Palestinian security forces in East Jerusalem and harassed by the Israeli military, June 1995.

⁷⁷ Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Nablus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Palestinian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

with the more pragmatic outlook of the local Palestinian notables.⁷⁸ Indeed, the 1967 Arab defeat and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by the Israeli army caused a profound change in the sociological structure of the West Bank and Gaza.

The growing rift between notables and the militant PLO leadership soon emerged. Israel had succeeded in attracting Palestinian laborers to their fields and factories and Palestinians found obtaining a work permit in order to work in Israeli factories or agricultural production units very lucrative.

The PLO realized that it would lose more influence in the Occupied Territories if the organization's strategy was not changed. The Israelis pushed forward with the creation of universities, for example, Birzeit University in 1972 and An-Najah University in 1977. The main student body soon became leftist and, in the case of Birzeit, became pro-Fateh to support Yasser Arafat's faction in the PLO. The student body was a potential protest group that the PLO could not ignore. The challengers of Arafat were members of a new elite, which included, for example, the mayors of Nablus, Bassam Ash-Shaqa'a, and of Ramallah, Karim Khalaf.⁷⁹

In elections for chambers of commerce, professional associations, and student councils, the PLO obtained the majority of votes whereas Hamas averaged between 35 and 45 percent. Whereas the mayors were the new Palestinian elite following the 1967 Israeli military victory in the Six-Day War, Hamas was to emerge as *the* new leadership of the Palestinians during the *Intifada*.⁸⁰ The Muslim Brotherhood had used defeat in 1967 and later in 1973 to try to develop the religious consciousness of the Palestinians. The War of 1973 also marked a change of strategy for the PLO, when the organization opted more and more for diplomatic and political decisions to improve the destiny of the Palestinians. The guerrilla warfare against the Israelis was clearly not leading to the declared goal of establishing a Palestinian State by conquering Israel,⁸¹ and the absence of the PLO from Israel including the Occupied Territories and the subsequent odyssey from Jordan via Beirut to Tunis was seen as a welcome opportu-

⁷⁸ Ibid. Frisch, "From Armed Struggle over State Borders to Political Mobilization and Intifada Within it: The Transformation of PLO Strategy in the Territories." *Plural Societies*, XIX, no. 2 & 3. (March 1990), p. 102.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 97-103.

⁸⁰ Z. Abu Amr. *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), p.86.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 13.

nity by the Islamic movements. The inability of the PLO to deliver on its promises of a return to Palestine stimulated the emergence of an alternative solution to the secular movement. The Islamic movement in the Middle East and beyond tried to modify the internal power structure in Palestinian society after the PLO's exodus from Beirut. The Islamic movement received ideological support from the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The Muslim Brotherhood could from now expand its role in Palestinian society. The *Intifada* had been its first opportunity to test and refine this new strategy.

The Islamic militants used the ideological vacuum that had been created by the expulsion of the PLO from the Middle East after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, but Arafat's return to Gaza in the aftermath of the signing of the Oslo Agreement challenged the leadership role the Islamic activists had established there. Confrontations between Islamic militants and forces of the secular Palestinian Authority soon led to killings⁸² and to violent incidents. The Oslo peace process had slowed down the fight of the Islamic movement for an Islamic state that had begun during the *Intifada*. Hamas had to challenge the authority of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat with a series of suicide attacks in order to stall the peace process: The messages that Hamas tried to send seemed to have the right effect, since peace appeared impossible without the cooperation of the Islamic militants. When, shortly after his return to Palestine, Arafat decided to limit the activities of the Islamic movement, like on 18 November 1994 in Gaza, he risked a civil war. That day, a confrontation between Arafat's police and Hamas followers resulted in the death of 16 people and more than 200 people being injured. The violent clash between Hamas and the PLO broke a silent agreement between the two movements not to engage in a direct violent confrontation. Could this have been an attempt by Hamas to demonstrate that no Israeli-Palestinian arrangement can be secured in the long term if the movement's aspirations are, if not met, at least considered and taken more seriously? Hamas succeeded, if not in interrupting permanently then at least in slowing down significantly the speed of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The Islamic Resistance Movement by no means could replace Arafat as *the* Palestinian leader.⁸³

⁸² Policemen of the Palestinian Authority killed Ahmed Araj and Ayman Razayneh, two Islamic Jihad activists. *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 38 (16 February 1996), Jerusalem.

⁸³ Z. Abu-Amr. "Palestine's Islamic Alternative." *Middle East Insight*, (January-February 1995), pp. 12-14.

The diversity of the Islamic movement allows such speculations, but they are not supported - until recently - by the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood in the neighboring states such as Jordan.⁸⁴ Therefore, the emerging Palestinian Authority was challenged not simply by the emerging Islamic movement in the West Bank and Gaza but also by the Israeli government of Binyamin Netanyahu.

The hard-line tactics of Netanyahu resulted, if not in an interruption, in at least a stop-and-go negotiation process that did not advance after Netanyahu was elected in May 1996. Instead of ending in a direct arrangement with the Palestinians, the negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis were increasingly managed by the Clinton Presidency and special envoys such as Dennis Ross. Foreign governments such as the British or the European Union attempted to mediate and to bring Palestinians and Israelis back to the negotiations.⁸⁵ Since then the American administration has more frequently supported the Palestinian cause than in the past and joined the negotiations as an active negotiation partner along with Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority.⁸⁶ Israel is currently not negotiating directly with the Palestinians but with the United States, acting on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, whose standing in international affairs has improved considerably. An Israeli researcher has evaluated the change as follows: "It is revolutionary, when you think how far we've come from the traditional perception of the United States and Israel versus the Arabs."⁸⁷

By supporting a dialogue with the Palestinian Authority, the American administration reinforced Yasser Arafat's government, which was weakened by Netanyahu's initial refusal to withdraw more Israeli troops from the West Bank. The continued American backing of Arafat's Palestinian Authority poses a challenge to the Islamic resistance movement since Arafat can benefit from American logistics. The Authority's security forces are now trained by the United States⁸⁸ and may be more willing

⁸⁴ R. P. Mottahedeh and M. Fandy. "The Islamic Movement: The Case for Democratic Inclusion." In *Persian Gulf at the Millennium*. G. S. Sick and L. G. Potter. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.

⁸⁵ J. Bushinski. "EU Hopes to Ease Golan Vote Flat." *Jerusalem Post*, 25 July 1997, p. 1. The European peace envoy Miguel Moratinos attempted to advance the Israeli-Syrian peace talks. On the other hand, the British government offered Israelis and Palestinians the opportunity to meet in London to discuss ways to overcome the stalemate. Greenberg, J. "Albright to See Netanyahu and Arafat in London." *New York Times*, 21 April 1998, p. A3.

⁸⁶ *New York Times*, 7 May 1998, p. A1 & A8.

⁸⁷ Researcher M. Heller, Jaffee Institute for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, in the *New York Times*, 7 May 1998, p. A8.

⁸⁸ *New York Times*, 2 April 1998, p. A10.

than before to confront the Islamic resistance movement to guarantee American support.

Critics of the Israeli hard-liners argue that the shifting alliances of the American administration reflect the failure of Netanyahu's policies.⁸⁹ Whereas Netanyahu attempted in May 1996 to avoid seeking American support for the arranging of a meeting with Yasser Arafat, the Israeli Prime Minister felt compelled to ask for American mediation in the wake of the riots of September 1996 that followed the opening of a tunnel that runs alongside Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Will Netanyahu's policies bring the results he desired? Nothing is less certain. A petition signed by 81 US senators concerning a further Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank may put further pressure on the President; the senators did not want the Clinton administration to announce any proposal that might push Netanyahu to concede to a further withdrawal from the West Bank.⁹⁰ Clinton has certainly been confronted by internal scandals and there is a real danger that Netanyahu may indeed lose the critical support of the American administration.

The First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton has recently expressed her public support for the creation of a Palestinian state "that has the responsibility for providing education, healthcare and economic opportunity to its citizens."⁹¹ It is remarkable that such proposals referring to a Palestinian state - be it an independent entity or part of a federation with Jordan⁹² - are today being made.⁹³ The emergence of a Palestinian state is today more and more certain. What is more surprising, is the fact that the Palestinian society has witnessed the development of grassroots organizations that favor the concept of an Anglo-Saxon-style civil society with independent non-governmental groups.

⁸⁹ M. Heller, Jaffee Institute for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University. *New York Times*, 7 May 1998, p. A8.

⁹⁰ *New York Times*, 7 May 1998, p. A8.

⁹¹ *New York Times*, 7 May 1998, p. A8.

⁹² *Jerusalem Post*, 23 February 1996, p. 2. Following his election as president of the left-wing party Meretz, the Israeli Minister of Environment, Yossi Sarid said to Nabil Sha'ath, a member of the Palestinian Authority: "The next time when we meet, you will be a representative of an independent Palestinian state." *Jerusalem Post*, 23 February 1995. General (Retired) Shlomo Gazit wrote: "To say now following Oslo following the handshake (...) all of sudden again we say, there is no Palestinian political entity - forget about it. No Israeli can say it anymore."

⁹³ *New York Times*, 7 May 1998, p. A8.

Even if the above is not the official White House position, the change in the American policy toward Israel is noticeable. In 1995, the American President had sided with the Israeli Government and said that Jerusalem "is the eternal capital of Israel and I believe in the principle of moving our embassy to Jerusalem."⁹⁴ Today, a confrontation between President Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu overshadows the bilateral relations. However, this may be the price to pay in order to bring the Likud back to the peace track and to push forward with a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.⁹⁵

Former Prime Minister Shimon Peres went further with his declarations. Peres admitted that he had proposed to the Palestinian leader the creation of an independent state in Gaza and later in the West Bank⁹⁶ with the approval of the late Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, but that Arafat had hesitated in responding. There is a very good chance that the Palestinian President now regrets his second thoughts.

Arafat could benefit from confrontation between Netanyahu and the American administration since because the US-Israeli clash could undermine the strategic alliance between the United States and the Jewish State. Certainly, the image of the Palestinian leader might improve in the wake of public accusations involving Netanyahu. However, the Islamic resistance movement would be less at ease in making accusations concerning a collusion of interests between the United States and Israel. Instead of preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state, Netanyahu may actually push the Palestinians to reach this goal. What will be the reaction of the Islamic fundamentalists to a Palestinian state?

1.5.2 *Hamas - Islam as a Constitution*

The Islamic fundamentalists have conquered since the War of 1967 a key position among Palestinians and they cannot be simply ignored in a settlement of the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The mother organization of the Muslim Brotherhood was established in March 1928 in Ismailiyya in Egypt by Hassan Al-Banna and the organization intended to establish an Islamic regime long before it became one of the largest po-

⁹⁴ D. Neff. "Clinton Places US Policy at Israel's Bidding." *Middle East International*, 31 March 1995, pp.15-16.

⁹⁵ *New York Times*, 19 August 1998, Section A, p.13.

⁹⁶ WGBH, Boston's news station: Prime Minister Shimon Peres, 12 May 1998, 11:50 p.m.

litical parties in Egypt⁹⁷ Fundamentalists entered Israel during the War of 1948 and fought with volunteers at the side of the Arab armies against Israeli troops. However, the Muslim Brotherhood did not get involved in violence against Israel until the Palestinian uprising of 1987, when the *Intifada* witnessed the rise of Hamas, the acronym for *Harakat Al-Muqawama Al-Islamiyya*, 'the Islamic Resistance Movement'. Hamas was determined to remain independent of the secular PLO when Arafat established the Unified Leadership in an attempt to control the Palestinian uprising.

Hamas was created to fight the Israeli occupation forces in the West Bank, and a propaganda war between the militant wing of the Muslim Brotherhood and the PLO soon followed, with Arafat's Palestinians accusing Israel of having established Hamas in order to destroy the PLO's control over the Occupied Territories. Economic advisor to Yasser Arafat during the Oslo negotiations, Dr. Mohammed Abu Koash linked the Hamas movement and Israel:⁹⁸ "The Israelis established the Hamas movement to compete with us... but it got too influential. Finally, they could choose either Hamas or us for negotiations, and they chose us."

There is no doubt that the alleged Israeli sponsorship of the Hamas movement has caused a deep-seated love-hate relationship between Hamas and the PLO. Israel eventually opted for the rival, the PLO, when it seemed to be losing its grip of the territories. The challenge posed by the Islamic militants to the secular PLO continued and 30 to 50 percent of the Palestinians are said to nowadays be supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood.⁹⁹ This minority support explains the opposition the Islamic resistance movement has shown to any settlement with Israel within the Oslo framework: such a settlement would exclude Hamas from power.

The conflicting messages Hamas has sent to the negotiators could be one reason for the potential exclusion. The organization of Hamas is far from centralized, and the declarations of the movement's several spokespersons are often contradictory. The foreign-based military and political leadership has frequently proposed a more radical approach to negotiations with Israel or the PLO than local leaders. Clearly, the patience of the Islamic movement may have limits. Hamas spokesperson Ibrahim Ghosheh said that Hamas could not wait indefinitely to come to an ar-

⁹⁷ Abu Amr. *Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, op.cit., p.1.

⁹⁸ Interview with the author on 17 January 1996 in Gaza.

⁹⁹ Abu Amr. *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, op.cit., p.17.

rangement with the PLO. On the other hand, the West Bank-based Hamas spokesperson, Sheikh Jamil Hamami spoke instead in favor of continued negotiations with the Palestinian Authority.¹⁰⁰ Since Hamas operates in autonomous cells across the West Bank and Gaza, the strategic announcement of one cell to freeze suicide attacks could result, for example, in suicide attacks by another cell. Hamas, which emerged in an active confrontation with the Israelis, may lose its popularity in a more settled negotiation with Israel.

The Muslim Brotherhood's participation in the *Intifada* propelled its spiritual leader Sheikh Yassin into the spotlight. Israel recently released the semi-paralyzed sheikh from prison upon the request of King Hussein of Jordan as part of an Israeli-Jordanian deal, reached in the aftermath of the attempted assassination of Hamas member Khaled Masha'al in Amman.¹⁰¹

Israeli miscalculations have made it easier for Hamas to pursue a hard-line strategy and for the Hamas spokesperson in Gaza, Mahmoud Zahhar, to promote confrontation with Israel. As a protest movement without governmental responsibilities, Hamas is free of any accountability, and it is certainly easier to criticize established structures and institutions than set up better ones. Zahhar declared that the *Jihad* (Holy War) could only be interrupted temporarily but not abandoned until Israel is destroyed¹⁰² and said that he supported new terror attacks against Israel. He reaffirmed Hamas' commitment to continuing to work in the social field and to expanding the Islamic welfare system, which allows the movement to gain continued popular support. The radical representatives of the Islamic movement are a pretext for Israeli right-wing politicians to refuse further territorial concessions. In short, a vicious circle has been created that can only be broken by security and American mediation guarantees.

The Palestinian Authority is well aware of the destructive impact the Islamic movements have on the negotiations with Israel, which is one of the reasons why it called for them to disarm.¹⁰³ So far, the deadlines have passed without the call having had any impact. The flow of arms into the territories under Palestinian control has not been interrupted, as the con-

¹⁰⁰ *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 24 (10 November 1995), p. 11.

¹⁰¹ *New York Times*, 28 December 1998, p. 1.

¹⁰² "Zahhar: Hamas Hasn't Abandoned Its War." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 38 (16 February 1996), p.5.

¹⁰³ "Arafat order Militants to Give up Arms." *International Herald Tribune*, 29 February 1996, p. 1.

tinued terrorist attacks against Israelis illustrate. The demonstrations involving armed Hamas supporters in the territories under Arafat's control constitute one reason why the United States has urged the Palestinian Authority to curb the attacks by Islamic militants.¹⁰⁴ Will the PLO have to confront Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood to confirm Arafat's supremacy?

Hamas and the PLO had initially adopted a strategy of cooperation. The reason was simple: neither Hamas nor the PLO was prepared to decide on a military confrontation. The issue is to what extent can the Palestinian Authority accept Hamas continuing to act freely under its rule and undermining its authority? Prior to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, there were no suicide attacks by Hamas militants, and the recent American package¹⁰⁵ has linked an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank to increased Palestinian efforts to fight Islamic terrorism, with the Palestinian Authority being called upon to show that the PLO and Hamas are far from being two sides of the same coin. The Islamic and the secular Palestinian movements are antagonistic movements that will clash eventually as happened before in Syria, Egypt or more recently in Turkey. In the case of the Palestinian society, the disunion of the Islamic movement and its confrontation with the secular PLO further weakened the Palestinian opposition to the Israeli occupation.

1.5.3 *The Islamic Jihad and Minor Islamic Movements*

The radical Islamic Jihad, an offspring of the Muslim Brotherhood, perceived the activities of the Brotherhood as too conservative and is yet another opponent to any peaceful understanding with Israel. Although the Iranian Revolution of 1979 motivated Islamic radicals to establish the movement, 1980 is considered the official date of its founding by two radicals from Gaza, Fathi Ash-Shiqaqi and Abdul Aziz Aweidah. The leaders of the Jihad came from a younger generation of men in their thirties and forties and they were soon joined by PLO members and followers

¹⁰⁴ *Financial Times*, 6 May 1998, p. 1.

¹⁰⁵ The American package presented at a meeting in London on 6 May 1998 called for a phased Israeli withdrawal from 13 percent of the West Bank. This was far below the roughly 30 percent Arafat had expected in exchange for increased Palestinian efforts to curb terrorism. It would also commit the Israeli Government to a further 'redeployment,' as agreed upon in January 1997 and to stop the expansion of Jewish settlements in Arab East Jerusalem and the West Bank. *Financial Times*, 25 March 1997, p. 4.

of the Muslim Brotherhood.¹⁰⁶ The Islamic Jihad is closely linked to the Iranian ideology of Imam Khomeini, and its radical ideology challenged the Muslim Brotherhood prior to the *Intifada*.

The Islamic Jihad believed in an Islamic popular liberation movement and the destruction of Israel and launched several terror attacks involving Israeli targets.¹⁰⁷ Its relationship with the PLO remained ambiguous but not as hostile as the relationship between Hamas and the secular movements. The PLO searched for some form of cooperation with the Islamic Jihad during the *Intifada*, Abu Jihad, one of the Fateh leaders, being fully aware of the religious tendencies of the Palestinian people.

“Our relations with the Islamic Jihad are good. And we are trying by all means possible to placate the situation (...) since Israel uses every such incident as an excuse to hold redeployment.” Such was the evaluation of the relationship between the Islamic Jihad and the Palestinian Authority by Brigadier General Khaled Musmar from the Palestinian Authority’s General Security Forces.¹⁰⁸ Musmar referred to a terrorist attack by the Islamic Jihad that was followed by massive Israeli retaliation. Differences in policies continue to exist between the two unequal movements: the Islamic Jihad advocates along with others interference in the internal affairs of Arab regimes as a way of overthrowing conservative rules, an approach that is not shared by the PLO. The fact that the Jihad’s spiritual leader is the Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini has caused in the past for further friction between the secular and religious Palestinian movements.

The Islamic Jihad believes that Khomeini’s Iran is the state that is most committed to the Palestinian issue. The movement was convinced that Iran’s victory over Iraq would create a new situation in the region, possibly leading to the final battle against the Zionist State. Reality, however, has dashed all such hopes.

The Islamic Jihad’s relations with the rival Islamic resistance movement Hamas have remained far from friendly, and the former has accused the

¹⁰⁶ The officer of the Popular Liberation Forces (PLF), Jabr Ammar, joined the Islamic Jihad. Z. Abu Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism in Gaza and the West Bank*, op.cit., p.96.

¹⁰⁷ Hand grenade attack on an Israeli patrol in Khan Younis in the Gaza Strip, 4 August 1989, firebombing in Ramallah on 14 August 1989, knife attacks on Israelis in Jaffa Street in West Jerusalem on 3 May 1989, killing two and injuring others. Z. Abu Amr. *Islamic Fundamentalism in Gaza and the West Bank*, op.cit., p.108.

¹⁰⁸ *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 24 (10 November 1995), p. 11.

Muslim Brotherhood of adopting an uncritical attitude because of its refusal to cooperate in an alliance with the PLO factions. The Muslim Brotherhood strongly rejected the criticism of the much smaller Islamic Jihad. Hamas too considers the split as unacceptable and will accept unification with the Jihad only under its own terms and leadership. The setup of Hamas and the action of the independent Izz Eddin Al-Qassam brigades were a further attack on the Islamic Jihad, since it had gained a reputation among Palestinians as being the sole militant Islamic movement. Confronted with a crackdown by the Palestinian Authority, both Islamic movements might however join forces.

In addition to the two major groups, smaller Islamic cells such as Conveyance and Call (*Tabligh w'ad-Daw'wa*), Atonement and Holy Flight (*At-Tafkir w'al Hijra*), the Sufis (*As-Sufiyyua*) and the Salafis (*As-Salafiyya*) also oppose the peace process. Despite their different sizes and strategies in regard to the political struggle, the goal of the Islamic movements remains focused on exactly the same thing: the destruction of Israel and the creation of the first Islamic society modeled on the life and teachings of the Prophet Mohammed.

1.6 A Peace Process Rejected by the Islamic Fundamentalists

The competition between the PLO and the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas and the smaller Islamic Jihad crystallized during the *Intifada*, the Palestinian uprising, which started in 1987. During the *Intifada*, the Muslim Brotherhood broke with its strategy of peaceful resistance to Israeli occupation, which it had adopted in 1967, and started to fight the Israeli armed forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The *Intifada* also gave a boost to the ailing PLO since it revealed to the Israeli public the high price that would have to be paid for a continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinians accepted direct negotiation with Israel in 1991 under a rather humiliating condition, namely, that the PLO and its leader Yasser Arafat would be officially excluded from the direct talks in Madrid. However, the power struggles in the Palestinian camp ensured that the leaders of the Palestinian delegation were obliged to ask Arafat to approve in advance any of their decisions or initiatives. In fact, Hanan Ashrawi and Haidar Abdul Shafi, two key negotiators with the Palestinian delegation in Madrid, flew overnight to Tunis on a regular basis to ask the PLO leader for instructions and to

brief him on the talks. The Israelis had succeeded in officially excluding the PLO from the negotiation table, but no decision could be made without consulting the PLO headquarters in Tunis.¹⁰⁹ Even if the negotiations in Madrid did not achieve a breakthrough, they helped Israel to accept the fact that only direct negotiations with the PLO leadership could break the deadlock and lead to a road of negotiations.¹¹⁰ In the words of Nabil Sha'ath, the way the Oslo Agreement and negotiations between the PLO and Israel were conducted

“strikes against Zionist ideology (...) the deal was struck with the organization of struggle, the liberation movement that fought the Israelis, rather than with Palestinian elements that live in the occupied territories (...)”¹¹¹

All the attempts made to bypass the PLO with West Bank notables or an emerging new elite had failed. The PLO had not only retained nominal control of the negotiation process but also reaffirmed its control of the Palestinian society. The direct negotiations between Arafat's PLO and the Israeli Government allowed the Palestinians to overcome the split that Arafat's move to Tunis had caused within the Palestinian society. Moreover, the return of Arafat to the front row of the negotiations showed non-governmental organizations and all grassroots organizations in Palestine that the authority of Yasser Arafat cannot easily be ignored. The negotiation process leading to the Oslo Agreement and beyond served another important function as far as the autocratic leader of the PLO was concerned.

It also opened the door to democratic legitimacy for Yasser Arafat, although before the PLO could achieve this legitimacy, the Israeli Labor Party had to win the elections of June 1992. It is likely that the Oslo Agreement might never have been signed if Likud had won the elections and continued to reject the idea of any contact with the PLO as explained

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Dr. Mohammed Abu Koash, economic advisor to President Yasser Arafat during the Oslo negotiations, 17 January 1996, Adam Hotel, Gaza. Palestinian Minister Nabil Sha'ath confirmed that all important decisions were referred to Tunis and that the entire delegation was flown to Tunis at night and returned to Madrid the following dawn. "The PLO is in Full Control of the Team", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXL, no. 1 (Autumn 1992), pp. 70-77.

¹¹⁰ General (Retired) Shlomo Gazit, researcher, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, "Israeli Political Understanding of the DoP." In *Challenges Facing Palestinian Society in the Interim Period*. Jerusalem:JMCC, December 1994, pp. 35-44.

¹¹¹ N. Sha'ath. "The Oslo Agreement." Interview, *Journal of Palestine Studies*. XXIII, no. 1 (Autumn 1993), p. 9.

by Dr. Mohammed Abu Koash,¹¹² an economic advisor to President Yasser Arafat during the Oslo negotiations:

“They asked us to come to talks and we accepted... It was a chance for us to get back on the scene in the Middle East... No one ever wanted to involve Hamas in the talks. We were accepted as the representatives of the Palestinians.”

Israel introduced the PLO back in Palestine as a challenge to the radical movement Hamas to counter the rising influence of the far less predictable Islamic resistance movement.

Binyamin Netanyahu's victory in the elections of 29 May 1996 and his problematic relationship with the Palestinians challenged this strategy. It remains yet to be seen if his policy is a continuation of Likud's policy from 1977 to 1982 when Menachem Begin refused to integrate the Palestinian issue in the peace talks with Egypt. The Madrid negotiations were far from easy, and when discussions concerning senseless details blocked any¹¹³ progress, two Israeli academics, Professor Yair Hirschfeld and Dr. Ron Pundik initiated direct contacts with the PLO by talking first with Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), one of Yasser Arafat's main advisors, and Ahmad Qrei'a, the PLO's treasurer.¹¹⁴ The talks led to the Declaration of Principles¹¹⁵ and the historic signing ceremony between the PLO and the Israeli government on 9-10 September 1993 in Washington, which sealed their mutual recognition and seemed to end a historic deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian relationship.

The Muslim Brotherhood criticized the Oslo Agreement from the very beginning. Oslo seemed to ignore the Islamic movement and reestablish the PLO as the sole leader, thereby allowing for a reversal of the situation created by the meticulous work of Islamic militants in the Occupied Territories. In addition, the Islamic militants argued that the agreement did not address essential issues such as the right of four million Palestinians

¹¹² Interview with Dr. Abu Koash, Gaza, 17 January 1996.

¹¹³ During an interview with the author in Gaza on 17 January 1996, Dr. Abu Koash declared that the Palestinian and Israeli delegations even argued about the seating order at the negotiation table and could not agree on it. He said: "It was a show and there was no way we could advance the talks in Madrid (...) other ways of advancing the discussions had to be explored."

¹¹⁴ A. Shlaim, "The Oslo Accord." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIII, no. 3 (Spring 1994), pp. 24-40.

¹¹⁵ D. Makovsky, *Making Peace with the PLO*. Washington: Westview Press, 1996, pp. 2-25.

living in exile to return.¹¹⁶ Worse, it did not address the status of Jerusalem, the third holiest city in Islam. The Question of Palestine, to use the term coined by the leading Palestinian academic Edward Said was far from solved as far as the Islamic militants were concerned. Secular critics of Arafat such as Edward Said¹¹⁷ accused him of having sold out Palestinian national interests to the Israelis. Such criticism was a blow to the authority of Arafat.

Critics of the Oslo Agreement refused to accept the temporary character of the agreement, which rather than being a final agreement was an agenda for continued negotiations.¹¹⁸ It stipulated that the Israeli withdrawal from Hebron and the elections for a Palestinian Council should take place nine months after the signing of the agreement and that Israel had to transfer power in five different fields to the Palestinians: education, culture, health, social security and direct taxes. Although the schedule was not fully respected, the Oslo Agreement enabled the PLO to reaffirm its presence in the Occupied Territories. Ever since the PLO had been obliged to move its headquarters from Lebanon to Tunis, contact with the territories had been more difficult.

The first elections in history for the Palestinian President and the Palestinian Legislative Council took place in January 1996. In addition, several agreements advanced the Palestinian standing, e.g., the Protocol for Economic Relations of 29 April 1994, the Cairo Agreement on Gaza and Jericho and the agreement called Oslo 2, signed in Washington on 28 September 1995. The emergence of a Palestinian state seemed to be only a question of time and the Israeli elite appeared to have accepted that there would either be an independent state - like the former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban, who said "It's inevitable; accept it"¹¹⁹ - or a confederation with Jordan. The governing Labor Party was truly moving toward a 'two-state solution' since the separation between Palestinians and Israelis, reinforced by the continued attacks on civilians by Hamas activists from 1994 to 1996, succeeded in deepening the rift between Palestinians and Israelis.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ *Financial Times*, 5 May 1998, p. 7.

¹¹⁷ E. Said. *The Question of Palestine*. New York: Vintage Books Edition, 1992.

¹¹⁸ *New York Times*, 7 May 1998, p.A1.

¹¹⁹ *Jerusalem Post*, 23 February 1996, p. 4.

¹²⁰ "After the bombs." *Economist*, 2 March 1996, p. 39.

The problem of the absence of democratic legitimacy in regard to the Palestinian leaders was solved by the first Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996, when confirmation of the democratic legitimacy of Yasser Arafat represented a heavy blow to the Islamic resistance movement Hamas. The issue of democratic legitimacy was both functionally and politically important. Hamas had in the past participated in professional elections in the West Bank and succeeded in challenging the PLO. The question now was would the PLO now be able to use the tool of democratic elections to conquer the ground it had lost to the welfare associations of Hamas.

1.7 Elections and Democratic Legitimacy

Again, terrorism was to alter the flow of events. The assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on 4 November 1995¹²¹ by a Jewish extremist was a serious setback for the advancement of the peace process initiated by the Oslo Agreement. The suicide attacks launched by Hamas from April 1994 to March 1996 helped to change the political landscape in Israel and promoted the victory of Binyamin Netanyahu in the Israeli elections of 29 May 1996. Moreover, the continuous challenge of Islamic terror not only damaged the peace process but also weakened the newly won democratic legitimacy of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, meaning that the PLO, which had reemerged in the territories as a political force due to Israeli support, was on the brink of losing everything. Yair Hirschfeld, an initiator of the Oslo meetings, became critical of Yasser Arafat's commitment to a peaceful development and tried to explain the reluctance of the Netanyahu government to implement the Oslo Agreement: "They broke their part of the deal (...) and did not stop terrorism. It is normal that the process has slowed down (...) they have to fulfill their part and fight terrorism..."¹²²

The election process of the first-ever elections of a Palestinian President and Palestinian Legislative Council played an essential role in the legitimization of Yasser Arafat. The elections reconfirmed his commitment to the peace process and to fighting the Islamic movement's violent strat-

¹²¹ The author witnessed the hate campaign against Yitzhak Rabin in Israel during several visits in autumn 1995. The Israeli Prime Minister was depicted with the Palestinian *kuffiyeh* and presented as a traitor in posters that were spread across walls in West Jerusalem.

¹²² Interview with Y. Hirschfeld, Tel Aviv, 14 July 1997.

egy. They also opened a new chapter in Palestinian history, one in which the fight for legitimacy between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Palestinian Authority would be decided according to a Western concept of government and the notion of popular sovereignty.

The large voter turnout of 79.73 percent was a blow to Hamas, which had called for a boycott. Of the 595,702 registered voters in the West Bank, 73.18 percent actually cast their vote, and of the more than 359,478 registered voters in Gaza, 86.26 percent. In all, 955,180 voters expressed on Election Day 745,902 votes.¹²³ Initially, the elections appeared democratic not only in appearance: 370 candidates from the West Bank and 302 from Gaza ran for the 88 seats of the Palestinian Council. Yasser Arafat, with 87.1 percent of the votes was elected President, his only challenger, Samiha Khalil, having secured only 9.62 percent of the votes.¹²⁴

The PLO and Arafat himself perceived the elections not as a democratic contest but rather as the coronation of their life-long efforts to establish a Palestinian state. The program of Khalil, who today plays only a minor role in Palestinian society, was thus of no importance, and critics argued that her participation was nothing but a reflection of Arafat's distorted understanding of democracy.¹²⁵ The Palestinian leader would never have accepted a candidate that could seriously endanger his victory, and it was surprising that there was a challenger at all.

The elections attracted numerous international observers, such as former US President Jimmy Carter.¹²⁶ The emergence of embryonic national institutions such as the Presidency and the Legislative Council seemed to underscore the national character of the event. The massive participation of the Palestinian population at the Palestinian elections and the success of Yasser Arafat seemed to confer democratic legitimacy to the Palestinian leader. In summary, the historic legitimacy of Arafat was ratified by a popular vote.

¹²³ *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 38 (16 February 1996), p. 7.

¹²⁴ The Palestinian Council met on Thursday, 7 March 1996 and came a step closer to establishing national institutions. *International Herald Tribune*, 8 March 1996, pp.1 & 10.

¹²⁵ Author's interviews with voters during election meetings in Gaza, 16 January 1996.

¹²⁶ Former US President Jimmy Carter and representatives of the Carter Center traveled to Israel and, for example, showed up at the Main Post Office in East Jerusalem on Election Day. European Parliament observers also attended the elections.

The elections of 20 January 1996 also helped to transform the Western perception of the Palestinians. The progress achieved by the PLO in the diplomatic field was truly impressive: in 1988, US Secretary of State George Shultz could prevent Yasser Arafat from returning to the United Nations in New York,¹²⁷ whereas in 1993, Arafat was welcomed to the White House by President Clinton. Had the Palestinian leader also succeeded in altering his reputation among Israelis?¹²⁸ The failure of Yasser Arafat to rapidly gain concessions from the Israeli Government has weakened his position in the competition with Hamas,¹²⁹ and instead of promoting democracy among Palestinians, the new Israeli-Palestinian confrontation has weakened the democratic potential in the Palestinian society.

A democratic contest in the Palestinian society could not develop because the PLO leadership and the newly elected Palestinian Council did not enter into an open contest for power. The challenge of Netanyahu's policy reinforced the non-democratic elements in the Palestinian society and the Islamic fundamentalist movement. Today, Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority fits better the model of a strictly guided democracy than that of a liberal democracy.¹³⁰ The nature of the elections challenged the liberal minded such as the Ramallah-based association of lawyers, Al-Haq and other liberal elements in the Palestinian society.

The continued Israeli occupation of large parts of the West Bank did not prevent Palestinians from conducting peaceful elections. However, in Jerusalem, the military presence was noticeable. In the small West Bank city of Jericho and in the Gaza Strip for example, no Israeli soldiers interfered in the elections because redeployment had already taken place. Jerusalem was a different matter. Although the Israeli Government had agreed that Palestinians in East Jerusalem could participate, since it considers Jerusalem the unified and sole capital of Israel, it ordered the Palestinian Authority not to establish polling booths there; to have allowed

¹²⁷ E. Said, *The Question of Palestine*. New York: Vintage Books Edition, 1992, p. xxiii.

¹²⁸ "Paix Piégée au Proche-Orient." *Le Monde Diplomatique*, December 1995, p. 1.

¹²⁹ Eight months have passed since the deadline for the withdrawal from the West Bank that Netanyahu agreed to. *New York Times*, 7 May 1998, p. A1 & A7.

¹³⁰ S.P. Huntington. "How Countries Democratize." *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 106, no. 4 (1991-92), pp. 579-616; see L. Sadiqi. *Progress and Retrogression in Arab Democratization* op.cit., who assessed the way different Arab countries try to cope with the challenge of democracy in order to avoid to alter the status quo. The Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996 can also be used to illustrate this approach to democracy. The official results of the first Palestinian elections confirmed that Yasser Arafat's formation (PLO, Fateh and other, so-called independent members) gained control of the Palestinian Council (51 out of 88 seats).

them would have suggested there was some kind of shared sovereignty in Jerusalem, something no Israeli government was yet ready to accept. US President Clinton had reassured Israel in the past that Jerusalem would remain the undivided capital of the Jewish State: "I recognize Jerusalem as an undivided city, the eternal capital of Israel and I believe in the principle of moving our embassy to Jerusalem."¹³¹ Consequently, in order to appease the Israelis, Palestinian voters had to mail their votes in post offices - such as the Main Post Office in Salah Eddin Street in East Jerusalem¹³² - which were surrounded by heavily armed Israeli soldiers. In other words, the Israeli Government had realized that the elections could reinforce Palestinian claims concerning Jerusalem were it to fail to take the necessary precautionary measures. However, despite the strong military presence, no major conflicts between Israeli and Palestinians occurred.

The peaceful elections confirmed - as expected - the preeminence of the Fateh movement of Yasser Arafat, and the final election results raised new concerns regarding the prospects for democracy in the new Palestinian territories under the control of the Palestinian leader. The secretive Oslo negotiations had troubled members of the Palestinian delegation at the Madrid negotiations, who felt betrayed, not having been made aware of the Norwegian channel. The leader of the Palestinian delegation to Madrid, Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi was deeply worried concerning Arafat's policies and the civil war they could provoke:

"The PLO should reassure the Palestinians by adopting the measures that will convince them that it has a collective leadership and institutions and that it functions on the basis of true democratic principles. (...) I do not think there is democracy in the Arab World. I am talking about a different type, indeed a new type of democracy."¹³³

¹³¹ US President Clinton quoted by D. Neff, "Clinton Places US Policy at Israel's Bidding." *Middle East International*, 31 March 1995, pp.15-16. According to confidential sources, the US-Government has already purchased the territory in Jerusalem in order to construct soon a new building for the US Embassy and to move the diplomats from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem (September 1999).

¹³² The post offices in East Jerusalem, e.g., in Saleh Eddin Street were surrounded by Israeli military personnel, who after a few hours prevented journalists from entering. Furthermore, 15 armed soldiers stood on the roof of a tiny post office in Beit Hanina in East Jerusalem to the dismay of a delegation of observers from the European Parliament. Author's visit to Jerusalem, 20 January 1996.

¹³³ Interview in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 1 (Autumn 1992), pp. 57-69.

The new type of democracy that the former leader of the Palestinian delegation expected has not yet materialized in the territories under Palestinian administration. Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority still reflects the authoritarian leadership style of the former guerilla chief. He has to avoid a situation of anomie,¹³⁴ which might alienate the radical fundamentalists even further. The continued challenge posed to Yasser Arafat's authority by terrorist attacks of radical fundamentalists has already led to bloodshed between Palestinians.

1.8 A Challenge to Arafat's Authority: Radical Islamic Fundamentalists

The radical orientation of Islamic movements has complicated the relationship between the secular PLO and the Islamists. The rivalry between the Islamic movement and Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority is further complicated by the collusion of interests between secular and religious activists: members of the Muslim brotherhood became founders of the PLO in 1964. Their common enemy - Israel - has provided a link for both tendencies in the Palestinian society. In addition, secular and religious movements also have a common organizational history.¹³⁵ Leaders of Arafat's Fateh group were, in the past, active members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Abu Jihad, Abu Iyyad, Hani Al-Hassan, Rafiq Natsheh, and Arafat were all closely involved with the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Palestinian voters' electoral support for Yasser Arafat gave him additional legitimacy and weakened the Islamic challengers that had boycotted the elections in January 1996. The Islamic strategy had backfired.

The confrontation between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority does not yet fulfill Horowitz's definition of a conflict, something the author has defined as a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals.¹³⁶ A military confrontation between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority could easily fulfill these criteria since it would most likely be a battle for life or death in the territories. Once the self-imposed red line of war is crossed, Hamas will have

¹³⁴ Gellner, E., *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.

¹³⁵ M. Steinberg. "The PLO and Palestinian Islamic Fundamentalism." *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 52 (Fall 1989), p. 40.

¹³⁶ Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, op.cit., p. 95.

nothing to lose; either the movement will be crushed by the Palestinian Authority or, if it wins, by widespread Israeli intervention. The Muslim Brotherhood's militant movement has slowly been transformed into the common enemy of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority and Israel.

It is evident that the common interests of secular and Islamic movements combined with the Palestinian voters' backing of Arafat have initially prevented an open confrontation between the two movements. Arafat's police force drew a red line when Hamas attempted to challenge the PLO leader's authority in Gaza. In a violent confrontation there on 18 November 1995, the Fateh police pushed back and killed several Hamas militants. Despite the confrontation, the dialogue between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority is ongoing, and Palestinian Authority representatives were instrumental in calling for restraint on the part of supporters of Hamas following the alleged Israeli assassination of a Hamas militant in Ramallah.¹³⁷ However, the Islamic movement may not listen to the calls for more moderation. Following the assassination of Yahya Ayyash on 6 January 1996 in Gaza, Hamas launched a campaign of suicide attacks against Israeli civilians killing more than 59 people and Arafat's authority suffered another blow.

The Palestinian President hesitated for a long time before committing himself to making any serious efforts in regard to facilitating comprehensive security cooperation with the Israeli forces in order to curb terrorism. The recent American proposal for an additional Israel withdrawal from the West Bank linked the move to close cooperation in security matters between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. In the end, Arafat will not be able to avoid a confrontation with the Hamas movement if the Islamic activists continue their suicide attacks against Israeli civilians and military targets. It is becoming increasingly clear that he has to risk a confrontation with Hamas if he wants to continue with the peace process and achieve statehood for the Palestinians.

Arafat's position will be weakened in the eyes of many Palestinians if he fails to create a Palestinian state, although the recent development in the American-Palestinian relations may help to diffuse the threat of such a failure. The gap between the possibility of establishing a Palestinian state¹³⁸ and the deadlock in the negotiations with Netanyahu is large and

¹³⁷ *International Herald Tribune*, 3 April 1998, p. 5.

¹³⁸ CNN, "World News." Interview of Israeli journalist Ze'ev Schiff, 22 February 1996, 8 p.m. The Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* had reported that the Israeli delegation headed by Yossi Beilin had formu-

could expose Arafat to criticism by the Islamic militants. The notion of a Palestinian state was long rejected by Israeli decision-makers as the statement of Shimon Peres illustrates: “There is no such a thing as a Palestinian state on the agenda, and I reject it (...) We’ve said more than once that we prefer a solution that involves a confederation with Jordan.”¹³⁹ The first Palestinian national elections, however, enabled the Palestinians to express their desire for self-determination.

The elections stimulated the democratic potential of the Palestinian society and caused a mobilization across the territories. The election campaign encouraged the activities of numerous grassroots movements such as the Jerusalem Center for Media and Communication – established by young journalists and researchers in the West Bank in 1988 to spread awareness concerning events in the Occupied Territories – the Charitable Society of the Friend’s Community, the Arab Graduate Club, Al-Kasaba Theater and many more. The road to mutual acceptance by Israelis and Palestinians was still long. Palestinians still believed that the Israeli State could eventually be destroyed and the PLO Charter¹⁴⁰ became even more anachronistic¹⁴¹ in the context of the demise of the Soviet Union.

Arafat had to pay a price for the change in the Israeli-Palestinian relations. As long as the PLO did not modify the Charter, the Islamic fundamentalist movements could not claim that Yasser Arafat and the Israeli Government fought for the same cause. The Palestinian Authority attempted to improve its democratic image by developing a basic law that distinguished between legislative, executive and judicial powers.¹⁴² The separation of power had yet to go beyond a draft and to be implemented in the autocratic Palestinian regime. Hardly any politician who participated in the elections of 20 January 1998 had a detailed program,¹⁴³ and the political machinery of the Palestinians was not yet really focusing on substantive issues. The discussion concerning the Palestinian Constitution

lated in cooperation with Mahmoud Abbas a common map outlining the limits of a possible Palestinian entity in addition to a formal written document after a total of 20 meetings. *International Herald Tribune*, 23-24 February 1996.

¹³⁹ *International Herald Tribune*, No. 35,143, 24-25 February 1992, p.2.

¹⁴⁰ 24 April 1996: The Palestinian National Council decided to abrogate the articles hostile to the existence of Israel but the first attempt did not fully satisfy the Netanyahu government.

¹⁴¹ R. Backmann. “Le Forcing d’Arafat.” *L’Événement de Jeudi*, no. 1643, p. 28.

¹⁴² Draft Basic Law. Dr. A. Al-Qassem, Chair of the Palestinian National Council. Legal Committee. Jerusalem Media and Communication Center, Occasional Document Series, no. 5. (February 1996).

¹⁴³ Palestinian National Authority, “Palestine Elections Law,” Gaza, 7 December 1995.

has highlighted lately the lack of democracy that prevails within the Palestinian administration.

The separation of powers and legal rights are only granted on paper. The first version of the Basic Law was approved by the Executive Committee of the PLO. In a public announcement of the Executive Committee on 3 December 1993, the President's power was considered as relatively unlimited. In other words, the movement that was used to a strict rule of command in the fight against Israel initially had difficulties in accepting the idea of checks and balances for a future executive, especially when these limitations were enshrined in a Palestinian constitution.

Critics asked for an improvement of the draft, but the version of June 1994 did not fare much better because the legislative authority was hardly mentioned except in Articles 47 to 49, whereas the executive power continued to be predominant and unlimited (Articles 50 to 85).¹⁴⁴

NGOs and others involved in the modification of the Basic Law revealed a solid understanding of the idea of checks and balances as a numerical comparison between the articles dedicated to the legislative and the executive revealed. The emerging civil society had an impact on the new version of the constitution. The draft of February 1996 specified the task of the Legislative Council in Articles 47 to 66 and dedicated articles 67 to 99 to describing the powers of the executive. The chapters concerning the powers of the executive included the tasks of the security forces and the local government. Contradictions remained, and the discussions about the extent of the powers of the Legislative Council continued even if Article One of the Basic Law acknowledged the principle of popular sovereignty. The secular movement therefore conflicts with Hamas which refers to Islam as its system and not to popular sovereignty.¹⁴⁵ The notion of an independent judicial system that could enforce civil and political rights in case they were violated by the executive or legislative is still not a part of the discussion about a Palestinian constitution.

¹⁴⁴ In the French Constitution for the fifth Republic the executive enjoys also a dominating place. Article 49.3 of the French Constitution of 1958 enables the executive to legislate without requesting an approval of the decrees by the Parliament. The only way a Parliament could refuse such a request by the government would be to overthrow it. Since the executive asks for such exorbitant powers generally after an all-out electoral victory of legislative and presidential elections, is it extremely unlikely that the Parliament might ever refuse such a request by the executive of the same political affiliation. The French example illustrates just one of several tendencies in democracies to favor a executive based leadership-style.

¹⁴⁵ *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4 (Summer 1993), pp. 122-123.

The issue at hand is to know whether or not Arafat's democratic legitimacy involves aspects of accountability. The question is, why the Palestinian executive should concentrate so much executive power in the hand of a single person since it may make the emerging Palestinian state more vulnerable. Indeed, granting autonomy to administrative units such as Parliament and administration is one important way of reducing uncertainties. The vast majority of Palestinian voters backed Arafat, but what would happen if they voted him out of power or if he suddenly died? Indeed, the emerging Palestinian Authority would be well advised to give up old well-established ways of ruling and hierarchy and opt, among others, for an autonomous bureaucracy to guarantee a continuation of the emerging state. This can be one way to meet the Islamic challenge in the context of elections.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas both underestimated the importance of the democratic process. The call for a vast boycott of the first Palestinian elections was in line with the strategy of the radical Islamic militants; any direct dialogue with Israel was to be avoided and the elections, which were the outcome of the Oslo process, should be considered void. Hamas, which did not interrupt the elections in a violent manner, was stunned by the vast Palestinian support for Arafat.¹⁴⁶ The march of the Islamic fundamentalist militants of the Brotherhood toward the reign of power in the Palestinian territories appeared to have come to a sudden end. Was the next confrontation to be with the winner of the elections of 20 January 1996?

The PLO and the Muslim Brotherhood had been drifting toward confrontation since the Six-Day War of 1967. Although the Muslim Brotherhood had joined the Arab side during the war, it maintained a low profile during the 20 years of occupation of the West Bank and Gaza from 1967 to 1987. The sudden radicalization of the Islamic movement only took place in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution and during the 1987 *Intifada*, when the Islamic revolutionary ideology also spread to Israel and the Occupied Territories.

Rumors have continued to spread the idea that the Israelis sponsored the militant Islamic movement in its early days to challenge the PLO leadership in the territories. In the past, forceful attempts were made by the

¹⁴⁶ Hamas suffered a setback as more than 85 percent of the population in the territories under Palestinian control voted despite calls for a boycott. *Jerusalem Post*, 21 January 1996, p. 1.

PLO to prevent Palestinian notables from collaborating with Israel in the occupied West Bank.¹⁴⁷ The split between Arafat and the Syrian leader Hafez Al-Assad¹⁴⁸ in 1982 deprived the PLO of the support of a consistent enemy of Israel. Syria too had been challenged by the Muslim Brotherhood and Arafat could have benefited from some form of strategic cooperation to curb the influence of the Islamic movement.

The disastrous decision of Yasser Arafat to back the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait 1990 and to choose the side of the loser during the Gulf War of 1991 brought the PLO to the brink of disaster. As a form of punishment, the Gulf oil monarchies cut their financial support to the PLO, Palestinians in Kuwait were badly treated and those who fled the invasion were not allowed to return.

Following the Gulf War, US President Ronald Reagan and Secretary of State James Baker were in a unique position to launch a Middle Eastern peace initiative. The Soviet Union, once denounced as an evil empire¹⁴⁹ was in the process of disintegration and the USSR had no power to reject the American invitation to be a cosponsor of the Madrid peace negotiations. The United States was well on the way to becoming the only global superpower that was able to deploy military forces across the globe to settle long-standing geo-strategic problems.¹⁵⁰

1.9 The Importance of the Democratic Transition of the PLO

It may be rightly questioned if the PLO could undergo a democratic transformation. The PLO sought an end to Zionism and the destruction of Israel, as specified in Articles 15 and 22 of the National Covenant. Accordingly, the Israelis authorized the members of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) to return to the authorities under Palestinian self-administration¹⁵¹ to modify the Covenant. The Israeli concessions were significant: the PNC includes some leading Palestinian fighters such as Nay Hawatmeh, the head of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Pales-

¹⁴⁷B. Rubin draws a rather critical picture of the PLO. For further details see *Revolution Until Victory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.

¹⁴⁸P. Seale. *Asad of Syria*, op.cit., p. 467.

¹⁴⁹R. R. Holt & B. Silverstein. "On the Psychology of Enemy Images: Introduction and Overview." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 45, no. 2 (1989), pp. 1-11.

¹⁵⁰Z. Brzezinski. *The Grand Chessboard*. New York: Harper Collins, 1997, p.194.

¹⁵¹The PNC is different from the Palestinian Legislative Council issued of the elections on 20 January 1996. *Jerusalem Post*, 21 January 1996, p. 1.

tine and Abu Abbas, the head of the Palestine Liberation Front. Both groups were weakened by Arafat's election victory.

The issue of building a democracy has confronted the PLO with a dilemma since the movement is only given little credit to set up in the long run the first Arab democracy. The question may indeed be raised if a formerly revolutionary organization like the PLO can build democratic institutions that go beyond a draft. What will happen with democracy when the Israeli army continues to occupy large portions of the West Bank? How will the Palestinian Authority defend democracy when Israeli tanks and troops cut off cities administered by the Palestinians such as Nablus and Ramallah from the outside¹⁵² and how can Israelis be expected to believe in Palestinian democracy if Islamic suicide bombers prepare for their missions in cities that are under the control of the Palestinian Authority? What is needed to break the vicious circle of terrorism and counter insurgency efforts?

Living conditions in Gaza are very poor but is it sufficient to quote unemployment and economic crisis as the sole motivating factors of young Muslim activists that seek their redemption by a suicide attack on Israelis?¹⁵³ This could be, perhaps, said of stone throwers but certainly not of young Arabs that prefer to die instead of going on living under Israeli occupation. The general increase of violence in Gaza was criticized by some and the emergence of suicide bombers, something equally new to Gaza and the West Bank, cannot be attributed to the Palestinian Authority.

Dr. Abu Koash¹⁵⁴ stated that the Palestinians had had bad experiences with local development initiatives. "The Israelis block all our initiatives and we sense there is no will to cooperate (...) there is no way we can develop our economy (...) we want to run our business like we did before."

¹⁵² Palestinian riots were caused by the opening of a tunnel that runs alongside Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock in East Jerusalem. There was a huge deployment of Israeli troops in the West Bank. *New York Times*, 30 September 1996, p. A4. Worse, the Israeli police fired at the third holiest site in Islam, Al-Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem. *New York Times*, 25 September 1996, p. 3.

¹⁵³ M. Heiberg & G. Ovensen. *Palestinian Society - in Gaza, the West Bank and Arab Jerusalem*. FAF0 Report 151, 1993. Roy, Sarah, "Alienation or Accommodation." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIV, no. 4 (Summer 1995), pp.73-82.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Dr. Abu Koash, Gaza, 17 January 1996.

In addition to dealing with the harsh economic realities of the territories under Palestinian control, the Palestinian Authority has to manage Islamic symbols in a highly mobilized community. Israeli soldiers shooting rubber bullets at Muslims around Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque attack the legitimacy of the Palestinian President as a guardian of the third holiest site in Islam. It is significant that the riots in September 1996 started after the preacher at Al-Aqsa told worshippers: "Israel has assaulted our holy places, and we have a right to defend our religious sites."¹⁵⁵

The significance of the manipulation of Islamic symbols by fundamentalists cannot be underestimated. Ayatollah Khomeini issued a *fatwa* (religious ruling) against Salman Rushdie, the British author of *The Satanic Verses*, whom he accused of insulting Islam and Muslims in his book. This is just one vivid example of the impact of Islamic symbols on politics. In addition, Pan-Arabism and secular ideology have gradually been combined with Islamic terminology in the statements of the PLO. By accepting Islamic formulas, Arafat has invited supporters of Hamas to change sides and he may well succeed in diffusing the Islamic influence. The cooperation with Israeli security forces remains a two-sided sword for Arafat since he has to balance accusations of collaboration with the enemy¹⁵⁶ on the part of the Islamists with the need to appease the Israelis. However, this paper will try to show that the increased cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and Israel remains the key to curbing terrorism and to promoting the economic, cultural and political development of the Palestinian-controlled territories. Arafat's *Realpolitik* is based on a concept of leadership that differs from the liberal notion of democracy.

Furthermore, two major theories of legitimacy compete nowadays among Palestinians: Yasser Arafat favors the concept of an autocratic state based on a guided democracy where security apparatuses will keep the opposition under control without necessarily reinforcing the ruler's historical legitimacy.¹⁵⁷ The other form of legitimacy refers to the *Shari'a* as the sole source of law. The *Shari'a* is defined as the *Qur'an*, the *Sunna*, *Qiyas* (anology) and the consensus of the '*ulema*, *Ijma'*'. "The historical dimen-

¹⁵⁵ The preacher of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, *New York Times*, 28 September 1996, p. 1.

¹⁵⁶ S. Mishal. *The PLO under Arafat - Between Gun and Olive Branch*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986, pp. 146-175; B. Rubin. *Revolution Until Victory*, op.cit., pp. 148-152.

¹⁵⁷ L. Sadiki. *Progress and Retrocession in Arab Democratization*, op.cit., p. 40.

sion of the Islamic Resistance Movement originates from its adoption of Islam as a system of life.”¹⁵⁸

The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has opposed negotiations with Israel and enshrined the concept of Jihad as the sole way of dialogue with the Jewish state in the movement’s Charter “(...) there is no solution to the Palestinian problem except the Jihad”.¹⁵⁹ Nowadays, the Islamic militants attract protest voters and militants that reject the tedious negotiated solutions and seek speedy results – no matter the cost. The conflict between the religious and secular model of legitimacy reflects the rivalry between the PLO as the natural representative of the Palestinians and Hamas. The discussion of the essential elements and criteria of democracy will enable us to determine if a democratic future for the self-administrated Palestinian territories is possible. The book will show that Hamas has consequently refused the supremacy of democratic principles whereas the Palestinian Authority has embarked on a tit-for-tat form of democratization. A fairly united cabinet under the guidance of a directly elected President and presupposing the support of an absolute majority in the elected Parliament are in charge of the destiny of the emerging state.

These developments lead to the following questions: Does a democracy have a place in this fight among Palestinians? In addition, will the fight between the Islamic movement and the PLO lead to regional destabilization and increased regional insecurity?

¹⁵⁸ “Special document: Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) of Palestine.” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4 (Summer 1993), pp. 130-131.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 122-134.

II. Conflicting Model of Legitimacy

2.1 The Concept of Liberal Democracy

Since we will review the Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996 in the following chapter, there is a need to introduce the concept of liberal democracy. Are the territories under Palestinian administration ripe for democracy? Will they ever be? These important questions need to be addressed in evaluating the regime established by the PLO in the territories under Palestinian administration as the answers may indicate whether or not the Palestinian Authority will survive the Islamic challenge of a religious state. The Islamic challenge to the Palestinian Authority is fundamental since state building and Islamic activism are organized according to different political agendas.

A historical comparison will help to illustrate the dilemma faced by the emerging Palestinian society in the Middle East as the Palestinians try to establish democracy rapidly. Indeed, democracies as we know them today emerged in other countries only over the past 200 years after many setbacks and ongoing crises. Today, democracies such as the United States apply standards to measure democracy in foreign countries that they themselves, in many cases, did not meet until 40 years ago; one only has to remember how the black population of America suffered before the civil rights movement scored initial successes. One should also remain aware of the fact that democracy is never a finished product, but rather a part of an ongoing modification process.

Following the French and American Revolutions in the 18th Century, democracy became deeply rooted in the United States but faced difficulties in infiltrating Europe. In the 20th Century, Germany challenged the democratic countries first as an aristocratic-authoritarian power - during World War I - and then, as a ruthless and xenophobic dictatorship, which focused its resources on warfare and holocaust. Since the end of the Cold War, democracy has triumphed over communism and one more ideology that is authoritarian has been laid to rest in the grave of history. The end

of history as Francis Fukuyama wrote in his book was yet far away and the world was thrown into a violent transformation process.¹

In other words, democracy did not appear overnight in the liberal version of the 20th Century. The right to vote for women and other fundamental civil rights were only attained in the 20th Century². Still, in the 20th Century it is no longer possible to talk about democracy and not consider civil rights as they are understood today in European or American democracies. The argument frequently made by Palestinians, i.e., that the Israeli occupation does not allow the promotion of democracy is superficial. Even when the confrontation between the Palestinian Authority and Israelis caused tensions, the former could have reduced the conflict by seeking to implement democratic principles in its internal organization. This book will point out the areas where the PLO can promote democratic practice despite there being a confrontation with Hamas. The gap between the democratic reality in the territories under Palestinian Authority rule and in Western democracies is real and should not be ignored. When Palestinians or Israelis refer to the term 'democracy', both groups refer to the liberal notion of popular sovereignty and a national state.

Criticism of authoritarian regimes is frequently based on the idea that promoting freedom will result in peace. US President Ronald Reagan said that a government founded on a respect for individual liberty has a foreign policy orientated toward peace, hence his crusade in the name of democracy and freedom.³ In making such an argument, the President joined a long list of liberal theorists who had said before him the following: The aggressive policies of authoritarian leaders and groups prepare the way for war. On the other hand, liberal states that are founded on popular sovereignty, free and democratic elections, civil rights and private property do not go to war, one reason being that their governments are held accountable for their actions by the voters. When a government has to be approved by its citizens, it will not go to war unless the public calls for action; should it go to war whilst disregarding the will of the public, its leaders would rapidly lose support and the public would simply refuse to

¹ For a presentation of this argument refer to: F. Fukuyama. *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press, 1992.

² The British feminist movement, the 'Suffragettes'. In France, for example, women were granted the right to vote only in 1944. B. S. Anderson and J. P. Zinsser discuss the concept of women's rights in a democracy. *History of Their Own: Women in Europe*. New York: Harper, 1988

³ For a discussion of the concepts of liberalism see C. W. Kegley. *Controversies in International Relations Theory*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.

vote for them. Therefore, liberal and democratic states are important aspects of peaceful international relations.

The constitution of a state is thus of key importance in regard to regional and global stability and peace. The triumph of liberalism after the Cold War necessitates that we assess the key concepts of liberal thinkers such as Emmanuel Kant and Schumpeter and evaluate their contribution to the concept of global or regional peace. First, we will consider Machiavelli's arguments concerning liberal imperialism, the aim being to distinguish with greater ease the pacifist and imperialist branches of liberalism. The Italian author argued that republics, in spite of being free, are not pacifistic. Indeed, he maintained that they are the best forums for imperial expansion. Machiavelli believed that the expansion of a republic would help to guarantee the survival of the State by increasing the power of the prince. In Machiavelli's republic, citizens are free and hungry for glory, refusing to be oppressed and more than prepared to resist hostile states. Machiavelli's concept enables us to decode the imperialist record of democratic states such as France and England but does not contradict the promotion of internationalism and pacifism on the part of liberal thinkers such as Kant and Schumpeter.

The cooperation of liberal democracies in the 20th Century has created a zone of relative peace. Schumpeter saw the interaction of modern capitalism and democracy as the base of liberal pacifism, arguing that any productive form of capitalism requires the existence of a rational and democratic people. Indeed, capitalist countries have produced many institutions to preserve World Peace, an example being The Hague. In his opinion, only profiteers can gain from war, unlike the general population of a democracy, which benefits from economic development and the redistribution of income.

Schumpeter failed to account for the long history of colonial wars conducted by democracies or even the numerous interventions in the history of democratic states. A further weakness of his pacifism is the notion that civilized countries govern backward nations. Kant's *Perpetual Peace*, written in 1795, helps us to understand the interactive nature of international relations.

Kant's republics are not to be studied in an isolated fashion. He argued for an ever-widening union of liberal states and explained why, at some point, liberal states go to war with non-liberal states. Kant's ideas do not isolate a feature of democracy or liberalism. Unlike Machiavelli's republics, Kant's states achieve peace because they use democratic caution. His

concept of a pacifistic union is of particular interest with regard to the Middle East. According to the first part of his theory, liberal republics will create peace among themselves by means of treaties or cooperation, and according to the second part, the rights of each state will be preserved in this global federation. The notion of World State has no place in Kant's concept, and he rejected the denial of national sovereignty or the transfer of sovereignty to a supranational body. His concept, in other words, totally rejects the exploitation of countries.

The ideas of Joseph Schumpeter and Kant thus summarize the two key concepts of liberal democracy. David Held has further summarized the two major Western approaches toward democracy and assessed Schumpeter's contribution to institutional issues. Schumpeter defined democracies as states in which regular, periodic and just elections are held with the participation of a variety of candidates who vie for votes. No democracy would pursue war since only war profiteers and military aristocrats - certainly not the general public - would stand to benefit, and going to war would be against the self-interest of the majority of citizens. Held proposed the idea that democracy is connected with the principle of autonomy and the opportunity to participate in democratic elections. Indeed, citizens living in a democracy are less likely to call for a war since they can find more efficient ways to achieve better results. It is simply against their interest to assume the costs of war.

The American political scientist Samuel P. Huntington has combined the previous approaches.⁴ He stipulates that democracy is defined as follows:

- 1) Citizens can participate in free and just elections
- 2) The elected candidates are the ones that wield power
- 3) Government stability is different from the stability of the whole system; in other words, the absence of government stability does not imply the absence of democracy
- 4) Democracy cannot coexist with a non-democratic system
- 5) Non-democratic systems are defined as those systems in which elections are not regular. Thus in an authoritarian form of government,⁵ leaders are not chosen in elections and the powers of the executive are almost unlimited.

⁴ S. P. Huntington, S. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

⁵ K. Bollen. "Political Democracy: Conceptual and Measurement Traps." In A. Inkeles, ed. *On Measuring Democracy*. New Brunswick, NJ : Transaction Publishers, 1991, pp. 3-20.

When we take into consideration the criteria presented by Huntington to advance our analysis of the mode of government of the Palestinian Authority and the Islamic resistance movement, we will be able to distinguish non-democratic characters of radical movement. In order to simplify the comparison of non-democratic movements, the concepts of autocracy and democracy will form the opposite poles of a scale to measure the democratic nature of the movements. The closer the movement is to the limit of autocracy, the less democratic the internal and external organization will be.

A variety of more or less democratic systems can be placed on this scale according to their respect for democratic requirements and practices. The Mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, clearly does not consider Yasser Arafat as a democratic head of state since he evicted Yasser Arafat in 1995 from the Lincoln Center in New York. He draws a strict separation between the elected emerging Palestinian President and the democracy in Israel.⁶ As the Israeli model of democracy has proved, the absence of some of the democratic criteria developed by the American scholar Lipset does not disqualify a state from being considered democratic. He argued that democracy exists in various forms, which may be ranked and classified in different ways.⁷ Still, the criteria enable the researcher to decide upon the degree of democracy that is practiced in different countries and to make comparisons. It will also enable us to understand why the absence of democracy in a governing unit may endanger regional security. The evaluation of democracy is thus essential for our study.

2.2 How to Measure Democracy?

Freedom of expression and freedom of conscience enjoy great importance in liberal democracies. The American Constitution and the Bill of Rights have placed freedom of conscience above all other values and clearly defined the freedom of expression as a free press, the right to assemble peaceably and the right to address a petition to the government:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people to assemble peaceably, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”⁸

⁶ *New York Times*, 13 November 1999, p. 1 & B8.

⁷ S. M. Lipset. “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economics Development and Political Legitimacy.” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 53, no. 1 (March 1959), pp. 69-105.

⁸ A. Cox. *Freedom of Expression*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981, p. 1.

In other words, the American Constitution excludes the possibility of establishing a sole State religion or preventing any religious group from practicing any kind of belief.

Freedom of expression is never absolute in democracies. In times of war, unrestrained expression may endanger the national interest or the survival of the State and some balancing is inescapable, which is also the case in times of peace. The question is to what degree can freedom of expression be regulated. The founding fathers of the American Constitution were devoted to the search for truth and respect for human beings. Their truth reflected, for example, the ideas promoted by philosophers such as John Locke and the respect of religious freedom since many of the first American settlers had attempted to escape religious persecution. In the American Constitution, freedom of speech is linked to the issue of freedom of religion. The US government can, however, restrict the same freedom of speech for reasons of national security - a notion that is difficult to limit.⁹

The people as governors adopted the guarantees of freedom of speech and press in order to retain control of the government. Only by resorting to freedom of expression and freedom of the press can the people voice their complaints and inform everybody about the conduct of the government. The issue thus remains to what degree can information be restrained without endangering the democratic nature of the State? Laws restricting freedom of expression may usually be classified according to their functions. The development of the issue of freedom of speech and freedom of the press in the United States has underlined the important role an independent Supreme Court has played in the conservation and extension of the rights expressed in the First Amendment. The issue of the separation of powers in a democracy is therefore the basic concept behind the respect of civil rights.

Criteria such as freedom of press, freedom of speech, freedom of opinion and freedom of religious belief in addition to civil liberties and human rights are thus particularly valuable in evaluating the emerging conflict between Palestinian secular movements and the Islamic resistance movement. These criteria are also reflected in Gurr's model, which allows us to assess a political system on five levels.¹⁰

⁹ Ibid., p. 60-71.

¹⁰ T.R. Gurr. "Persistence and Change in Political Systems, 1800-1971." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 68, no. 4 (December 1974), pp.1482-1504.

- 1) The degree to which the superior and inferior level of command can both influence the other
- 2) The degree of equality between the two levels
- 3) The institutional relations between the leadership and voters
- 4) Competitive recruitment for the leading positions
- 5) Mode of legitimacy such as historic, electoral, popular, etc.

Gurr's model,¹¹ based on one of his characteristic large-scale studies, analyzed 161 states in the period 1945 to 1994. The model will enable the observer to assess the democratic nature of the system. Gurr proposes that three criteria will prove valuable in assessing the practice of democracy in the Palestinian administrated territories. These three criteria will also allow for an evaluation of the competitive relationship between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. The criteria are as follows:

- The existence of democratic institutions, which enables the citizen to express his opinion and his desire for a change of policy and leadership. Freedom of expression is guaranteed and leaders will be exchanged after running in competitive elections.
- The executive power is controlled by a system of 'checks and balances'. Sartori (1965) has emphasized that a sovereign people can maintain its power only if it does not grant absolute powers to the leaders.¹²
- Civil liberties must be respected; the guarantee of civil liberties is a key element in a liberal democracy.

The issue of civil liberties and freedom of expression plays an essential role in the evaluation of the democratic nature of a regime. The violent nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of that between Hamas and followers of the PLO has led to increased awareness concerning human rights violations in the Middle East. An effort has been made to define these rights in an improved manner. According to Zehra,¹³ civil liberties

¹¹ T.R. Gurr, K. Jagers and W. Moore. "The Transformation of the Western State: The Growth of Democracy, Autocracy and State Power since 1800." *Studies in Comparative International Development*, vol. 25, no. 1 (Spring 1990), pp. 73-108.

¹² G. Sartori. *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1987, p. 287. See also to G. Sartori. *Democratic Theory*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1965.

¹³ A. Zehra. *Democracy and Human Rights in Developing Countries*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991; K. Bollen. "Issues in the Comparative Measurement of Political Democracy." *American Sociological Review*, vol. 45, no. 2 (June 1980), pp. 370-390.

are connected to the protection from arbitrary persecution and arbitrary imprisonment and the prohibition of torture. In a modern society, they also encompass the respect of human rights, freedom of the press and freedom of movement. Arab countries were accused in the past of not respecting the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In June 1993, at the UN Conference on Human Rights, Islamic countries accused the UN and major Western powers of applying double standards in the discussion of human rights, of not respecting the key principle of sovereignty as, for example, defined in Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, and of neglecting economic rights.¹⁴

The discussion about human rights in international relations suffers not only from the lack of a globally accepted definition but also from the fact, for example, that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was proclaimed in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly, has no force of law as such.¹⁵ This makes the effort of UN peacekeeping missions highly selective in the sense that even a minimalist definition of human rights “as the rights of each person simply as a human being”¹⁶ is not enforced at a global level. On the one hand, the key promoter of Human Rights since the American President Jimmy Carter’s high-profile human rights campaign, the US government, is torn apart between the costs of such operations and internal political concerns. The less than glorious withdrawal of American troops from Somalia after a botched attempt to restore not only hope but also peace pushed UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to declare:

“I don’t think the member states have the stomach for this type of operation. It’s going to be a very long time before the United Nations as an organization takes on a peace enforcement mission and manages itself.”¹⁷

The dependence of the UN on American troops and the US military’s principle according to which it will not fight under UN command have

¹⁴ For the discussion of the concept of modernity, we refer to B. Badie. *Les Deux Etats*. Paris: Fayard, 1996. For a discussion of the compatibility of human rights and Islam see F. Halliday. “Human Rights and the Islamic Middle East: Universalism and Relativism.” In *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1996, pp. 133-159.

¹⁵ R. E. Howard and J. Donnelly. “Human Rights in World Politics.” In R. J. Art and R. Jervis. *International Politics*. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996, pp. 30-48.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁷ In S. Meisler. “Kofi Annan: The Soft-Spoken Economist Who Runs UN Peacekeeping Forces.” *Los Angeles Times*, 21 June 1994, cited in J. L. Hirsch and R.B. Oakley. *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996.

pushed a small group of UN member states led by Denmark to advocate the creation of a multinational United Nations Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade.¹⁸ Such United Nations stand-by forces would enable the UN to deploy rapidly all resources needed to sustain UN operations and would help to prevent large-scale failures like in the case of the genocide in Rwanda. The genocide in Rwanda was partly made possible because the world's leading powers hesitated too long before sending troops. The former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali requested in 1992 that troops and adequate resources should be made available by the member states of the United Nations on relatively short notice. His 1992 Agenda for Peace clearly referred to this issue in Paragraph 51. Due to the resistance of major member states such as the US to set up an independent UN Standby Corps, the discussions were limited to the standby arrangements system.¹⁹ The discussion regarding the intervention in the internal affairs of a UN member state reflects the seemingly increased international concern with human rights and the apparent importance the issue of human rights has gained in the Palestinian state-building process.

The contemporary discussion about intervention in internal affairs on behalf of human rights has been motivated to a large extent by Michael Walzer's book *Just and Unjust Wars*.²⁰ The Palestinian state-building process therefore cannot ignore the increased, certainly biased, concern of an international community with the issue of human rights.

Indeed, human rights are, even for today's promoters such as the United States only a part of their foreign policy, and as a part, they are not necessarily in harmony with national concerns. To say it more bluntly "sometimes a country can afford to act on its human rights concerns, other times it cannot."²¹

For the Palestinian Authority such variations in the international approach of, for example, the United States towards human rights and their lack of a coherent human rights strategy have created inconsistent policies in this field. Although justified, American criticism of the violation of human rights focused, for example, more on the emerging Palestinian Authority than on Israel. Double standards in the evaluation of human rights viola-

¹⁸ United Nations documents of the General Assembly resolution A/51/75 and resolution of the Security Council S/1996/166. New York: UN. General distribution, 5 March 1996.

¹⁹ Update Briefing to Member States on Standby Arrangements, UN: New York, May 29, 1997.

²⁰ M. Walzer. *Just and Unjust Wars*. New York: Basic Books, 1977.

²¹ R. E. Howard and J. Donnelly. "Human Rights in World Politics," op.cit., p. 42.

tions are the subject of constant criticism of Third World countries that reject the liberal concept of human rights and criticize it as a propaganda tool.²²

Following the total disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1992, these critics seemed to have found no opportunity to make their voice heard. The United States' version of a set of universal political and economic values such as liberty, democracy, equality, private property and markets, seemed to be the new dominating philosophy, and Samuel Huntington forged the concept of primacy to describe the current American role in world politics: the sole global superpower could reach out to fix regional micro-problems. So it seemed in 1996.²³ In a few years, disillusionment with the US leadership has replaced the enthusiasm created by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Instead of a glorious "end of history" and universal acceptance of the American model of society and economy, even long-lasting allies of the United States increasingly resist American demands, while other states see American foreign policy as hostile to their own countries. The US Government appears to have failed to realize that it no longer enjoys the same powerful supremacy that it enjoyed right after the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Samuel Huntington, the very same author who argued for American supremacy, suggests today that the United States should learn to compromise with key partners.²⁴ Yet other observers are more skeptical and do not believe that the United States that are able to accept the difference outside of their borders and will refrain from imposing their positions on allies.²⁵ The criticism of the American leadership of the free world is frank when Garry Wills criticizes the nu-

²² UN special investigator Bruce Waly Ndiaye accused the US in his report for the UN Commission on Human Rights of a "significant degree of unfairness and arbitrariness" in the death penalty use. We may also quote the resistance of the United States to the creation of a fully independent International War Crimes Tribunal that would try tyrants of the type of Pol Pot. The Pentagon has warned in a memorandum against "unbridled discretion to start investigations" and criticized, for example, "that some delegations have supported over broad and vague definitions of war crimes." The Pentagon argues that the proposed International Criminal Court could, for example, charge US soldiers if they committed as peacekeepers violations of human rights. Their intentions were pretty clear: "The US is committed to the successful establishment of a court. But we are also intent on avoiding the creation of the wrong kind of court." Schmidt, E. "Pentagon Battles Plans for International War Crimes Tribunal." *New York Times*, 1 April 1998, p. A11.

²³ S. P. Huntington. "Why International Primacy Matters." In R. J. Art and R. Jervis. *International Politics*. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996, pp. 376-385. President Clinton said that the US will no longer tolerate large scale human rights violations - but fails to give clear definitions or even to explain the absence of the US from Rwanda to stop the genocide. *Süd-deutsche Zeitung*, 25/26 September 1999, p. 1.

²⁴ Ibid. Huntington modified his approach when he noticed the resistance allies showed to follow blindly the US American leadership; see "The Lonely Superpower". *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 78, no. 2 (March-April 1999), pp. 35-49.

²⁵ G. Wills. "Bully of the Free World." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 78, no. 2 (March-April 1999), pp. 50-59.

merous cases of American intervention in Third World countries to remove leaders that were qualified enemies of freedom: "(...) however justified these acts may have been strategically, they cannot be called leadership. Leaders persuade followers. The United States used covert action, sabotage and threat."²⁶

The current US administration, having overcome a form of political paralysis due to scandals, continues to play the role of the wise superpower. "We stand tall and hence see further than other nations" summarized the Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright in boasting of the wisdom of US American Foreign policy."²⁷

The Palestinian Authority has to take the dominant position of the United States into account during the state-building process since the United States is not interested in classical imperialism but rather favors a policy qualified as 'security-imperialism': the United States did not want to annex countries, it simply wanted to use them. All this was done in the name of leadership of the free world.²⁸

In order to be accepted as a part of the American sphere of influence, the Palestinian Authority will be required to accept the current concept of democratic accountability that the US promotes.

Indeed, the Palestinian Authority has largely ignored the issue of civil society whilst neglecting to pay attention to the need to develop the characteristics of a modern democracy. Instead of gaining the support of the civil society and its key opinion makers such as journalists, the Authority has generated a third opposition, the civil opposition, as we will see.

The Palestinian Authority has seriously limited the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press since it started to administer the territories under its control. The decision on the part of the Authority to imprison *Al-Quds* newspaper editor Maher Al-Alami²⁹ for refusing to print an article that exalted the abilities of Arafat raised serious concerns regarding the future of the freedom of press in territories that he controlled or

²⁶ Ibid., p. 52.

²⁷ M. K. Albright, quoted in S. P. Huntington's "The Lonely Superpower," op.cit., p. 37.

²⁸ G. Will, "Bully of the Free World," op.cit., p. 52.

²⁹ The editor of *Al-Quds*, a pro-PLO newspaper in Jerusalem did not grant front-page status to an address by Jerusalem's Greek Orthodox Bishop Timothy to Arafat, in which the Bishop compared Arafat to the Islamic Caliph Omar Ibn Al-Khatib. *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1996), p. 13.

could possibly control in the future. Editors of other Palestinian newspapers did not cover the incident because they feared they would suffer a fate similar to Al-Alami's if they did. However, three days after the arrest, a second Palestinian daily, *An-Nahar*, published an editorial statement condemning the Palestinian Authority. Such protests have not caused the Palestinian Authority to modify its policy of intimidating journalists, and even the Reuters office in Gaza was closed because it distributed a Hamas video accusing the Palestinian Authority of involvement in the recent killing of a Hamas militant.³⁰ What democratic government could afford to shut down a news office simply because it was doing its job?

Palestinian society developed during the Israeli occupation many independent associations and organizations, such as the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA) in Jerusalem, Al-Haq, an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva in Ramallah, the Jerusalem Media Center and others, all of which have served the social and political interests of the Palestinian people. In other words, numerous grassroots organization emerged in order to make the military occupation more bearable for the Palestinians.³¹ The building of grassroots organizations was also a learning process for Palestinians since these organizations enabled the Palestinians to express themselves in the confrontation with the Israeli occupation forces. The Palestinian population gained further confidence in the abilities of the locals during the *Intifada*. Any attempt by the Palestinian Authority to ignore this emerging civil society in the self-administrated territories is likely to generate tensions between a self-confident segment of Palestinian society and the newly established ruling elite of the Palestinian Authority.

Another example of the way in which the Palestinian Authority disregards democratic rights was reported by an Israeli human rights organization that is not at all hostile to the Authority. Bassem Eid, an employee of the Israeli human rights organization, B'Tselem, was arrested by the so-called Preventive Security Services (PSS) of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and held for 24 hours, during which no specific accusations were made. The frequency of such events pushed the French organization *Reporters without Borders* to publish a list of journalists who had been arrested by the security forces of the Palestinian Authority.

³⁰ "Al-Quds," of 13 April 1998 in the *Jerusalem Post*, Press Review, 14 April 1998 (see <http://www.jpost.co.il/Columns/Article-1.html> for an online version).

³¹ The annual Diary of PASSIA, Jerusalem, contains a comprehensive list of Palestinian associations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Despite the military censorship in Israel, freedom of the press is a highly appreciated value in the Israeli society as the existence of a variety of newspapers – e.g., *Ha'aretz*, *Ma'ariv* and the English language paper *The Jerusalem Post*, in addition to the magazine *Jerusalem Report*, etc., illustrates. The military censorship applies only to military secrets and is applied in a rather selective way when issues of so-called state security are involved.³² Palestinians could also benefit from these liberties as shown by the emergence and continuation of Palestinian newspapers such as *Al-Quds* and the English language paper, *The Jerusalem Times - Biladi*.

Since the Palestinian Authority took control of Gaza and of Palestinian West Bank cities such as Ramallah, Nablus, and Jericho, the violation of the freedom of press by Palestinian security forces has been frequent. There are currently no checks and balances to control the Palestinian President or guarantee the freedom of expression; rather, the Palestinians seem to be ruled by a President who enjoys practically unlimited power. Gurr's, Jagger's and Moore's model can be applied to the Palestinian Authority in order to underline the lack of respect for civil liberties on the part of the Palestinian Authority, the quasi absence of checks and balances of Arafat's power and the absence of any real separation of powers. Gurr and Jagger's research regarding democracy and autocracy can be applied in the context of the Palestinian Authority.³³ The concepts of autocracy and democracy indicators are used in the set of data that Gurr named 'Polity II'. The data is based on Gurr's study of the continuity and change of political systems.³⁴ Gurr assessed the durability of regimes between 1800 and 1971 and coded each regime according to the degree of authority which the regime operated. The degree of authority in a regime can be assessed by referring to (1) the influence between the hierarchical levels; (2) the inequality between the different strata of the hierarchy; (3) the competitiveness in the recruitment process; and (4) the basis of legitimacy.³⁵ In his study Gurr used a more refined scale than in previous comparative assessments in order to classify the different historical regimes. Prior studies were limited to the period before the historic changes that took place in the late 1980s. Therefore, 'Polity III' data reflects the changes that have taken place since the late 1980s, such as, for example, the collapse of the Soviet Union and of Yugoslavia.

³² Author's research in Jerusalem, June 1995, confidential.

³³ K. Jagers and T.R. Gurr. "Tracking Democracy's Third Wave with the Polity III Data." *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 32, no. 4 (1995), pp. 469-482.

³⁴ T.R. Gurr. "Persistence and Change in Political Systems, 1800-1971," op.cit., pp. 1482-1504.

³⁵ Ibid.; K. Jagers and T.R. Gurr. "Tracking Democracy's Third Wave...", op.cit., p.470.

In their study, Jagers and Gurr attached importance to the assessment of institutions and procedures through which citizens could express their opinions and votes. Furthermore, for Western regimes typical limits given to the executive power were discussed. In a modern democracy, citizens delegate their sovereignty to a bureaucratic government in charge of administering their affairs. Sartori defines democracy as a

“political system in which the people exercise power to the extent that they are able to change their governors, but not to the extent of governing themselves. The only way the sovereign people can maintain the degree of power they need and are capable of wielding is not to give their governors unlimited power.”³⁶

The discussion about the separation of the executive and legislative power in the Palestinian Authority has therefore a key importance in discussing the democratic potential of the Palestinian society. Furthermore, Jagers and Gurr underline the importance of the guarantees of civil liberties to all citizens, regardless of their ethnic or national origins, religions, political opinions, or handicaps. The authors summarize these guarantees as the traditional concept of human rights.³⁷ Jagers and Gurr use in the context of their study the concept *Polyarchy* and quote Dahl as saying “*Polyarchy* is the best but nonetheless ‘imperfect approximation’ of the ideal democracy.”³⁸ Four variables are regarded as crucial in the assessing of the degree of Polyarchy: (1) fair elections; (2) freedom of expression; (3) availability of alternative sources of information; and (4) freedom of organization.

A high level of political competition and the participation of the citizens are considered as crucial in a democracy. For example, the level of competition is measured by the share smaller parties or groups gain in elections for presidential or legislative functions. The authors notice that liberal democracy has no legitimate alternative in societies that are strongly shaped by Western thought. Once again, the situation in the territories under Palestinian administration and the Occupied Territories does not reflect the model presented by the American researcher R. Dahl. We notice in this context that the economic dimension is excluded in all these

³⁶ G. Sartori, quoted in *ibid.*, p.471.

³⁷ For a discussion about Islam and human rights, see M. Monshipouri and C. G. Kukla. “Islam, Democracy and Human Rights: The Continuing Debate in the West.” *Middle East Policy*, vol. 3, no. 2 (1992), pp. 22-46.

³⁸ R. Dahl. *Polyarchy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971, quoted in Jagers and Gurr, “Tracking Democracy’s Third Wave...”, *op.cit.*, p. 474.

discussions about democracy and focus according to an Anglo-Saxon approach more on political rights.

The lack of sufficient respect for civil liberties on the part of the Palestinian Authority, the quasi absence of checks and balances on Arafat's power and the absence of any real separation of powers reinforces the impression that the PA favors in the current conditions a less democratic mode of government.

The long-standing lack of competitive recruitment for leading positions in the PLO has further weakened attempts to build a democratic state under the control of the Palestinian Authority because of the lack of a democratic tradition. Candidates for elections are frequently co-opted and not freely selected, and Arafat's intervention in the election campaign of the Palestinian elections of January 1996 caused chaos; Fateh held elections to select candidates but many of those chosen were removed from the list by Fateh leader Arafat, who replaced them with candidates that he favored.³⁹ The European Union Electoral Unit criticized the allocation of seats, the shortened election campaign, which was cut from 22 days to 14, and the breach of the Election Law and charged the PLO with the "arbitrary use of power to redesign the electoral architecture."⁴⁰

On 20 December 1995, three Hamas members took advantage of the reopened nomination period to register as independent candidates. The three - Said An-Namrouti, Isma'il Haniya, and Khaled Al-Hindi - who had all been members of the Hamas delegation to the Cairo talks with the Palestinian Authority subsequently withdrew their nominations. They claimed that their participation in the elections would create too much confusion within Hamas and among fellow Islamic supporters. Hamas denied that it had called for a total boycott, even though it distanced itself from an independent candidate in Northern Gaza, Imad Al-Falouji, the publisher of *Al-Watan* newspaper who used to be close to Hamas.⁴¹ Until the very last moment, the Islamic movement appeared reluctant to accept the challenge of elections.

³⁹ "Arafat causes chaos as campaigning starts." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1996), p.9.

⁴⁰ European Electoral Unit, statement made by the former Swedish Minister of Justice Carl Lidbom, "EU Observer Speaks Out." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1996), p. 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.9.

2.3 Why Minorities Rebel in Palestine?

The confrontation between the Palestinians and the Israeli army that took place during the *Intifada* was easier to apprehend than the emerging confrontation between the Palestinian Authority leadership and Hamas militants. Indeed, the rebellion of the Palestinians that began in 1987 fits the criteria enumerated in Gurr's study.⁴² The Israeli Government understood that the *Intifada* made it more difficult for things to continue as they were. As a democracy, Israel discussed at great length the continuous confrontation between Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and the army; since the latter is composed of conscripts, practically every Israeli was concerned by the constant violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Moreover, much was known in Israeli society about the economic situation in the Palestinian territories due to the first-hand accounts and experiences of Israelis soldiers. The causes of the *Intifada* in the West Bank and Gaza can be evaluated by using Gurr's criteria:

- 1) A large extent of collective disadvantage such as limits to freedom of movement and opinion and a high level of group identity, the latter being commonly found among conquered nations. The early founding of the Arab National Party and the attempts by the Supreme Muslim Council to block the sale of land to Jews in 1920 illustrate this development.⁴³ The decision by the Palestinian Authority to threaten to execute Palestinians who sell land to Israel should be seen as the continuation of the historical policy.
- 2) The extent of group cohesion and mobilization was confirmed with the 1987 Palestinian uprising. The effective mobilization during the *Intifada* depended on the formation of a coalition between the Muslim Brotherhood and the PLO. The PLO-dominated Unified National Leadership was set up during the *Intifada*. However, the emergence of the radical movement Hamas challenged its sole guiding role. The Islamic militants did not recognize the sole responsibility of the Unified National Leadership about structuring the *Intifada* and organized their own policies and actions. The Muslim Brotherhood had initially built up a dense network of social assistance and welfare associations and seen its hey-day, and nothing appeared to be able to prevent the rising of the Hamas to the position of the leading Palestinian organization under Israeli occupation.

⁴² T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*. Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 1993, pp.125-132.

⁴³ M. Tessler. *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, pp.226-228.

- 3) Gurr quotes the repressive control of a dominant group as a third element in explaining why minorities rebel. The images of the *Intifada*, during which heavily armed Israeli soldiers found themselves required to confront Palestinian children throwing stones are examples of such a power structure. In the long run, soldiers used to fighting terrorists and foreign armies rejected the idea of having to fight women and children.⁴⁴

The *Intifada* helped in increasing the competitive nature of the PLO-Hamas relationship. Gurr⁴⁵ has argued that the mobilization of groups with competing political movements and organizations can lead to fighting between factions with the potential to wreck any attempts to reconcile the warring parties. Among the contenders for power in the Israeli-controlled territories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were traditional groups such as Islamic militants and religious preachers. The fighting between Palestinian factions, for example, George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) had already weakened the Palestinian movement in the past. Another rebel, Abu Nidal, had broken with Arafat following the October War of 1973 and established his ultra-militant faction, Fateh - the Revolutionary Council, with which he waged a war against the PLO.⁴⁶

During the *Intifada*, Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood succeeded in posing a serious threat to the secular PLO in terms of power. Hamas, for example, called for general strikes on days other than those named as strike days by the Unified National Leadership and rejected the leadership of the PLO.⁴⁷ Israeli policies also helped to increase the influence of Hamas: Israeli-controlled institutions such as courts were shut down, and the spiritual leaders of Hamas were increasingly called upon to act as mediators. This was an effective way used by the Israelis to promote Hamas as the main challenger to the PLO. The Islamic resistance movement thus affirmed its cohesion as a group and its capacity for mobilization.

The increased influence and organizational independence of Hamas was finally criticized by the PLO-dominated Unified National Leadership:

⁴⁴ Author's conversation with Israeli soldiers concerning the ways in which they perceived the *Intifada*, July 1996.

⁴⁵ T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

⁴⁶ P. Seale. *Asad of Syria*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, p. 465.

⁴⁷ Z. Abu Amr. *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 69.

“Recently the national movement has noted attempts by Hamas, which is a wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, to impose its authority on the national street and to arrange a general strike (...) We extend our hands to any force that wishes to share in the national task and we do not exclude Hamas from our efforts to unify the fighting position. However, any attempts to force positions upon our masses will be resisted.”⁴⁸

The stage for increasing rivalry between the PLO and the Muslim Brotherhood was thus set. Hamas increased its popular legitimacy throughout the *Intifada*, which revealed the enormous capacity of the Palestinians to fight Israeli military forces in the West Bank and Gaza. However, the divisions amongst the Palestinians confirmed that the group would not be able to fight efficiently alone with the aim of destroying Israel. Nevertheless, nobody had dared to imagine that the Islamic militants might resort to carrying out suicide bombings involving Israeli targets and resulting in numerous casualties.

The criteria used in Gurr’s research project Polity III enables us to study the democratic character of a regime, for example, by evaluating the competitive character of elections.⁴⁹ Elections are not necessarily a sign of democracy if, for example, the selection of candidates has to respect discriminatory guidelines or if candidates are pre-selected by the executive. Gurr referred to the degree of competition in the political participation,⁵⁰ the competitive recruitment of the executive branch,⁵¹ and the limits imposed on the president of the executive branch. The criteria of this study further weaken the democratic legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority when we assess the conduct of the election campaign for the first Palestinian legislative and presidential elections in 1996. Indeed, the challenge of Islamic Fundamentalism pushed the secular Palestinian leadership around Yasser Arafat to adopt a rather selective democratic strategy.

⁴⁸ The United National Leadership of the *Intifada*, Leaflet no. 25, 6 September 1988. Ibid., pp.70-71.

⁴⁹ Definitions are given in detail in T.R. Gurr, K. Jagers and W. Moore. “The Transformation of the Western State...” op.cit., pp.73-108.

⁵⁰ A scale mentioning different degrees to measure democratic recruitment: a) competitive, b) intermediate, c) faction-based, d) limited, e) forbidden.

⁵¹ a) Elections, b) joint selection, c) selection.

2.4 Two Concepts of Legitimacy Confront Each Other: Religious and Secular Theories

The Islamic influence and the change in the balance of power between Islamist and nationalist are also evident in the changing nationalistic speeches. The nationalists have resorted to a discourse that has used Islamic symbols,⁵² whereas the PLO statements and the leaflets issued by the Unified National Leadership contained verses of the Qur'an. Instead of there being a secularization of politics, as was the case in Israel, there was a creeping Islamization of the political discourse among Palestinians. The lack of a solid democratic commitment on the part of the PLO leadership gives secular legitimacy a bitter taste; democracy was used only as a tool to conquer power in the international arena, and nowadays, the Palestinians seem to have no option but to choose between two autocratic movements.

The roots of today's Islamic movements go back to Hassan Al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, which was established in Egypt in 1928, and to the Jamaa't Al-Islami in Pakistan, which was established by a group of Islamic activists, headed by Abul 'Ala Maududi, in India in 1941.⁵³ The radical Islamists generally preach the return to the Qur'an and the *Sunna* and reject the commentaries. Moreover, they have adopted a particularly strong position in regard to the issues of the Qur'an, women and the application of the *Shari'a*. These Muslim militants perceive Islam as a global system and instead of just practicing Islam and going to the mosque, they go to the streets and attempt to conquer the political power.⁵⁴ Radicals such as Khomeini even called for attacking Muslim states that are corrupt. With the exception of the Islamic movement of Iran, the movement is led by young intellectuals and professionals. Radical Islamists such as Abul 'Ala Maududi believe that the society has first to be purified before the principles of Islam can be truly practiced. Yet by enforcing a conservative practice of the *Shari'a* as happened in Iran, the necessary spiritual transformation was not achieved. Radical Islamists face

⁵² Z. Abu-Amr. *Emerging Trends in Palestinian Strategic Political Thinking and Practice*. Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1992, p.26.

⁵³ After the British decolonization of India and the resulting independence of Pakistan in 1947 the movement worked as an independent organization in India as well as in Pakistan. After the secession of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971, Jamaa't Al-Islami operates in this country as Jamaa't Al-Islami Bangladesh. For an assessment of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jamaa't Al-Islami refer to the following books written by G. Kepel. *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in the Modern World*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994; and *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: the Prophet and Pharaoh*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.

⁵⁴ O. Roy. *The Failure of Political Islam*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.

a vicious circle: How can Muslims live the principles established by the Qur'an when the society deviates from the spiritual and material conditions of the Prophet's time? How could the Islamic activists achieve a spiritual transformation of the Muslim community necessary to the adoption of Islamic principles when the very same principles can only be enforced by force? Abul 'Ala Maududi's movement stands therefore in a sharp contrast to the conservative Islamic regimes in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

The 1979 takeover of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, the immediate consequence of the Iranian revolution, caused a mobilization of dissatisfied Saudis. The political reading of the Qur'an has transformed the Islamists into a dangerous destabilizing force that even threatens established Islamic governments like the Wahabbi in Saudi Arabia. With the sole exception of Iran, radical fundamentalists have not developed an institutional framework. The Jamaa't Al-Islami leader Abul 'Ala Maududi admits that Islam does not have a fixed constitution for ruling a country and that the conquest of power is necessary in order to establish the Islamic regime.⁵⁵ He argues that Muslims cannot live a life according to the principles revealed in the Qur'an if the state does not respect the principles revealed therein. The conquest of power by the Jamaa't Al-Islami follows simple principles. The Jamaa't Al-Islami movement asks people first to accept Islam as the ruling force in their own personal life and then attempt to convert their fellow citizens and establish an Islamic state.⁵⁶

The Islamic activists of the Jamaa't Al-Islami do not advocate new revolutionary solutions for social problems. They advocate instead a return to a pre-industrial organization of the society and the literal respect of the Qur'an. The Jamaa't Al-Islami have renounced any attempts to practice *ijihad* and have concentrated instead on trying to prescribe a fixed set of rules for everyday living.

Islamic activists like Jamaa't Al-Islami leader Abul 'Ala Maududi preached the return to the Islamic prescriptions provided by the Qur'an. The attempt to reconcile modernity and Islam thus became secondary. This conservative Islamic fundamentalism of the Muslim Brotherhood also gained importance in Egypt. The Egyptian lawyer Sanhuri attempted to reconcile modernity and Islam by formulating a new civil code in 1949 but his attempt was to fail. Indeed, the creeping Islamization of the Egypt-

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ The basic four-point program of the Jamaa't Al-Islami movement is online available at: <http://www.muslims.net/jib/4point.html>.

tian legal system continued after a period of liberal reform, which witnessed the adoption of the modified Jihan Sadat Law after the Supreme Court rejected the first draft in 1985. The Supreme Court had ruled that the law - named after the wife of the late President Sadat - granted women too many rights and thus violated the spirit of the Qur'an. The influence of the Iranian revolution and the revival of political Islam could thus be felt in the Egyptian capital.

The failure to export the Iranian Islamic revolution of 1978 should not be understood as a failure to revive Islamic thinking. Since 1978, radical Islamist movements have remained a disturbing irrational factor of politics in the Middle East and in Muslim countries beyond. Massacres committed by Islamic fundamentalists in Algeria are an expression of the capacity of the Islamic movement to disturb civil society and confirm its authoritarian tendencies. The movement may not have the capacities to overthrow a military regime but it can still terrorize the citizens using indiscriminate terror. Islamic terror can easily lead to regional instability. For example, the Islamic terrorist attack on President Husni Mubarak during a meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa⁵⁷ in June 1995 resulted in tensions with the Sudanese Islamic military regime. Egypt accused Sudan of harboring Egyptian Islamic terrorists and of sponsoring international terror movements but a military confrontation was avoided.

The fragile regional balance in the Middle East can easily be disturbed. What might have happened if President Mubarak had died in such a terrorist attack? Since the assassination of President Sadat and the ascent to power of Mubarak, no new vice-president has been nominated, and were Mubarak to be assassinated, the military might seize power. In order to enhance the new ruler's sovereignty and gain popular legitimacy, the military government might attempt to remilitarize the Sinai and denounce the Camp David Agreement. A strong Israeli military reaction to any such attempt would be very likely, as the War of 1967 has already proven. Such a scenario is even more probable in light of the fact that Mubarak warned Israel that it would face destruction and terror if it mishandled the Middle East Peace Process.⁵⁸

Hamas has not challenged the Palestinian Authority militarily in a continued direct confrontation but the Islamic resistance movement has refused

⁵⁷ An assault on Mubarak's limousine occurred during the summit. *Financial Times*, 27 June 1995, p. 4.

⁵⁸ *Reuters World Service*, 14 November 1996.

to recognize the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians. Article 27 of the Hamas Charter⁵⁹ confirms that the Islamic militants will not accept the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians. The Charter, which was written during the *Intifada*, rejects a unified secular opposition to Israel. A possible ethnic and religious conflict appears to be on the horizon if Hamas follows its own charter and attempts to challenge the leadership of the Palestinian Authority.

“The organization (PLO) adopted the idea of a secular state... secularist ideology is in total contradiction to religious ideologies and it is upon ideology that positions, actions and decisions are based... We cannot exchange the present and future of Islam in Palestine in order to adopt the secular ideology because the Islamic nature of the Palestinian issues is part of... our ideology and way of life... and whosoever neglects part of this... is surely lost.”⁶⁰

In other words, the Islamists believe that the Palestinian Authority has chosen the wrong path. Still, Hamas has expressed hope that the PLO may recognize that the negotiations with Israel are doomed to failure and will reverse the Palestinian Authority's politics. The radical Islamic opposition does not specify in the Charter the actions the group will take in the event that the Palestinian Authority attempts to establish a secular state, but the message for the PLO is clear: the longer it waits, the more difficult it may be to assure its supremacy. In some aspects, the PLO and Hamas share certain organizational principles: the Hamas Charter, for example, does not promote the idea of competitive recruitment or an egalitarian structure of command. If we refer to the criteria presented by T.R. Gurr such as competitive elections instead of nominations, we can assess the capacity of an organization such as Hamas to play according to democratic rules or simply to accept different opinions.⁶¹ The radical Hamas Charter contains, however, principles that seem to exclude democratic practice.⁶²

Hamas has not yet labeled the PLO an illegitimate leadership and called for a Jihad against it. Instead, it states that it will respect the PLO as a brother, but that it will only fight for it once the organization adopts Islam as the guiding ideology - a development that is highly unlikely. Hamas,

⁵⁹ *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4 (Summer 1993), pp. 130-131.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., pp.125-132.

⁶² See for details “Special Document: Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) of Palestine.” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4 (Summer 1993), pp. 122-134.

which refers to Islam as its system (Article 1), confirms that its task is to 'liberate' all of Palestine (Article 13) by resorting to a holy war (Article 15). Islam rejects the concept of popular sovereignty because sovereignty can only reside in God. Indeed, since the *Shari'a* was revealed by God in the Qur'an, Islamic activists cannot accept that popular consensus is superior to God's will.⁶³ The Palestinian Authority is today challenged by a radical Islamic movement, Hamas, which rejects the Oslo Agreement as the basis for any form of Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation.

The battle for legitimacy between secular and religious movements has weakened the capacity of the Palestinians to mobilize. The lack of group cohesion⁶⁴ is underscored by the organizational independence of the secular and religious movements. The effective mobilization of internal diverse groups frequently depends on the formation of coalitions among diverse segments and contending leaders.⁶⁵ Consequently, a failure to build coalitions may facilitate the State's task of quelling protests.

In addition, the attitude toward the role of women in society has crystallized the opposition between the radical Islamic movement Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. Article 18 of the Hamas Charter restricts the role of women in both the present and future society, and although Hamas praises the role played by women in the field of education and in the home, it limits their involvement in modern society. The *Shari'a*, which regulated all aspects of the pre-industrial Islamic society will – so the Islamists argue – also define the role of women in the 21st Century. The Islamists want to implement a policy that was formulated in the first century of the Islamic calendar when the challenges of modern society were not yet known. In other terms, the Islamic doctrine limits the freedom of individuals once such freedom conflicts with Islamic Law since popular sovereignty cannot challenge the Qur'an.⁶⁶

A confrontation between the secular movement and the radical Islamic opposition emerged during the Intifada when attempts were made to make the wearing of the *hijab* by Palestinian women compulsory. Women made an enormous contribution to the *Intifada* right from its very beginning. In

⁶³ B. Badie. *Les Deux Etats*. Paris: Fayard, 1986, pp.109-128.

⁶⁴ T.R. Gurr, *Minorities at Risk*, Op.cit., pp.127.

⁶⁵ Coalition formation can serve as the key to successful ethnic-political movements as it does in regard to revolutionary groups. See J. Goldstone, J. A. Gurr, T.R. & Moshiri, eds. *Revolution of the Late Twentieth Century*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991; and T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p. 377.

⁶⁶ J. Esposito. *Islam and Politics*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1991.

addition to carrying out traditional tasks such as cooking and educating, they were often to be seen fighting in the streets, a consequence of which was the killing of 70 women by Israeli soldiers.⁶⁷ They also played a major role in the village and residential councils in the early stages of the uprising.⁶⁸ However, the orders of the PLO-dominated Unified National Command encouraged female activities in the traditional sectors and not in politics. The emergence of the female movement in the Palestinian society during the *Intifada* disturbed the functioning of the political Palestinian institution and ironically, women are hardly represented in the official institutions of the emerging secular Palestinian State. Despite the rather non-democratic recruitment and the autocratic management of the PLO and Hamas, both organizations differ in important aspects as far as the tolerance of an independent civil society is concerned. Whereas the PLO may not be at the forefront of the women's movement, the involvement of key figures such as Hanan Ashrawi or Samiha Khalil, the challenger of Yasser Arafat in the first Palestinian national elections, in Palestinian politics reveals some of the sharp differences of a society that the secular and the religious movement intend to construct: The PLO failed initially to promote a more active role of women in politics prior to the *Intifada* and had difficulties in coming to terms with the activism of women during the Palestinian uprising. The secular movement nevertheless clearly rejects the radical Islamic interpretation of the woman's role in society.

Consequently, the women's movement rapidly lost ground and failed to amass new rights in the post-*Intifada* period. Worse was to come. A vast Islamic movement launched an assault on the values and rights that women believed were respected by the society. Preachers and radical Islamic students called for women to wear the *hijab*, and graffiti in Gaza and loudspeakers from the mosques called for all women to be veiled. The secular and PLO-dominated Unified National Leadership abstained at first from interfering in the Muslim Brotherhood's religious activities. The fundamentalists felt encouraged, and in August 1989, radical Islamic students attacked two women who were not wearing the *hijab*. Only now did the Unified National Leadership feel compelled to intervene and to order that women not be attacked for not wearing the *hijab*.⁶⁹ The role of women in society revealed again the deepening rift between Hamas and

⁶⁷ E. Kuttab. "Libération des Femmes, Libération Nationale." *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, no. 51 (Spring 1994) pp. 67 -72.

⁶⁸ R. Hammami. "L'Intifada a-t-elle émancipé les femmes?" *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, no. 51 (Summer 1994), pp. 59-65.

⁶⁹ Directive 43 of the Unified National Leadership quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 59-65.

the PLO leadership. A first public competition between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority was on the agenda.

The mosques continued to call for the compulsory wearing of the *hijab*, and in Ramadan 1990, the movement against women's rights intensified even further. Fundamentalists applied the following strategy to impose the *hijab*: first, they urged women to demonstrate their nationalistic feelings by wearing the *hijab* without referring to religious motives, then, they gradually mixed the nationalistic and religious arguments until the *hijab* had a clear religious significance. No exceptions were tolerated in cities where the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas had gained an increasingly powerful position in the society. Consequently, women were persecuted if they dared to appear in public without covering their heads.

The situation of the women's rights movement has remained uncertain in the Palestinian territories and the elections of 20 January 1996 failed to produce a significant number of female representatives. Democratic elections and the role of women in society have remained essential elements in the analysis of the growing split between secular and Islamic movements in the Palestinian society.

2.5 The Palestinian Authority and the Muslim Brotherhood

2.5.1 Electoral Legitimacy vs. Hamas Religious Legitimacy?

2.5.1.1 Professional Elections

As the previous assessment of the Hamas Charter illustrated, Islam does on the one hand not determine public order by the use of elections or the democratic designation of the leadership. On the other hand, the Charter does not exclude the participation of Islamic activists in elections - provided they respect the limits of the Qur'an. It is not surprising that the Hamas Charter does not mention the term elections, although there is no prohibition of it either. Article 1 of the Charter recognizes God as the supreme authority. This article has not prevented members of Hamas and other Islamic candidates, who have built up a network of charities and religious and professional associations across the West Bank and Gaza Strip, from participating in democratic elections. The Islamic movements participated in elections to gain influence in the said associations and committees. Could we consider this a first attempt to gain democratic legitimacy? Was the movement willing to play according to democratic criteria?

The Algerian Front de Salvation Islamique (FIS) was split between a liberal and a militant faction. The liberal branch of the FIS seemed to gain importance shortly before the first round of the elections of 1991. ‘Abbasi Madani, the leader of the liberal faction, tried in public statements to reassure foreign observers about the intentions of the FIS. He declared, that

“pluralism is a guarantee of cultural wealth, and diversity is needed for development. We are Muslims, but we are not Islam itself (...) we do not monopolize religion. Democracy as we understand it means pluralism, choice, and freedom.”⁷⁰

The FIS scored an impressive success with 81 percent of the votes in the first round. Encouraged by France, the Algerian military stepped in during January 1992, and prevented a second round of the elections. As a result, the liberal wing of the Islamic movement gradually lost its key position in the FIS and radical groups such as the Group Islamique Armé (GIA), the Armed Islamic Group launched a murderous civil war.

The enemy image of radical and murderous Islamic militants proved to be a good example of a mirror image: The Western description of Islamic militants being unable to play according to the rules democracy of, turned out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy since the secular Algerian regime pushed the Islamic movements in a military confrontation by preventing the FIS electoral victory. In fact, Algerian military maintained the military’s moral and image of a diabolic Islamic movement by taking the steps that provoked eventually a military confrontation. By acting like they did, the military created finally an Islamic movement that reflected their initial image of it. When the FIS fought the decision to suspend the elections by a military fight, Western States did not criticize initially the Algerian government.⁷¹ Indeed, the question is not whether the Islamic movement is willing to conquer power by winning elections, but whether or not the movement can be voted out of power once it has won the elections.

Secular Palestinian leaders in the West Bank and Gaza tried prevent the Islamists from gaining more power in the professional elections. In 1992,

⁷⁰ A. Madani quoted by C. Kurzman. “Liberal Islam: Prospects and Challenges.” *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA)*, vol. 3, no. 3 (September 1999), p. 7 (<http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria/index.html>).

⁷¹ For the discussions of mirror images and their role in conflicts see G. N. Sande et al. “Value-Guided Attributions: Maintaining the Moral Self-Image and the Diabolical Enemy Image.” *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 45, no. 2 (1989), pp. 91-94. For an introduction see R. R. Holt and B. Silverstein, “On the Psychology of Enemy Images: Introduction and Overview.” *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 45, no. 2 (1989), pp. 1-11.

the Islamists won 45 percent of the votes in the elections of the Nablus Chamber of Commerce, which, due to the electoral system, translated as only three out of 21 seats.⁷² The progress of the Islamic movement continued.

On some occasions, the Islamic resistance movement scored more votes than any of the given PLO factions except perhaps Fateh and sometimes it scored more than all the PLO factions combined, the 1992 elections of the Ramallah Chamber of Commerce being a good example. The Fateh-dominated PLO had opted for an Islamic discourse to counterbalance the advance of the Islamic movement in the Occupied Territories; in the Nablus Chamber of Commerce elections of 1992. The PLO nationalists ran under the name of 'the Muslim Nationalist Trend'⁷³, although they still failed to win. Since the signing of the Oslo Agreement, Hamas has continuously improved its performance in professional and student elections, as the following assessment of elections for student councils will show.

2.5.1.2 *Student Elections*

Students, the most dynamic element in Palestinian society, are frequently used as a sample in assessments of the Palestinian political opinion. The *Intifada* and the Iranian revolution enabled Hamas to confirm the Muslim militants' autonomy within the Palestinian society. After a few years, Islam had emerged in the Occupied Territories as a challenging force that disturbed equally the Israeli occupation and the PLO's control of the local municipalities and cities by a network of local notables. Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran seemingly offered an alternative to a capitalist and Western-orientated state since students frequently expressed broad support for Hamas. Today, the elections for student councils and professional associations confirm the popularity of Hamas, whose student groups are extremely active, among young Palestinians: despite bloody terror attacks involving Israeli civilian victims, Hamas has enjoyed about 40 to 45 percent of the votes expressed in elections for student councils.⁷⁴

The Islamist challenge can even be felt in the traditional PLO-stronghold Birzeit University near the small city of Ramallah on the West Bank. Every year the 51-seat student council is chosen in open, democratic elections. In the years before the existence of the Palestinian Authority,

⁷² Z. Abu-Amr. *Emerging Trends...*, op.cit., p.25.

⁷³ *Al-Quds*, 18 May 1992, quoted in Z. Abu-Amr. *Emerging Trends ...*, op.cit., p. 26.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.24.

Birzeit's elections, in which students from all over the West Bank and Gaza participated, were regarded as a political barometer of Palestinian political opinion. However, the most recent elections of 13 April 1998 resulted in a confirmation of the political role played by the Islamic Bloc, since the list scored 39.34 percent of the votes and gained 20 seats. The pro-Fateh Jerusalem Bloc scored 37.23 percent (19 seats), the pro-left Democratic Student pole 19.13 percent (ten seats), the independent Change Block 3.36 percent (two seats), and the radical bloc of the Martyr Fathi Shiqaqi only 0.95 percent (no seats). Of the 2,771 eligible voters, 86.65 percent actually voted.⁷⁵

The Islamic Bloc has challenged the pro-Fateh students continuously since 1995. The Bloc scored 34 percent in 1995, 43 percent in 1996, and 37.33 percent in 1997. Meanwhile, the pro-Fateh group attempted to preserve its leading position but in vain: 40 percent in 1995, 32 percent in 1996, and 42.78 percent in 1997. The voter turnout was as follows: 86 percent in 1997, 79 percent in 1996 and 85 percent in 1995. The Hamas results were impressive.

In comparison, in the 1992 student council elections, PLO supporters had still gained 66 percent of the votes whereas the Islamists secured only 33 percent.⁷⁶ The results showed that the students had apparently opted for a more lenient attitude toward Israel. Ironically, the Oslo Agreement seemed to inverse this trend and to help promote the Islamic resistance movement rather than the PLO-led student groups. In the November 1993 elections, for example, during which Christian students ran on the same ticket as the Islamic Bloc, an alliance of left-wing students and the Islamic Bloc seized power from the pro-Arafat Sha'biba faction, which had dominated student politics for eight years. Before the Oslo Accords were signed, the alliance ran on a 'Jerusalem-First' coalition and won the elections.⁷⁷

The students' opposition to an arrangement between the PLO and Israel that might not settle the status of Jerusalem was evident. The pro-Fateh students had lost their representation since a 'first past the post' system enabled the opposition to achieve a total takeover of the student council. This challenge to the Fateh movement in its traditional stronghold was not accepted: the administration, being loyal to Fateh, changed the electoral system to prevent the Fateh followers from being voted out of power.

⁷⁵ Birzeit Election Team, phone call, 25 April 1998, and university web site (www.birzeit.edu/).

⁷⁶ Z. Abu-Amr. *Emerging Trends ...*, op. cit., p.25.

⁷⁷ Birzeit University Newsletter, English ed., no. 26, August 1995 (<http://www.birzeit.edu/news>).

Following the signing of the Oslo Agreement, a proportional voting system replaced the old 'winner takes all' system. The new system will help to ensure that the pro-Fateh lists will never be excluded from the student council in the future. The rising threat of an Islamic takeover of the 51 seats in the student council was thus prevented in the former Fateh stronghold. Birzeit's Public Relations Director, Albert Aghazarian called the 1995 student elections "a model for Palestinian democracy."⁷⁸ However, student groups knew that worse was to come.

The new electoral system of 1995 is a long way from allowing a competitive change in the composition of the student council. According to the system, the different blocs are allowed to decide which of their candidates should hold the available seats only after the elections have taken place. In addition, the election campaign was shortened to a mere two days. The first Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996 were going to witness the use of similar tricks to shape the outcome of the vote, something that was criticized by the European Election Observers.⁷⁹ Carl Lidbom the head of the European Election Unit accused the Palestinian Authority in particular of breaching the Election Law by shortening the election campaign without giving any explanation: the election campaign had been shortened from 22 days to 14 days without any explanation being offered. He argued that this added to the difficulties of the independent candidates since the period hardly gave them time to conduct their campaign: they were lacking the necessary infrastructure to compete with official candidates that were supported by political movements. He also claimed that the Central Election Commission was marginalized since all allocations of the seats were issued by presidential decree. The European Union followed closely the election campaign and the elections on 20 January 1996 since the Commission Vice-President Manuel Marin and the European Union Troika, headed by the Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli were present.⁸⁰ The high-ranking delegation witnessed in January 1996 an election that would lead to a government structure that reflected elements of the new Birzeit student council with a government dominated by the executive.

The Birzeit elections showed that the executive would be reinforced by the new electoral system. Birzeit could perhaps be qualified as a test-run

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*; see also: <http://www.birzeit.edu/news/26elect.html>.

⁷⁹ "Enough is Enough." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1996), p. 12.

⁸⁰ C. Lidbom / Statement of European Electoral Unit, *ibid.*, p. 12. For more details see the EU press release IP/96/59 of 19 January 1996 at <http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/welcome.htm>.

for elections in order to see to what extent the institutions could be managed by the executive in order to produce a result that will be more acceptable in the eyes of the PLO leadership.

Yet, the Birzeit system seems sophisticated if we compare it to the methods used by Arafat to nominate his allies as candidates. The Birzeit University opted for a more executive-orientated governing structure for the student council: a cabinet composed of 11 members has to be composed through a majority vote of the 51 council members. If the party with the largest number of seats does not establish a council within seven days, the second largest party has a week to try and so on. In other words: a system of coalitions may help to keep the largest bloc out of power if a sufficiently large number of secondary student blocs are able to forge a coalition. The decision of the student body to favor a bloc may become irrelevant if a sufficiently large number of the members of the student council decide to build a composite coalition. Did Palestinian students try to test the regulations, which might one day allow the PLO groups to run the university administration under any conditions, even if Hamas were to secure most of the votes in the elections? The question is important, especially if one considers the role played by Birzeit University in the Palestinian society.

Support for the Palestinian Authority and President Arafat is by no means unanimous at Birzeit. For example, a group of radical students named their list after one of the founders of the Islamic Jihad, Fathi Shiqaqi, who was allegedly assassinated by Israeli agents in Malta in October 1995. The Bloc of Martyr Fathi Shiqaqi obtained 2.31 percent of the votes in 1997 (one seat) and showed that the militant Islamic groups were far from popular among the student body. The student elections have already proven that the Islamists have the potential to achieve surprising results in free elections. Moreover, even in the Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad were able to achieve impressive results.

The electoral rivalry between Hamas and the PLO-orientated students showed that the political confrontation was going to be conducted along a secular-religious cleavage. Never before had the Palestinians known such a rivalry between two major groups. The occasional clashes between Hamas and Fateh in Gaza and in other parts of the Occupied Territories and the territories under the Palestinian Authority illustrate the desire of Hamas to remain as independent as possible.⁸¹ Therefore, the coexistence of Islam and democracy is yet another challenge for Hamas and the Is-

⁸¹ The cooperation attempts between Hamas and the PLO will be assessed in the section analyzing the implications of the first Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996.

lamic Jihad.⁸¹ The chances that popular sovereignty will be allowed to question the divine Qur'an are close to non-existent; the Qur'an is accepted as the word of God and the Islamic Resistance Movement will not allow voters to question it.⁸² While the PLO and Hamas may indeed have non-competitive recruitment styles, the newly elected Palestinian Authority and President Yasser Arafat would be invested with popular legitimacy - essential but, as the future would reveal, not sufficient ingredients for any further contacts with the Israeli and US Government. The question remains how the PLO-led Palestinian Authority would react if it were one day obliged to hand over power to an opposition movement if, for example, the economic situation in the territories under Palestinian control were to deteriorate further.

As Gurr notes, political autonomy and economic rights are very important for minorities in the Middle East. Islam has promoted an egalitarian approach to society. The Islamic ideology is thus a suitable tool for protesting against the current economic order between Israelis and Palestinians since "the economic situation has become extremely difficult."⁸³ The new democratic legitimacy appears to be of minor importance to Hamas since a parliament could never question the *Shari'a* and the Qur'an. Political autonomy and economic rights are very important for minorities in the Middle East and can provoke violent reactions if both are not granted. A regional comparison with the Islamic movement in Jordan has taught important lessons regarding the involvement of radical groups in politics.

2.5.2 Sharing Responsibility with Hamas to Improve Control of the Islamic Movement?

The Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood won a third of the seats in the first pluralistic elections in 1989.⁸⁴ The late King Hussein involved the Islamists in politics and succeeded in limiting their success. The day-to-day management of the society did not allow the ministers linked to the Muslim Brotherhood to achieve a fundamental change the society. Their low-profile participation in the Jordanian Cabinet accelerated, it seemed

⁸¹ M. Monshipouri & C. G. Kukla. "Islam, Democracy and Human Rights: The Continuing Debate in the West." *Middle East Policy*, vol. 3, no. 2 (1992), pp. 22-46.

⁸² M. C. Dunn, "Revivalist Islam and Democracy: Thinking about the Algerian Quandary." *Middle East Policy*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1992), pp. 16-22.

⁸³ W. A. Siam, Deputy Director General, Palestinian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Gaza. Interview with the author, 18 January 1996 and July 1997.

⁸⁴ L. Adoni. "Jordan's First Party Vote Pits Tribes Against Leftists." *Christian Science Monitor*, 8 November 1993, p. 2.

at first, the decline of Muslim Brotherhood. In the lead-up to the Jordanian elections of 4 November 1997,⁸⁶ the Muslim Brotherhood entered the race disunited and eventually, the leadership of the organization decided to boycott the elections following pressure from its constituency. The Islamic opposition conducted its protests, like in the case of the Palestinian Authority, from outside parliament. The Muslim Brotherhood, for example, offered a safe haven to radical Palestinian Musa Abu Marzouq, who promised to continue to fight Israel.⁸⁷ The Jordanian Government has enjoyed continuous success by using an electoral strategy to contain the Muslim Brotherhood, allowing legal activities and declarations hostile to Israel. The change of policy by the new King Abdullah reveals that his father's policy had in fact not achieved its goal, and that the Islamic Resistance Movement could expand its role in Jordanian society. Is Jordan today at the brink of a violent confrontation between state authorities and the Islamic movement? The Middle East is one of the world's regions where cultural differences and stress have the greatest impact on separatism.⁸⁸ It is believed that 24-40 percent of the Palestinians currently support the Islamic militants.⁸⁹ Could Hamas try to take over the political power by participating in democratic elections and refuse to acknowledge any changes thereafter?

Hamas cannot ignore the experience of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, for which participation in electoral competition did not pay off. The movement was convinced that the Palestinian elections of January 1996 would not have a considerable impact on the Islamists' role, but this was not the case, and the group's decision to contest the secular authority by opting for a boycott of the first ever Palestinian elections backfired. The Muslim Brotherhood tried to avoid a public discussion among its followers regarding whether or not the movement would participate in the first ever national Palestinian elections. Then Hamas spokesperson, Sheikh Jamil Hamami declared that cooperation with the Palestinian Authority is possible although Hamas opposed participating in the elections.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Results of Jordan's Parliamentary Elections, Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, DC, 1997.

⁸⁷ *United Press International (UPI)*, 6 May 1997, B cycle.

⁸⁸ Gurr, T.R., *Minorities at Risk*, op. cit., p. 79.

⁸⁹ *Al-Ahram Hebdo*, edited by Al-Ahram, Cairo, 13-19 December 1995, p. 9.

⁹⁰ *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 24 (10 November 1995), p. 11.

The political strategy of the transnational Muslim Brotherhood can be better assessed by referring to an analysis of Robin Wright,⁹¹ who maintains that the militant Islamic movement entered a second phase after the Iranian revolution of 1978. Shi'ite Islam is no longer the driving force of Islamic movements; the Sunni Muslims, who represent approximately 85 percent of the total Moslem population, are nowadays more active in politics and are looking for a role in the political institutions. Due to the extreme popularity that the radical Islamic opposition enjoys among Palestinians today, it seems to be impossible to exclude the movement totally from power. A military confrontation between the PLO and Hamas might be disastrous for both movements and lead to mutual destruction. Hamas has acknowledged the self-destructive consequences of a military confrontation and the discussion concerning the level of cooperation with the Palestinian Authority continues. Mahmoud Zahhar, the Hamas representative in Gaza declared civil war is a red line that Hamas is not willing to cross. Once a military confrontation between Hamas and the PLO began, it would be a fight for life or death - a fight that currently, the Islamic militants could easily lose.⁹² The Islamic discourse adopted by Yasser Arafat's secular movement thus represents a first contribution to the strength of the Islamic movement.

The democratic process plays an essential role in the confrontation between Palestinians and Israelis and within the Palestinian community. Following the reasoning of Gurr,⁹³ political and economic disadvantages motivate Palestinians to request greater access to the political system and to claim better economic opportunities. The poor economic conditions in Gaza where the unemployment rate reached 60 to 70 percent after the elections of January 1996 have generated discontent among Palestinians. Walid A. Siam, Deputy Director General at the Palestinian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Gaza, linked the popularity of Hamas with the economic crisis:

"Currently, we cannot do a lot. We are waiting for the donor countries to support us. The situation is today worse than during occupation because we are totally cut off from the Israeli side. People wait at the checkpoint and would like to go to work in Israel... There were several incidents when the Israelis shot at our

⁹¹ R. Wright. "Islam, Democracy and the West." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 71, no. 3 (Summer 1992), pp. 131-145.

⁹² Interview conducted by H. Hijazi, translated by E. Sanbar from *Majallat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyya*, no. 20 (Autumn 1994) in *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, vol. 3 (Spring 1995): pp.12-18.

⁹³ T.R. Gurr, T.R. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., pp. 85-88.

people (...) Hamas claims that we are responsible although it does not criticize us in public (...) It is very clear and we hear it.”⁹⁴

The economic misery, the absence of generous donor countries and the restrictions imposed on the movement of the Palestinian workers create frustration and anger as visitors can observe at the Gaza checkpoint; Palestinians living in Gaza cannot cross the border to Israel unless they have a special Israeli permit. Hamas has used the anger of Palestinians to mobilize protest votes.⁹⁵ The Islamic movement certainly faces no problems in pointing out Arafat's dependency on Israel; the Palestinian leader is by no means the master of the borders of his territory. A recent tripartite agreement between the Palestinian Authority, Israel and the donor countries has not improved the economic situation in the territories. The new pact acknowledges Israel's right to impose restrictive measures, including the closure of the West Bank and Gaza for security reasons. Consequently, the Palestinian Authority has been accused of supporting the Israeli regime.

This was not always the case. The Israeli labor market helped in the first years of Israeli occupation to diffuse collective mobilization and the expression of grievances by Palestinians. The continued integration of the Israeli economy in the globalization process had created work opportunities for Palestinians, and the jobs in Israel were far more attractive to the Palestinians than the ones in the territories. In 1974, some 70,000 Palestinians found jobs in Israel, and shortly before the beginning of the Palestinian uprising, some 100,000 Palestinians were working for Israeli companies, kibbutzim, and shops.⁹⁶ Today, a mere 30,000 Palestinians cross the border to Israel to work in Israeli industries - if they are not prevented from crossing by a closure of the Palestinian territories.

A closure of the territories affects Palestinian workers and the Palestinian Authority alike. The budget deficit of the Palestinian Authority reached the amount of US\$127 million when Palestinians were prevented from working in Israel.⁹⁷ Worse was yet to come: since the suicide terrorist

⁹⁴ Author's interview with W.A. Siam, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Gaza, 16 January 1996.

⁹⁵ Author's visit to Gaza, January 1996 and July 1997.

⁹⁶ H. Frisch. "From Armed Struggle over State Borders to Political Mobilization and Intifada Within It: The Transformation of the PLO Strategy in the Territories." *Plural Societies*, XIX, no. 2 and 3 (March 1990), The Hague, pp. 92-115.

⁹⁷ T. Larsen, UN Special Coordinator for the Palestinian Territories, Agence France Presse, quoted in *La Presse*, Montreal, Canada, 22 August 1996, p. 3.

attacks of Hamas, Israel has begun to allow foreign workers from Thailand and Eastern Europe to replace Palestinians. Israeli security arguments are certainly convincing but they do not provide Palestinians with an income. Hamas has targeted young and frustrated Palestinians living without hope of a better life in Gaza or the West Bank, from whom it is able to recruit 'volunteers' for suicide bombings. Meanwhile, the expansion of the Israeli State and economic development has increased the grievances of Palestinians. The link established by Gurr between increased tensions within an ethnic group and economic grievances can therefore be verified in the case of the Palestinian society.⁹⁸

These Israeli security measures have contributed to the suffocation of Palestinian life and the economy throughout the territories. Hamas militants promote their ideas among a large group of impoverished Palestinians who cannot move to the labor market in Israel. As Gurr writes, democratizing autocracies lack the resources or institutional means to offer the material advantages that can be presented to protest movements in established democracies.⁹⁹ The absence of a comprehensive economic infrastructure program within the territories under Palestinian control and the frequent border closures will continue to increase the dissatisfaction of the Palestinians and create conditions that most likely will favor violent actions since competing alternatives may no longer appear attractive in the long run.

To prevent the Palestinians making the wrong choices, the various possibilities should be increased. Albert Hirschman argues that individuals have three basic options when it comes to expressing their grievances politically, namely exit, voice or loyalty: exit means in the Palestinian context independence, voice could be seen as the massive protests including violent actions, and loyalty refers to an acceptance of the given situation.¹⁰⁰ The Palestinian elections are an affirmation of the Palestinians as a people and a clear expression of the group's mobilization as the high rates of participation have already showed.

Loyalty can be made easier by improving living conditions. However, the improvement of the infrastructure in the territories under Palestinian administration is just a first step, and the small size and the limited means

⁹⁸ T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p.125.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.138.

¹⁰⁰ For an explanation of Hirschman's theory, see: A. O. Hirschman. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Response to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970, pp. 36-43 and 55-57.

that are available to the Palestinians necessitate the reaching of a more comprehensive settlement. Regional cooperation between Jordan, Egypt, Israel, and the emerging autonomous Palestinian territories will help to promote sectors like tourism.

Following the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty of 1994, Israel, and Jordan began discussing promising projects in the Gulf of Aqaba area. Neither tourists nor businessmen will be content with new projects in Gaza and Jericho only, although clearly, the incentives associated with cooperation with Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories may be large enough to bring further investments to Gaza.¹⁰¹

The essential condition for any further economic development of the territories under Palestinian administration remains stability and security. The challenge for the Palestinian Administration remains thus the ability of President Arafat, a former guerrilla leader, to come to terms with an emerging pluralistic society. The elections of 20 January 1996 were just a first step on a long road toward stability and peaceful coexistence between Israel and the territories under the Palestinian Authority and the neighboring Arab countries. The question now is as follows: Are guerrilla movements able to abandon their authoritarian leadership styles and choose democratic guidelines for dealing with issues and opponents? The answer to such a basic question is still unclear.

¹⁰¹ Independent study by B. Schoch: "Infrastructure Projects: Creating the Base for a Lasting Peace," written for Professor A. Hess, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Medford, US, Spring 1997.

III. Autocratic Movements and Democracy:

PLO and Hamas vs. Democratic Elections

3.1 The Importance of the Elections of 20 January 1996

The results of the Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996 confirmed Yasser Arafat's dominant position among the Palestinian participants. However, democracy is built on more than elections alone. Even Schumpeter's minimal definition of democracy is far removed from the current reality in the territories controlled by the Palestinian Authority in Jericho and Gaza.

In the territories under Palestinian control, the opportunities for communal groups to mobilize are substantial and democratization is likely to facilitate both protest and communal rebellion.¹ The emerging Palestinian Authority may allow, but only to a certain degree, the expression of grievances, but it is still far from having the necessary means to reach an understanding with its opponents that is comparable to similar understandings in established democracies. In democracies, the opposition often administrates some parliamentary committees. Instead of exclusion, the integration of the losing party becomes an essential concept, another democratic principle being the implementation of universalistic norms such as equal rights and equal opportunities. The reality of power sharing in the Palestinian Authority is totally different, as will be shown in the following part.

The elections, which represented a new form of competition between the political actors claiming to defend the interests of the Palestinian people, remain until today one of the tangible democratic results that the peace process has brought to the Palestinians. The voter turnout for the first Palestinian elections in Gaza was at 86.28 percent higher than the average

¹ T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*. Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 1993, p.138; S. Kanaana. "First Elections Called Success." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 35 (24 January 1996), p. 1.

turnout of 79.73 percent in the West Bank and Gaza combined.² In the partly Israeli-occupied West Bank excluding East Jerusalem, the voter turnout dropped to 73.18 percent, and in East Jerusalem, to 42 percent. Although Hamas' call for a boycott of the elections was not heeded, the PLO-Hamas rivalry clearly weakened the cohesiveness of the Palestinians. Nevertheless, Yasser Arafat remains their undisputed leader.³

Through the elections, Yasser Arafat confirmed his historical legitimacy by securing 87.1 percent of the votes. His only challenger, Samiha Khalil, had not and most likely will not play an important role in the PLO, while the only people capable of opposing Arafat chose not to do so; both Hanan Ashrawi and Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, both of whom were key members of the Palestinian negotiation team in Madrid, declined to openly compete with PLO leader Arafat. The results of the elections reflect those of Opinion Poll No. 21 published by the Center for Palestine Research and Studies (CPRS)⁴ and legitimized the historical PLO leadership. However, the apparent absence of competitiveness in the elections and the non-competitive recruitment of candidates did little to reinforce the credibility of Arafat's democratic intentions.

Hamas' boycott of the elections - Hamas being the only movement with the potential to challenge Arafat's authority - made the task of the Palestinian leader all the more easier. Certainly, the elections have given Arafat a much-needed democratic appearance. Instead of weakening the Palestinian Authority, the elections effectively reinforced the various Palestinian institutions with popular legitimacy. Against this background, the question of whether or not the elections ever had the potential to allow a new leadership to emerge appears almost irrelevant.

Contrary to the prediction of the French news agency, Agence France Presse⁵, Yasser Arafat was able to confirm his unchallenged position. Choosing not to wait for the results, he frequently intervened in the election campaign,⁶ having opted for a concept of 'guided elections' in order

² D. Makovsky provides a critical analysis of the peace process in *Making Peace with the PLO*. Washington: Westview Press, 1996.

³ S. Kanaana. "First elections called success," op.cit., p. 1.

⁴ *Opinion Poll no. 21*, conducted by the Survey Research Unit of the Center for Palestine Research and Studies (CPRS), which used a sample consisting of 1,168 individuals, 737 of whom were from the West Bank and 431 in Gaza. Error margin: 3%. Nablus: CPRS.

⁵ Information published by *Reuters*, available on 19 January 1996 at the computer terminal reserved for journalists at the American Colony Hotel, East Jerusalem.

⁶ C. Lidbom. Statement made on 1 January 1996, "Enough is Enough." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1996), p. 12.

not to be surprised by the final outcome. This strategy is rather common in Arab countries, an example being Egypt, where heavy restrictions remain in force to limit the scope of elections. Guided democracy is a tool of emerging democracies that prevents, in cooperation with an extensive security service, the electoral challenge getting out of control and undermining the ruler's legitimacy.⁷ Numerous neutral high-profile electoral observers of the first Palestinian elections of January 1996, such as former US President Jimmy Carter attempted to make sure that voters were not forced to vote one way or the other.⁸ Simply setting up elections was not enough. The election process and the campaign had to meet criteria that went beyond appointment of the members of the Palestinian Authority by the PLO-leadership. The actual elections, voting and counting, were a second step in the electoral process. Both the PLO leadership and the Israeli Government could - and did - interfere at various levels of the election process but without depriving the elections of their democratic nature.

The European Union's electoral unit, headed by the former Swedish Minister of Justice Carl Lidbom, had difficulties in coping with the irregularities in the election process. Lidbom told Arafat that if the elections were to "retain any credibility both locally and internationally," he must "take urgent steps to try to build public and international confidence in the election process."⁹ Palestinians in the territories under Palestinian control did not have the same problem as those in East Jerusalem, where former US President Jimmy Carter, who was leading a team of international observers, accused Israeli policemen and soldiers of preventing fair elections: "I don't think there is any doubt they (the police) are doing everything they can to intimidate voters."¹⁰

Indeed, the massive military presence at voting offices in East Jerusalem ensured that the turnout was kept at a level much lower than that seen elsewhere. The real reason why many Palestinians living in East Jerusalem did not go to the elections may well have been the rumor that Palestinians with the blue Jerusalem identity card who exercised their civil right and registered to vote on 20 January 1996 would lose their residence and tax status in the Holy City. The rumor was taken seriously enough by

⁷ L. Sadiki, L. *Progress and Retrogression in Arab Democratization*. Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1992, p. 40.

⁸ *New York Times*. 21 January 1996, p. 1.

⁹ Statement of C. Lidbom, quoted in *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1996), p. 12.

¹⁰ B. Hutman. "Observers Blast 'Police Intimidation' in Jerusalem." *Jerusalem Post*, 21 January 1996, p. 1.

the Central Election Commission (CEC), which distributed a press release in which Dr. Sa'eb Erekat, the Chairman of the CEC promised: "Let me once again reassure all Jerusalemites that their participation in this election will not in any way reflect or jeopardize their identity cards (...) Your right is your right."¹¹

The Jerusalem voting procedure was different from the one in the territories under Palestinian control and was outlined in the text of the Oslo II Agreement: Palestinians had to vote in post offices in Jerusalem. In order to vote, voters had to be identified by voter registration cards issued by the Central Elections Commission. Inside the post offices, the Israeli post office official would provide the voter with a ballot for the presidential election and another for the Palestinian Council. The ballots had to be mailed to the District Elections Office since the Israelis refused to allow the Palestinians to run independent voting offices in Jerusalem. The following post offices were agreed upon: Salah Eddin Branch; Jaffa Gate Branch; Shu'fat Branch; Beit Hanina Branch and Mount of Olives Branch.¹² International monitors were placed in the above mentioned offices in Jerusalem to help prevent irregularities. According to Jimmy Carter, who acted as an election observer, a massive military presence prevented Palestinians from voting and the turnout was relatively low at 40 percent.¹³

Yasser Arafat was able to reinforce his position among the Palestinians because of the results of the elections. The newly gained popular and democratic legitimacy added to his traditional authority and gave him more autonomy within the PLO. The results certainly made it more difficult for the Islamic resistance movement to claim that the local population does not support him.¹⁴ The style of leadership of the PLO leader prevents the emergence of a fully democratic Palestinian administration and he was harshly criticized for abuse of power.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the criticism by international and national observers did nothing to bring about a change in style and policies.

¹¹ Communication by the Central Election Commission, Ramallah, 21 November 1995.

¹² "Jerusalem Voting Procedures." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 35 (24 January 1996), p. 19.

¹³ S. Nolen. "Israeli Military Turns Back Jerusalem Voters." *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁴ Interview with Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi, Head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), Jerusalem, 22 January 1996. G. Usher presents in his article "Aspirations Démocratiques en Palestine," (Democratic Aspirations in Palestine) the different political orientations of the Palestinian population and their desire to build up democratic structures. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 1996, p. 21.

¹⁵ C. Lidbom, head of the European Election Observer Team, said that Arafat abused his power arbitrarily. R. Lingenthal. "Der Staat ist Gott". *Wochepost* (Zurich), no. 4, 18 January 1996, p. 5.

The first-ever Palestinian elections of 20 January 1996 maintained a democratic appearance, if only on the outside. The Palestinian voters could choose between 676 candidates for 88 seats in the Palestinian Council, yet still, Arafat continued to be criticized for interfering continuously in the election campaign and was repeatedly accused of co-opting his favorite supporters.¹⁶ The modification of the electoral system for the Birzeit Student Council elections in 1995 had already shown that Arafat's Fateh movement is by far not fully committed to democratic competition, and as already shown, in the case of the national elections, the PLO leadership tried to prevent opponents from gaining control of the process and winning. Eventually, it even went so far as to shorten the election campaign, the student elections at Birzeit having already revealed the value of such a mechanism in manipulating the outcome of elections.¹⁷

The first Palestinian elections and the results both raised high expectations among voters, which could lead to riots if living conditions are not improved. As a matter of fact, the living conditions in Gaza worsened¹⁸ after the Palestinian Authority took control, and although their potential to improve was frequently linked to the elections and the return of Yasser Arafat to Gaza,¹⁹ progress is painfully slow.

Even employees in the Palestinian Authority admit that the economic hardship has continued to worsen since the elections and that the transition to a wealthier Palestine will be difficult.²⁰ Nothing has changed in the arguments made by Palestinians to explain the crisis: Israelis are accused of blocking the goods at the checkpoints and of harassing Palestinians who try to sell goods in Israel. The continued frustration has increased the potential for riots. The Palestinian Authority does not have the necessary security means to quell all unrest, nor does it have the ability to improve the material living conditions.²¹ Communal protest has grown under Arafat's administration but is it a sign of an emerging democratic conscience?

¹⁶ B. Rubin. *Revolution Until Victory?* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994, pp.148-167.

¹⁷ See the chapter dealing with Birzeit University student elections in this book, and the University's Newsletter, English ed., no. 26 (August 1995) at <http://www.birzeit.edu/news/26elect.html>

¹⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), An-Nasser Street, Gaza, and interview with Walid A. Siam, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Gaza.

¹⁹ Author's meeting with Abdallah Abdallah, Director of the Palestine Geographic Center, Ramallah, on 20 January 1997; Zuhdi Al-Qidra, PLO Representative in Cairo, 11 January 1996.

²⁰ Confidential, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. Author's visit to Gaza in August 1997.

²¹ Meeting with Dr. Abu Koash, 17 January 1996 in Gaza, and information communicated by journalist G. Abdo from the Dallas Morning News regarding a contact in Hebron, 16 January 1997.

3.2 The First Democratic Palestinian Elections

3.2.1 *Free Elections*

The electoral conduct of the PLO leadership was disappointing. The former guerrilla organization may argue that the movement is confronted by foreign military forces at the borders of its territories and is challenged internally by the Islamic resistance movement. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Palestinian people, according to an opinion poll²² were strongly in favor of the holding of free elections. Indeed, the massive participation at the elections confirmed the findings of the poll and refuted the aspirations of the Hamas leadership concerning a boycott.

The massive Palestinian participation in the elections and the legitimization of Yasser Arafat could be interpreted as a form of non-violent protest against the Israelis who had occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip since 1967. The principle of free and democratic elections that was fixed in Article III²³ of the Declaration on Interim Self-Government Authority²⁴ was however far from fully respected. The major political tendencies in the territories were not represented at the elections, and the major challenger, Hamas, boycotted the vote. No serious opposition could voice an objection to Arafat's projects.

True, the internal fight for legitimacy between Hamas and the PLO-dominated Palestinian Authority limited the freedom of opinions and the freedom of votes. Since Hamas refused to play - at least officially - the democratic game, the leadership denounced the democratic elections and repeatedly affirmed that no popular vote could negate the sole authority of the Qur'an and the *Shari'a*.²⁵ Mahmoud Zahhar, the Hamas representative in Gaza, justified the boycott. He argued that although the Islamic

²² *Opinion Poll no. 6*, concerning the Palestinian attitudes toward democracy (Sample: 1,069 Palestinians of 18 plus error margin +/- 4). Jerusalem: Jerusalem Media and Communication Center.

²³ Article III - Elections:

- 1.1 In order that the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip may govern themselves according to democratic principles, direct free and general political elections will be held for the Council under agreed supervision and international observation, while the Palestinian police will ensure public order.
- 1.2 An agreement will be concluded regarding the exact mode and conditions of the elections in accordance with the protocol attached as Annex 1, with the goal of holding the elections not later than nine months after the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles.
- 1.3 These elections will constitute a significant interim preparatory step toward the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements.

²⁴ Oslo Agreement of 13 September 1993.

²⁵ *Ibid.*; "Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) of Palestine." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4 (Summer 1993), Article 4, p. 124.

resistance movement accepted the idea of elections for professional institutions and student councils and is even willing to participate in elections for the Palestinian National Council, the Palestinian elections of January 1996 were 'different' and that he refused to participate in them because they were linked to official recognition of Israel. However, a non-official party linked to Hamas, the Salvation Party, entered the election campaign, even if Zahhar tried to distance the Islamic leadership from the small group of Hamas affiliates:

"The issue is nothing more than this: a few people affiliated with Hamas have established a political party. To say that the party is an alternative to Hamas, or that Hamas has turned into a political party ... that is untrue."²⁶

The Islamic movement seemed divided concerning the best approach to counterbalancing the renewed support that Arafat might gain if he won the elections. As became clear later, Arafat's large majority does not allow the Islamic resistance movement to undermine his authority or to opt for violence. Hamas' boycott was a very risky strategy and it failed miserably. This failure should have enabled the Palestinian Authority to establish a democratic administration in order to increase international confidence in the Palestinians, especially on the part of the United States, the biased and decisive mediator.

3.3 Election and Their Implications for Communal Conflicts

Observers of the Palestinian elections accused Yasser Arafat of modifying the election procedures,²⁷ of arbitrarily choosing the candidates and paying off his old allies by rewarding them with jobs. Two of his allies seemed to turn against him, with one of them, Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation at the Madrid negotiations, becoming one of his sharpest critics. The second former ally, Dr. Hanan Ashrawi,²⁸ who served as the Palestinian spokesperson in Madrid, initially joined Abdul Shafi in criticizing the Palestinian President, but later reversed her position and changed sides. Whereas Ashrawi joined the Palestinian Cabinet, Abdul Shafi has remained a vocal opponent of the Palestinian Authority.

²⁶ *Palestine Report*, 16 February 1996, p. 5.

²⁷ "Arafat Causes Chaos as Campaigning Starts." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1996), p. 5.

²⁸ Interview with Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, *Palestine Report*, 3 November 1995, pp. 6-8.

Arafat's electoral victory was impressive. Fateh members and allied so-called independent members controlled 51 out of the 88 seats of the Palestinian Council, which rapidly closed ranks behind the Palestinian Authority and Yasser Arafat - despite talk about large-scale corruption in the Palestinian political administration. Only five women were elected to the Council, the influence of the Islamic movement and traditional rules having prevented it from becoming a forum for a democratic women's movement.²⁹

Hamas opted for cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, and whilst still affirming its independence,³⁰ refrained from obstructing the regular activities of the Authority. However, the Islamists learned quickly from their error, and in order to gain further popular legitimacy and conquer vacant territory, the Islamic resistance movement decided to join the election campaign for the municipal elections.

The first Palestinian elections fulfilled the criteria of democratic systems and they offered the Palestinians the opportunity to confirm their group cohesion. Carl Lidbom, the head of the European Union election observers noted that the first-ever Palestinian Presidential and Legislative Council elections "accurately reflect the aspirations of the Palestinian voters." He had modified his initial criticism of the election campaign in the territories under Palestinian control and embraced the results as the outcome of a democratic election.³¹ The first national consultation of the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip did not fulfill, however, all of Huntington's criteria to define a democracy.³² Huntington in particular stated that the simple organization of elections is not sufficient. The elected candidates must actually wield power, and regular elections need to take place without threatening the stability of the system in place. Therefore, the Palestinian Authority would have to prove that it could build up a democratic system that is characterized by regular free elections.

²⁹ *Palestine Report*, special edition for the elections, vol. 1, no. 35 (24 January 1996), p. 1.

³⁰ S. Kanaana, "New PA-Hamas Cooperation." *Palestine Report*, 2 February 1996, p. 9.

³¹ S. Kanaana. "First Elections Called Success." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 35 (24 January 1996), p. 1.

³² We might truly ask how a society such as the Palestinian society in the Occupied Territories and in the territories under Palestinian administration could already be expected to live up to the standards set by the world's leading democratic power, the United States. For more details, refer to Huntington's concept as developed in *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

The future prospects for a Palestinian democracy were furthermore linked to the extent Yasser Arafat was willing to share his new powers as Palestinian President. Due to the fact that 51 out of 88 members belong to the PLO or support the Palestinian President publicly, the future will show if the elected candidates exercise their power or simply approve the decisions of the Palestinian president. The first national elections were therefore a first step for the Palestinians to express freely different opinions in an election campaign. The pluralistic tendencies in Palestinian society, in particular the different NGOs, could express their different approaches towards the peace negotiations for a future Palestinian State – even if, like in the case of Hamas, they did not participate in the elections. The crucial role of the opposition in a democracy was confirmed in this election.

Hamas did not challenge Arafat in the electoral campaign but announced Islamic opposition publicly, without being prevented from articulating such a position. The huge interest of the Palestinian population in participating in these elections gives them an even bigger historical importance: The high turnout of the registered voters - 86.28 percent in Gaza, 79.73 percent in the West Bank and 73.18 percent in East-Jerusalem, combined with the massive support for Yasser Arafat (87.1 percent of the votes) - should be interpreted as the enthusiastic support of the population for their historic leader. Hamas' refusal to run in the elections made it even easier for Arafat to confirm the PLO's key position in Palestinian society. The voters clearly manifested their desire to express the existence of a Palestinian political society and rejected Hamas' call for a boycott of the elections.

Arafat's victory is in sharp contrast with the elections in Arab countries, such as Egypt, where Mubarak does not have any electoral challengers.³³

The Fateh-dominated Palestinian Authority has still avoided a full break with Hamas although Arafat's PLO has opted to pressure the Islamic militants to cooperate with the secular administration. Instead of giving incentives for cooperation using 'carrots', the Palestinian leader increasingly uses 'sticks' in his confrontation with Hamas; his improved cooperation with the United States and the necessity of quelling suicide terror attacks leave him no choice. The results are sometimes remarkable as in the case of the Hamas spokesperson Mahmoud Zahhar. After detaining

³³ Egypt's President Mubarak was recently re-elected with 94 percent of the votes for the fourth time for six years. No challenger could run. Only 1,16 million out of 18 million voters, voted with 'no'. In Egypt, a change of the President might also change the country's policy toward Israel. The 1878 Peace Treaty has not yet fundamentally changed bilateral relations and hostility to Israel remains strong. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 28 September 1999, p. 8.

Zahhar in Gaza for 105 days, the Authority released him on 8 October 1995. Zahhar appeared willing to compromise and said: “We do not have an alternative other than finding a collective formula for building the homeland on just principles (...).”³⁴

Zahhar’s statement reflects only one position among Hamas members. The problem remains the fact that Hamas does not speak with one voice but encompasses various groups with different points of view, which express their voice loudly, both from abroad and from the territories controlled by the Palestinian Authority. Horowitz remarks that the transfer of power raised the key issue of *who* would rule.

Indeed, Palestinian self-government brought a “wildly speculative atmosphere generated by the uncertainties of the transfer of power.”³⁵ The risk was indeed that an unranked communal system would be transformed into a ranked one with a clear hierarchical order. In other words: Arafat’s new elite of notables, PLO members and allied forces could create a new hierarchical system within the Palestinian society. The PLO leadership, which had lived for years in exile, might impose leaders on Palestinian non-governmental groups or professional groups, such as the Palestinian Chambers of Commerce that had emerged during the Israeli occupation. Indeed, the development of universities by the Israelis in the West Bank had created a student body that the emerging Palestinian Authority could find difficult to control - provided the new rulers intended not to tolerate an extra-parliamentarian opposition. Indeed, the *Intifada* had allowed the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories to confirm their autonomy regarding external PLO-direction, which in the past had neglected to promote student organizations and academic associations in the territories. The drifting apart of the PLO and the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories became evident when the spontaneous beginning of the *Intifada* in the Gaza refugee camp Jabalya revealed in a dramatic manner the political potential of the Palestinian society. The fear of domination is expressed in the Hamas Charter, in which Hamas recognizes the PLO as an independent structure, and by its refusal to acknowledge the authority of the Palestinian Authority.

In the first years, the PLO was used by the neighboring Arab countries to promote their own interests. Yasser Arafat led the organization to a new era of Palestinian nationalism and independence that affirmed the rights

³⁴ “PA Overtures to Hamas.” *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 20 (13 October 1995), p. 5.

³⁵ D.L. Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, p. 188.

of Palestinians and their claims for statehood. As time went by, the organization set up a structure similar to a government with security forces and financial, information, and foreign relations departments, etc. The Palestinian National Congress, is - theoretically - the ultimate decision-making body of the Palestinians. Among its current 483 members are Palestinians of all communities such as trade unions, resistance movements, and professional organizations.

Clearly, the PLO factions have lost ground since Arafat's popular election as the first Palestinian President on 20 January 1996. Even the Marxist-Maoist Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), which is committed to Arab Unity and a Palestinian state transferred its headquarters from Damascus to Gaza.³⁶ Despite the strong group identity of the Palestinians and their readiness to express their grievances, it is highly unlikely that the secular opposition will vigorously challenge the Palestinian President. The factionalism that for a long time characterized the PLO power structure has been replaced by a rivalry between the secular and religious movements in Palestine. Therefore, it is now becoming increasingly obvious that the PLO will have to close ranks in order to avoid a violent confrontation with Hamas and its own destruction. Moreover, although the steps being taken to achieve a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict still enable the Palestinian Authority to reinforce its authority among the majority of Palestinians, a lack of improvement in living conditions could result in a vast loss of support from secular and religious supporters alike.

The previous attempts to take over control of Jordan and of Southern Lebanon in 1970 and 1982 respectively had both resulted in bloody wars, from which the PLO leadership gained experience in fighting an opponent using military means. Hamas will certainly not ignore this chapter of the PLO's history. Furthermore, there is no doubt that foreign interference will continue to have a negative effect on Palestinian Authority-Hamas cooperation. Certainly, the United States and Israel will object to the continuation of cooperation between Hamas and the PLO leadership. Although they may have acknowledged the necessity of such cooperation in the past, the fact that the suicide bombings have continued will no doubt be used as a pretext by both governments in demanding that Arafat make some kind of decision. Hamas' strategy does not make it easier for the PLO: on the one hand the Islamic resistance movement rejects all peace negotiations with Israel in its Charter, and a Hamas representative

³⁶ *Jerusalem Times*, 23 February 1996, p. 1.

in Khartoum, Muni Said, denied that the Palestinian Authority and Hamas had reached any deal regarding the Palestinian elections of January 1996. On the other hand, Hamas leaders expressed their desire to participate in the first national elections that the Palestinians ever had. The split inside the radical Islamic movement became even more evident when West Bank Hamas activist Sheikh Hassan Yousef said that his movement might participate in the elections.³⁷ With statements such as these, the Islamic movement confirmed yet again that it is an unreliable partner.

The considerable number of suicide attacks on Israeli civilian and military targets have made Hamas all the more unacceptable as a partner. The ethnic-religious violence in the intra-communal conflict reflects the fear of domination, if not by the Israelis than certainly by the Palestinian Authority. Will power sharing between the Palestinian President and the elected assembly - assuming that the former is prepared to share power - alter this fear and contribute to stability?

3.4 Power-Sharing Mechanisms between Institutional Actors

3.4.1 *The Palestinian President vs. the Palestinian Council*

Whether a monolithic organization such as the PLO and Arafat can cope with open criticism remains yet to be seen. Power-sharing will be important in improving the trust between the Palestinian Authority and the opposition movement - assuming an opposition continues to exist. The political institutions and capabilities of the State determine to a large extent the political context of communal action. Repressive regimes hardly provide an opportunity for the development of non-governmental organizations. As for the construction of the Palestinian State, the Palestinian Authority needs to develop the concept of efficiency-orientated bureaucratic administration. Indeed, to fulfill another condition that Huntington listed as necessary for satisfying his definition of a democracy - the fact that government stability is different from the stability of the whole system - the Palestinian bureaucratic organization should be assessed.³⁸ To enable, for example, grassroots movements to carry on with their protest-movement function during the Palestinian state-building process, the bureaucratic autonomy of the Palestinian administration can

³⁷ "PA overtures to Hamas." *Palestine Report*, op.cit., p. 5. In 1999, former Hamas militant Falluji joined Arafat's cabinet recently and confirmed by this step the tensions within the Islamic movement regarding the acceptance or rejection of a secular Palestinian state. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 23 September 1999, p. 1.

³⁸ S. Huntington, *The Third Wave...*, op.cit., pp. 3-15.

be used as a political asset for the newly emerging Palestinian State. Indeed, even parliamentary democracies in Western Europe regulate the cooperation between the representative and executive bodies of government in a hierarchical way. Arafat's authoritarianism in the management of the PLO is certainly a common form of government in Arab countries. Indeed, Arab liberalization hardly changes the status quo and preserves the power of the ruling elite. In order to preserve control over essential sectors in the society, the PLO could not tolerate in the long run the full autonomy of grassroots movements. The PLO had also no intention of accepting an independent Islamic challenger. To avoid an independent Islamic movement, the PLO tried to take control of it by absorbing the Hamas, inviting it to join the PLO. Hamas refused to renounce the supremacy of Islam as its guiding principle and the conflict between secular and religious Palestinian movements. Does the secular movement have any alternative to confronting the Islamists and trying to crush them, or could they be integrated in a secular state?³⁹

Gurr argues that the scope of State power, the political values, the practice of institutionalized democracy, and the destabilizing effects of democratization have a special significance in the mobilization process of minorities.⁴⁰ The way the authority manages the scope of State power will determine the level of communal activity and rebellion. We could refer to the breakdown of the Soviet regimes and the communist satellite to provide an example underlining the impact of the States on a rebellion. Hungary in 1956 or Prague in 1968 turned into bloody repression of the communist regimes whereas Gorbachev's reform policies brought a swift end to more than 60 years of Soviet rule. Arafat is confronted with a dilemma that is similar to the one faced by the former Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: Whether he can offer more than a choice between civil strife and the disintegration of the Palestinian society or submission to the Palestinian Authority.

The struggle for domination and the "sharply opposed positions taken by ethnic groups on independent and constitutional arrangements reflect not merely the anxiety-laden perceptions of backward groups, but also a more general phenomenon of distrust."⁴¹ If the newly created institutions were to serve one movement only, the opposition movements would lack suffi-

³⁹ M. Steinberg. "The PLO and Palestinian Islamic Fundamentalism." *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 52 (Fall 1989), p. 42.

⁴⁰ T. R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p. 135.

⁴¹ D.L. Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, op.cit., p. 192.

cient trust in the regime and might easily opt for a violent confrontation. Haidar Abdul Shafi spelled out the risk posed by the democratizing movement in regard to the PLO leadership of Yasser Arafat:

“The PLO will remain the legitimate leadership of the Palestinian people... It is difficult to define the future relationship between the Palestinian Council and the PLO. I do not think it would be appropriate for the PLO to impose restrictions on an elected council... Democracy is very important to us and may be our only alternative because we have so many ideological orientations among us... without democracy we will have civil strife.”⁴²

The Palestinian Council has not yet expressed criticism of Arafat's leadership, though the issue of corruption has been raised on several occasions. The major task of the newly elected Palestinian Council was to formulate a constitution because the Executive conducted the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and Israel had insisted that the Palestinian Council should not be equipped with a parliamentary status. Thus, the Oslo Agreement enumerated in Chapter VI the competencies of the Palestinian Council.

3.5 The Institutional Opposition

The opposition, whose role is crucial for every democratic state,⁴³ plays only a secondary role in areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority. The major rivalry between secular and religious legitimacy does not allow for the development of a truly democratic opposition. Is there a possibility that without opposition, democracy will never prevail in Palestine? The history of the Palestinian Constitution certainly reflects the internal Palestinian fight for more democracy, without which the interests of the various minorities will never be addressed.

As long as the Palestinians do not recognize Israel out of conviction, the road to peace and prosperity will remain long. The exchange of letters concerning Israeli-PLO mutual recognition has erased the importance of Articles 19 and 22 of the Palestinian Charter, which call for the destruction of Israel. Still, a large group of Palestinians, including members of the Islamic resistance movement, still refuses to recognize Israel's legitimate right to exist. An official modification of these articles would surely

⁴² Interview with Dr. Abdul Shafi, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 1 (Autumn 1992), p. 57-69.

⁴³ S.E. Finer. *The Changing British Party System 1945-1979*. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1980, p. xii.

enhance the democratic credentials of the PLO; on the other hand, from the Islamist point of view, it would seriously weaken the organization's claim to legitimacy. The Palestinian Authority, whether it likes it or not, will have to decide if it will attempt to capitalize on the current confrontation between Netanyahu-led Israel and the Clinton administration or if it will embark on the road of a continued challenge to Israel.

The limited content of Chapter VI of the Oslo Agreement stipulated that neither the free movement of the Israeli army nor the control of borders falls under the jurisdiction of the Council. Therefore, many Palestinians are frustrated about the delay in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the continuously difficult economic situation. Some go so far as to say that they have lost confidence in the Palestinian Authority because of the slow negotiation process.

“The Oslo Agreement left so many issues open to interpretation that Israel (...) has been able to impose its predetermined objectives (...). After Oslo they dropped all pretense and began talking about settlement publicly as a matter of right, not only in Jerusalem, but throughout the Occupied Territories...I sit with ministers who say frankly: ‘It’s all over. We’re finished.’ They actually say it.”

Haidar Abdul Shafi draws a sad picture of the situation of the Palestinian Authority. However, he admits that the “PLO will remain the highest political authority of the Palestinian people (although) there is ample room for more democracy inside the institutions (...).”⁴⁴

Critics of the Israeli-Palestinian cooperation mention that the powers of the Palestinian Council are simply too restricted in Article VI of the Oslo Agreement; the agreement is - they claim - not designed to promote a more pluralistic development. For example, the Agreement does not deal with essential democratic issues pertaining to the effective functioning of the Palestinian Authority such as the role of the opposition. The centralization of the current power structure, they argue, only reflects the Israeli influence. Dr. Abu Koash argues in favor of the creation of a Palestinian state since Palestinians have shown in the past and during exile that they are able of managing their own political and social organizations. “They just do not care what the consequences are for us... We want to run our own business. We want a Palestinian state. We ran our business before

⁴⁴ Interview of Dr. Abdul Shafi, *Journal of Palestine Studies* (Autumn 1995), op.cit., pp. 78-79.

(...).”⁴⁵ The respect and tolerance of opposing political opinions is supported by Abdul Shafi, who argues in favor of a dialogue with everyone who will respect others and prove to be a reliable partner.⁴⁶

The international standing of Haidar Abdul Shafi has enabled the Palestinian to preserve some autonomy in his dealings with Arafat. His movement FIDA split in 1992 from the DFLP and has accepted *the* cooperation with the Palestinian Popular Party, the former communist party with its leader Bashir Barghouti. Indeed, Abdul Shafi considers his movement a reform rally rather than an exclusive political organization based on a clear program. However, this timid institutional opposition has not successfully challenged or questioned the leadership and style of Yasser Arafat, who has violated civil rights such as freedom of expression in order to preserve his undisputed position as leader.⁴⁷ Until now, the elected members of the Palestinian Council have yet to show that they can and want to push for a modification of Yasser Arafat’s autocratic style of leadership.

The Palestinian President does not approve of public criticism of his autocratic style of government and the centralization of power in his hands, and he has even succeeded in getting the Islamic opposition movement Hamas to abstain from criticizing him publicly. Instead of promoting democracy, the Palestinian Authority has used extensive security forces to keep the internal opposition - be it political or military - under control.

3.6 Hamas and Islamic Jihad: The Opposition Outside the Institutions

3.6.1 Hamas - A Strategy of Confrontation and Cooperation

The failure of the PLO’s military actions and its eviction from Lebanon in 1982 were powerful incentives for the Islamic movement to establish an armed resistance unit. The Islamic movement transformed Islam into a liberation ideology and referred to the Iranian model to create the illusion of a successful return of Islamic thought to contemporary societies.⁴⁸ The movement has played since 1979 an increasingly important role in student council elections.

⁴⁵ Author’s interview with Dr. Abu Koash, Gaza, 17 January 1996.

⁴⁶ Interview with Dr. Abdul Shafi. *Journal of Palestine Studies* (Autumn 1995), op.cit., pp. 76-85.

⁴⁷ "PA Arrests Journalist." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 32 (5 January 1996), p. 13.

⁴⁸ Z. Abu-Amr. *Emerging Trends in Palestinian Strategic Thinking and Practice*, Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1992, p. 19.

An alliance between the Islamic resistance movement and Haidar Abdul Shafi is unlikely for ideological reasons. The radical Islamic movement does not have to offer concessions to the pro-Communist leader of the Red Crescent in Gaza because the Charter of the Islamic fundamentalists stipulates that all peace initiatives are a "waste of time and acts of absurdity" (Article 15).⁴⁹ Such radical statements make it difficult to bridge the gap between the various members of the opposition movement.

Factionalism will only serve to further weaken the opposition and increase the advantage enjoyed by the Palestinian Authority in relation to opposition forces. Hamas has continued to present Islam as the sole legitimate source for the protest movement in the West Bank and Gaza. Moreover, Article 1 of the Hamas Charter eliminates the supremacy of popular sovereignty in the future Palestinian State. "Islam is its system. From Islam it reaches for its view of life, the universe and humanity, and it judges all its actions according to Islam and is inspired by Islam to correct its errors."⁵⁰

The Qur'an is indeed the sole constitution that the Islamic militants will accept. The potential for democratic-styled institutions are enshrined in the Qur'an. The concept of the advisory council, *shura*, and the leader, *amir*, are concepts that allow the creation of a parliamentary system. For the radical Islamists, it is a challenge to bring to an end the traditional division of power that existed in the glorious times of Islamdom, the division between the role of the sultan and a class of *ulema* that was concerned with rituals and family law. In addition, the Hamas militants have adopted a tit-for-tat strategy and are attempting to establish an Islamic microcosm, a kind of liberated area in which Islam rules every aspect of life.⁵¹ Accordingly, they reject any cultural compromise as far as clothing, for example, is concerned. The cultural intolerance is combined with radical political goals that reject the idea of a political compromise with Israel; the idea of any form of peaceful coexistence with Israel is rejected in Article 15 of the Hamas Charter, as is participation in the negotiations. The Islamic resistance movement rejects any territorial concessions to Israel and believes that any international conference is a waste of time.⁵²

⁴⁹Z. Abu-Amr. "Hamas: A Historical and Political Background," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4, (Summer 1993): 5-19.

⁵⁰"The Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4, (Summer 1993), pp. 122-134.

⁵¹O. Roy. *The Failure of Political Islam*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 80.

⁵²"The Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, op.cit

Hamas has decided to oppose negotiations - at least for as long as the Israeli Government opts for Arafat as its primary partner.

The absence of any credible document proposing an alternative solution to the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations gives more credit to the claim that Hamas will excel only in its opposition to the current negotiations and not in the management and development of the Occupied Territories. The similarities with the role played by the French communist party PCF in the period 1945 to 1981 are striking. Both movements could not participate in any form of national government nor did they succeed in gaining power by means other than elections. Eventually the PCF was absorbed by the capitalist society when it joined the French socialists of François Mitterrand in the 1981 presidential and legislative elections.⁵³ The participation in the management of public affairs caused a gradual decline in the political base of the PCF since longstanding economic problems such as unemployment were not solved. Since the PCF had joined the government, it could not initially mobilize its affiliated communist trade union, the CGT, to protest the government's policy; self-criticism was not yet on the agenda of communist movements.

Islamic militants can still gain support by simply opposing any peace process with Israel. The impoverished and disappointed of the regime may follow the banner of Allah to the same extent as their French equivalents followed for 40 years the communist symbol. Until today, the cooperation between the PLO and Hamas has helped to reduce the possibility of a major military confrontation between the two movements occurring. Nevertheless, Hamas challenged Arafat's authority in October 1994 with three attacks in which 26 Israelis were killed: Hamas blew up an Israeli civilian bus in the heart of Tel Aviv and kidnapped an Israeli soldier, Nahshon Wachsmann, who was subsequently killed during the storming of the building in which he was being held, after which it went on a shooting spree involving Israeli targets. The message Hamas wanted to send to the Palestinian leadership was clear: no peace, no stability, and no security were possible without involving the Muslim Brotherhood.

Hamas may also be keen to enter the negotiation process with Israel, although conflicting statements made by Hamas leaders make it difficult to assess the true intentions. The mediation efforts of the Israeli Islamic

⁵³ For a discussion of the role of the Communist Party as a protest movement see: A. Kriegel *Communistes Français*. Trans. by E. P. Halperk. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.

Movement,⁵⁴ which claims to have no connection with Hamas or the Islamic Jihad, were designed to get Hamas and the Islamic Jihad to conclude an agreement with the Palestinian Authority whereby they would promise to stop the suicide campaign.

The Hamas strategy of terror was risky as far as Arafat was concerned because he was forced to cooperate with Israeli security forces in order to avoid losing American support. Nowadays, Israel and the Palestinian Authority seem to have joined forces in curtailing the activities of the Islamic movement or otherwise harming the organization, though the Palestinian Authority was hesitant at first to admit publicly that this particular form of cooperation exists. Brigadier General Khaled Musmar from the Palestinian Authority's General Security Forces vehemently rejected accusations that the assassination of the Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shiqaqi was the result of a joint effort on the part of the Palestinian Authority and Israel.⁵⁵ The recent assassination of Muhiyeddin Ash-Sharif, a Hamas activist who was accused by Israel of being responsible for several suicide missions, is another example of Hamas' strategy to discredit the Palestinian Authority and its cooperation with Israel.

In summary, Hamas condemned the PLO for its secular ideology but did not dare enter an open confrontation. The radical Islamic movement has confirmed its affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood and has energetically rejected any submission to the secular ideology of the PLO. Since the ascent to power of Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, the confrontation between Hamas and the PLO has continued to increase. Arafat could not accept suicide attacks on Israeli civilians if he wanted to gain American support and further funding.

The international connection that exists between the Hamas movement and the Muslim Brotherhood makes the fight against terrorism in the Occupied Territories and the areas under Palestinian control difficult. The mere existence of the Islamic Salvation Party is far from being a clear sign of an emerging split in the Hamas movement and the Israelis seem to have no illusions concerning Hamas' international support. The Israeli crackdown on Hamas was symbolized by the re-arrest of the Hamas spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, soon after he was released from prison. Yassin had been serving a life sentence for ordering the kidnaping and killing of two Israeli soldiers during the *Intifada*.

⁵⁴ *Jerusalem Post*, 26 February 1996, p. 4.

⁵⁵ "Arafat meets with Hamas." *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 24 (10 November 1995), p.11.

In 1996, Israel had already urged the then imprisoned Sheikh Yassin to publish a statement calling for Hamas to suspend armed attacks. Israeli Government spokesman Uri Dromi is convinced that Iran sponsors Hamas.⁵⁶ “Iran is trying very hard to perpetrate terror again. So, an appeal by Yassin is a good step but it is not enough.”

This thesis is broadly supported in Israel and beyond. Moshe Ya’alon, the Director of the Israeli Military Intelligence Service, supported the same argument, being convinced that Iran masterminded the Hamas suicide campaigns. The Israelis also doubted the will of the Palestinian President to confront Hamas. Ami Ayalon, the Chief of the Israeli General Security Service argued in a meeting of the Israeli Cabinet on 5 April 1998 that Yasser Arafat avoids fighting terrorism. Israeli intelligence officers stated openly that the devastating acts of violence from February to March 1996 were masterminded by Iran as a means to damage the peace process.⁵⁷

The continuation of the terror attacks conducted by Hamas seemed to confirm the arguments made by Ya’alon and especially by Ayalon. A foreign power was therefore indirectly held responsible for the lack of progress in the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations. Former Prime Minister Shimon Peres was aware of the implications of such acts for government stability and he accused Iran of ordering Hamas to carry out several suicide attacks prior to the elections. “Iran gave orders to bring down our government (...) We lost 20 percent in the polls.”⁵⁸ The Israeli population hesitated about the policy to adopt against the Palestinians. As far as the civil population was concerned, the peace process that was supposed to bring peace and internal security had turned in a bloody nightmare.

Netanyahu, an opponent of Labor leader Peres vowed to end the peace process. As expected by observers,⁵⁹ he adopted a hard-line approach toward Palestinians, which has not changed until today.⁶⁰ Since Sheikh Yassin was freed last October,⁶¹ the ailing spiritual leader of the Islamic

⁵⁶ *CCN World News*, 25 May 1996, Web posted at: 5.05 p.m. EDT (2105GMT0).

⁵⁷ U. Bar-Joseph. “A Bull in a China Shop: Netanyahu and Israel’s Intelligence Community.” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counter Intelligence*, vol. 11, no. 2 (Summer 1998), p. 158.

⁵⁸ Shimon Peres, WGBH2, *Boston News Station*, 12 May 1998, 11:55 p.m.

⁵⁹ *CNN World News*, 25 May 1996.

⁶⁰ *New York Times*, 12 May 1998, p. A8.

⁶¹ Israel freed Yassin, 61, in October 1997. Yassin had been serving a life sentence, which he received in 1989 for founding Hamas and arranging attacks on Israelis. Israel was forced to

movement has returned to the Gaza Strip. His meeting with Hamas leaders in Egypt did not result in a message of peace. Nevertheless, he tried very carefully to secure American goodwill toward Hamas by making the following statement:

“The Qassam Brigades of Hamas are threatening the American and Israeli interests in the Palestinian land, but Hamas is not ready to mobilize the battle outside Palestine. By resisting Israel here, we are resisting America because America is Israel and vice versa. There is no difference.”

A few months earlier, Sheikh Yassin had announced that he would end suicide bombings in Israel if Israel were to withdraw completely from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.⁶² These conflicting statements do not facilitate any deepening of the trust between Yasser Arafat's Fateh movement and Hamas. Arafat was notably absent from the celebrations to welcome back Hamas leader Yassin to Gaza.

The political leader of Hamas, Musa Abu Marzouq, is said to have pushed local leaders towards hard-line stances because they felt their role was diminishing as the political initiative was quickly shifting to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Ironically, Abu Marzouq launched - allegedly from the United States - violent actions against Jews in Israel.⁶³ In addition, the decentralized character of Hamas has made it difficult to hold the movement accountable for unofficial agreements, a desire to preserve its operational abilities being one of the reasons why Hamas was granted autonomy by the Islamic Brotherhood. The PLO leadership should have been aware of the organizational structure of Hamas before it opted for a strategy of cooperation with the fundamentalists.

3.6.2 Cooperation between Hamas and PLO Until Victory

Despite the emerging Israeli-Palestinian cooperation in issues of national security, a look at the initial cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and the Islamic militants would prove useful. Initially, common interests and the political attitudes of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas

pardon him to obtain the release by Jordan of two Mossad secret agents captured in a bungled attempt to kill a senior Hamas official in Amman, and Yassin returned to his home in the Sabra district in Gaza. *Reuters*, 19 February 1998 in *CNN World News*, Web posted (17:25GMT).

⁶² *CNN World News*, 7 October 1997, Web posted 14:43GMT.

⁶³ J. Miller. "Israel says that a Prisoner's Tale Links Arabs in US to Terrorism." *New York Times*, 17 February 1993, section A, p.1.

made it difficult to stop terror attacks from Hamas bases in the territories under Palestinian control. Moreover, official statements and cooperation between the two movements gave the impression that President Arafat might consider using Islamic militant actions as a tool to exercise pressure on the Israeli Government and to obtain further territorial concessions.

Hamas and the PLO may be separated by their ideological orientation but they are part of the same problem. As long as the Palestinian Authority was not willing to clarify its position toward the Islamic fundamentalists, Israel, quite rightly, continued to doubt Arafat's sincerity with regard to seeking a peaceful settlement. Arafat's initial initiatives supported such an opinion. When the future Palestinian President met with Hamas representatives during the Amman Economic Summit in November 1995, he made his strategy very clear with the following statement:⁶⁴ "We are all in one barracks. Let us direct our attention to those outside the barracks and face them." Certainly, the common fight against Israel bridged - but only in the early days of the Palestinian Authority - the increasing gap between the secular movement and that of the Islamists. As a result, Netanyahu's subsequent accusation that Arafat has given the green light to Hamas militants⁶⁵ seemed all the more credible.

Yasser Arafat has a long tradition of rejecting any Israeli or American arguments accusing him as the leader of the PLO of orchestrating the campaigns of Islamic activists or simple terror attacks:

"The amazing thing is that the Americans expect the PLO to control all the acts of all the Palestinians. I am presented to the world as a superpower that should be held responsible for everything that happens anywhere in the world in which any Palestinian is involved. Reagan was himself shot at by an American citizen and Kennedy was killed by an American citizen but that did not make all Americans terrorists. If the US Government cannot control all the acts of every single American, how am I expected to control the acts of every single Palestinian?"⁶⁶

Prior to the 1993 Oslo Agreement, Arafat, due to his alleged orchestrating role in terror attacks, was a target for elimination by Israeli commandos: The 1986 bombing of the PLO headquarters in Tunis by the Israeli air-

⁶⁴ "Arafat meets with Hamas." *Palestine Report*, op.cit., p. 11.

⁶⁵ *New York Times*, 22 March 1997, p. 4.

⁶⁶ "Yasser Arafat", interview by A. Gauhar. *Third World Quarterly*, 8.2. (April 1986), p. 405.

force illustrated the double standards used in the international discussion of terrorism.⁶⁷ Due to the common origins of the secular and religious Palestinian movements, the PLO leadership can be easily made responsible for the bloody attacks of the Islamic resistance movement.

The organizational and personal link between the PLO and Hamas existed in the past. Certain Fateh members used to be members of the Muslim Brotherhood, and observers argue that even Yasser Arafat once had close links with the organization while many Fateh leaders maintained a friendly relationship.⁶⁸ The ideological affinities may indeed be an additional factor that supported an initial form of cooperation between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. The alliance that was established between Fateh and the Islamic movement in Lebanon showed that such cooperation can work.⁶⁹

Arafat's reinforced position in Gaza and Jericho weakened the secular opposition in the PLO, and both the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine gradually gave up any hope of uprooting the Palestinian leader. The closer contacts between the Palestinian Authority and the United States are further weakening the relations between Hamas and Fateh. One thing is abundantly clear: Arafat had to establish his power base in Jericho and Gaza before he could think about fighting Hamas. The results of the January 1996 elections revealed the overwhelming support of the Palestinians for Yasser Arafat. Islam as an efficient political strategy suffered a clear setback.⁷⁰ Arafat had opted in the early days of the Palestinian Authority for a strategy of cooperation with Hamas, which resulted in the following initial successes:

- A long-standing agreement was reached between Hamas and the PLO, according to which the former would not criticize the Palestinian leadership in public.⁷¹
- A split developed between the local Hamas leadership and the leaders living abroad. The Palestinian Authority helped a Hamas delegation to

⁶⁷ Ibid..

⁶⁸ Z. Abu-Amr. *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994, p.47-48.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p.46.

⁷⁰ See M. Heiberg and G. Ovensen. *Palestinian Society in Gaza, West Bank and Arab Jerusalem*. FAFO Report 151, 1993, pp. 268-269.

⁷¹ Tayeb Abdul Rahim, a senior advisor of Yasser Arafat, charged expatriate leaders with trying to push the local Hamas leadership to break the agreement. *New York Times*, 11 April 1998, p. 14.

travel from Gaza to Khartoum, Sudan, where they consulted with the Hamas political leadership regarding ways to improve relations with the Palestinian Authority.⁷²

Israel's status as a common enemy helped to reinforce the common identity of the Palestinians. This is confirmed by the writings of Gurr in which he notes that the group identity of conquered nations is in general strong.⁷³ The split between the PLO and Hamas weakened the group cohesion and their capacity to mobilize. Hamas has certainly confirmed Israel as the common enemy in order to allow for a joint mobilization with the secular forces as Arafat had suggested initially. Article 1 of the Hamas Charter leaves no doubt:

"Our nation is one, plight is one, destiny is one, and our enemy is the same...(…) the Islamic Resistance Movement (...) supports [the secular movement] in confronting the enemy and wishes guidance for him."⁷⁴

Hamas expressed the opinion in Article 1, that the PLO is on the wrong ideological path and that the PLO is in need of divine inspiration. The movement continues to reject the dominance of the secularist ideology and links any submission to the orders of the PLO and today's Palestinian Authority to the adoption of the Islamic way of life. "When the Palestine Liberation Organization adopts Islam as its system of life, we will be its soldiers and the firewood of its fire."

Indeed, Hamas never accepted the negotiation process and expressed its rejection using the voice of its spokespersons, such as Mahmoud Zahhar who had already been arrested following suicide attacks in Israel.⁷⁵ The arrest is not in itself significant in explaining the split between Hamas and the PLO leadership since both had attempted initially to cooperate:

- Following suicide attacks in downtown Jerusalem, carried out by the Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas in October 1994, Hamas

⁷² "PA-Hamas Still Talking." *Palestine Report*, 27 October 1995, p. 3.

⁷³ T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p.126.

⁷⁴ "Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) of Palestine." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, op.cit., p. 130-131.

⁷⁵ Interview with M. Zahhar, representative of Hamas in Gaza. *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, vol. 3 (Spring 1995), pp. 12-18. Interview by H. Hijazi. Translated by E. Sanbar from *Majallat Al-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyya*, no. 20 (Autumn 1994).

and the Palestinian Authority met several times.⁷⁶ Tension always increases between the two groups when the Islamic resistance movement launches another suicide attack on Israelis. However, the cooperation between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority initially led to concrete results, which improved the situation of the Islamic resistance movement.

- Hamas spokesperson Mahmoud Zahhar declared that “we don’t have an alternative other than finding a collective formula for building the homeland on just principles, and to repair what the occupation left behind.”⁷⁷
- Arafat released 17 Hamas members from prison and promised to free many more to create a new feeling of goodwill between the two sides.⁷⁸
- An eight-person joint Palestinian Authority-Hamas Field Conciliation Committee was established to solve urgent problems.
- Arafat granted Hamas permission to open an office in the Gaza Strip and to publish an official party newspaper. The pro-Palestinian Authority newspaper *Al-Ayyam* claimed that the opening of the office should convince Hamas supporters of the benefits of the elections. It was also an attempt to split Hamas since the participation of Hamas followers in the elections in January 1996 challenged the unity of the Islamic resistance movement.⁷⁹
- Sheikh Hassan Yousef, a Hamas representative, suggested that the Islamic resistance movement might participate in Palestinian autonomy elections.⁸⁰
- Hamas leaders and representatives of the Palestinian Authority met in Cairo, Amman and in Khartoum.⁸¹

The Islamic resistance movement had started its wave of bombings only following the massacre initiated by the American Jew Baruch Goldstein, a follower of the radical Rabbi Meir Kahane and a resident of the Israeli

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁷⁷ “PA Overtures to Hamas.” *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 20 (13 October 1995), p. 5.

⁷⁸ S. Kanaana. “New PA-Hamas Cooperation.” *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 35 (2 February 1996), p. 8.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ “PA Overtures to Hamas”. *Palestine Report*, op.cit., p. 5.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

and the Palestinian Authority met several times.⁷⁶ Tension always increases between the two groups when the Islamic resistance movement launches another suicide attack on Israelis. However, the cooperation between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority initially led to concrete results, which improved the situation of the Islamic resistance movement.

- Hamas spokesperson Mahmoud Zahhar declared that “we don’t have an alternative other than finding a collective formula for building the homeland on just principles, and to repair what the occupation left behind.”⁷⁷
- Arafat released 17 Hamas members from prison and promised to free many more to create a new feeling of goodwill between the two sides.⁷⁸
- An eight-person joint Palestinian Authority-Hamas Field Conciliation Committee was established to solve urgent problems.
- Arafat granted Hamas permission to open an office in the Gaza Strip and to publish an official party newspaper. The pro-Palestinian Authority newspaper *Al-Ayyam* claimed that the opening of the office should convince Hamas supporters of the benefits of the elections. It was also an attempt to split Hamas since the participation of Hamas followers in the elections in January 1996 challenged the unity of the Islamic resistance movement.⁷⁹
- Sheikh Hassan Yousef, a Hamas representative, suggested that the Islamic resistance movement might participate in Palestinian autonomy elections.⁸⁰
- Hamas leaders and representatives of the Palestinian Authority met in Cairo, Amman and in Khartoum.⁸¹

The Islamic resistance movement had started its wave of bombings only following the massacre initiated by the American Jew Baruch Goldstein, a follower of the radical Rabbi Meir Kahane and a resident of the Israeli

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁷⁷ “PA Overtures to Hamas.” *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 20 (13 October 1995), p. 5.

⁷⁸ S. Kanaana. “New PA-Hamas Cooperation.” *Palestine Report*, vol. 1, no. 35 (2 February 1996), p. 8.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ “PA Overtures to Hamas”. *Palestine Report*, op.cit., p. 5.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

settlement of Kiryat Arba near Hebron.⁸² Goldstein shot dead 29 Palestinians at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron in February 1994. In April 1994, the first suicide attack organized by Hamas occurred in Afula. Following the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, Iran was accused of promoting Hamas suicide bombings in a bid to topple the Peres government.⁸³

More than 200 Israelis have been killed since the radical Islamic opposition began to carry out suicide attacks⁸⁴ and a high level of violence stimulated Palestinian mobilization; violent confrontations between Israelis and Palestinians resulted in the killing of more than 50 Palestinians and several Israelis in September 1996 alone.⁸⁵ It often appeared that Arafat's PLO and Hamas had embraced a strategy of confrontation. The aim of Hamas was to cause the failure of the peace process. The numerous Hamas attacks on Israelis threatened now not only the positions of the Rabin-Peres Government, but also Arafat's place at the head of the Palestinian government.

The violent repression of the grievances of the Palestinians had an impact on Israel's 800,000 Arab citizens, who represent roughly 17 percent of the total Israeli population and increased their political mobilization. Arab electoral support for the Labor Party dropped from 31 percent in the general elections for the 1984 Knesset, the Israeli Parliament, to only 17 percent in 1988. The Arab-Israelis started to prefer pro-Arab parties such as the List for Peace, the Arab Democratic Party, and the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality.⁸⁶

Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin attempted to act against this alienation by cooperating with the Arab members of Parliament, and in 1992, for the first time in Israel's history, he included Arab-Israeli Knesset members in the Israeli Government. Rabin's move to integrate the members of the Arab parties can be viewed as an attempt to fight the declining Arab vote and the increasing alienation of the Israeli Arabs. A spillover of Hamas activities into Israel was prevented; while Palestinians from the Occupied Territories took part in suicide bombings, Arab-Israelis, who hold Israeli passports, refrained from engaging in terror.

⁸² Since 1967, Jewish settlers have killed approximately 60 Palestinians. *Le Figaro*, 3 January 1997, p. B3.

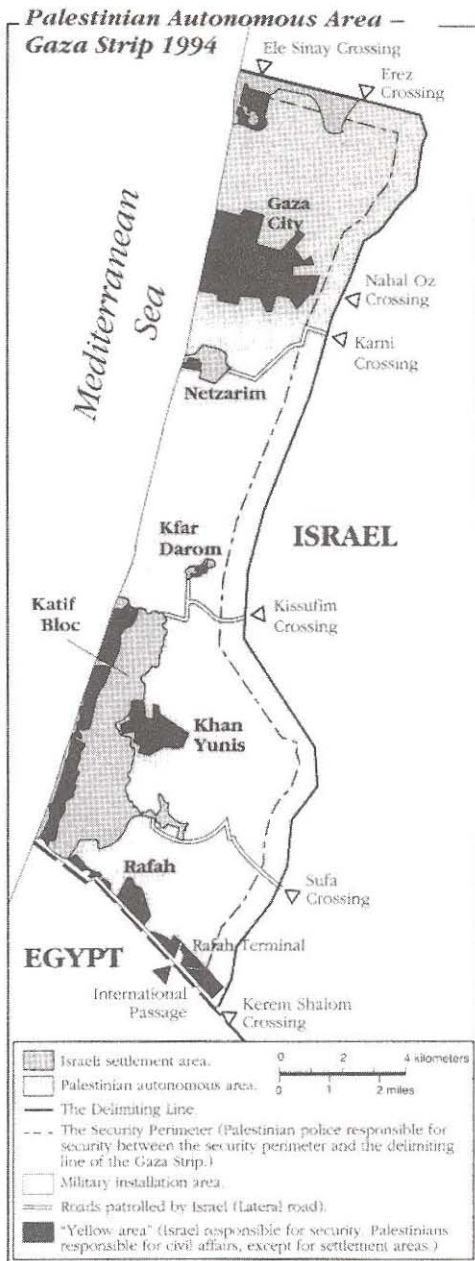
⁸³ Shimon Peres, WGBH2, *Boston's News Station*, 12 May 1998, 11:50 p.m.

⁸⁴ *International Herald Tribune*, 6 March 1996, p. 6.

⁸⁵ *New York Times*, 27 September 1997, p. 1.






⁸⁶ T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p. 234.

Map 1

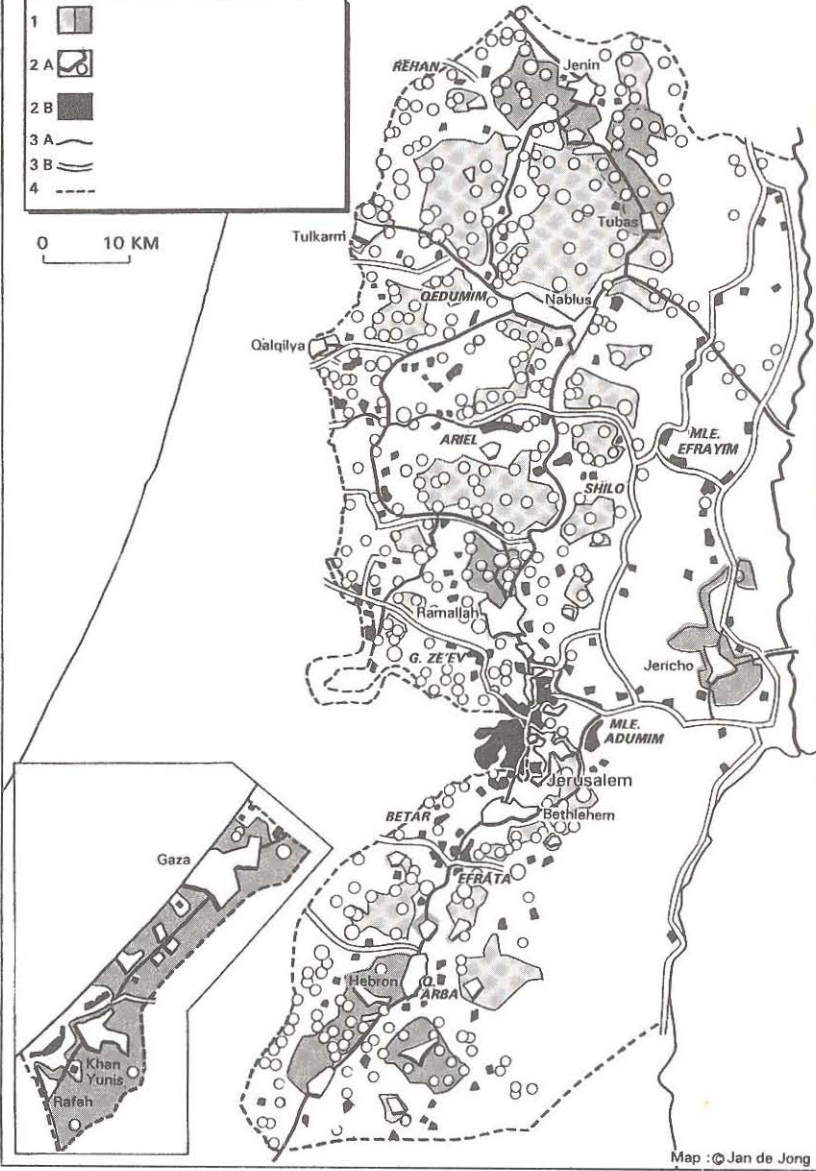


Source: Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area.

THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES
AFTER THE OSLO II - AGREEMENT , 1995

- 1 
- 2 A 
- 2 B 
- 3 A 
- 3 B 
- 4 

0 10 KM



Map : © Jan de Jong

3.7 Islamic Disunity: Salvation for the Palestinian President?

Before the *Intifada*, the Palestinian leader Abu Jihad had tried to win over young Muslims who were disenchanted with the nationalist factions. It is also said that Fateh provided the Islamic Jihad with logistic support *in the very beginning of the movement*. Over the years, the movements began to oppose each other and to fight ideological battles.⁸⁷ The Islamic Jihad considers the peace negotiations between Arafat and the Israelis political suicide and rejects the Oslo Agreements. Moreover, as far as the Islamic Jihad is concerned, the Palestinian Authority assassinated its leader, Fathi Shiqaqi.

The Islamic movement in the Occupied Territories and in the area under Palestinian control is split into two unequal groups, Hamas and the much smaller Islamic Jihad. The Muslim Brotherhood asked the Islamic Jihad, which has often disturbed the ongoing dialogue between the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government, to accept Hamas as the leading militant movement. Terror attacks carried out by the Islamic Jihad and Hamas could topple or at least weaken the position of Yasser Arafat.

The unity of Palestinians is further weakened by the disunity between Israeli Arabs and their cousins in the West Bank and Gaza, whom Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza often regard as traitors who are prepared to live in peace in the State of Israel and consider Arab states non-democratic.⁸⁸ The Palestinian Authority therefore is in charge of managing the destiny of a divided Palestinian society: Israeli-Palestinians enjoy more rights than Palestinians from the West Bank but are far from being equal citizens. In addition, the vast group of several million Palestinian refugees living in neighboring Arab States aspires to a seemingly impossible return to the territories under Palestinian administration.

Indeed, the policies suggested regarding the millions of Palestinian refugees are contradictory. US President Bill Clinton said that Palestinian refugees should be able to settle "wherever they want to live (...) and I would like it if the Palestinian people felt free and were free to live wherever they liked, wherever they want to live."⁸⁹ Such statements, which seemed to announce a change in a long-standing US policy towards Palestinians, shook Israel. If it announced a sincere change of policy, the

⁸⁷ Z. Abu-Amr. *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, op.cit., p. 110.

⁸⁸ T.R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*, op. cit., p. 235.

⁸⁹ *New York Times*, 2 July 1999, p. A9.

United States could reinforce the standing of the Arafat-led Palestinian Authority. Arafat's call at the 54th UN General Assembly in New York therefore no longer sounds just like lip service but may announce important changes in Palestinian policy. The call for an independent Palestinian State by the Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa at the same Assembly confirms this development.⁹⁰

The confrontation between the religious and secular movements - such as Hamas and the Palestinian Authority - has a direct impact on the emerging civil society in the Occupied Territories and leaves little space for the development of the first democracy in an Arab country.⁹¹ The Palestinian civil society is among the first groups that had to re-adjust to the authoritarian rule of Yasser Arafat. Certainly, the overwhelming victory of Yasser Arafat in the January 1996 elections does not reflect the diverse nature of the Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza. Whereas the West Bank was in close contact with Israel and Israelis, for example, the Gaza Strip was ignored, being considered unworthy of development. Even today, the poor infrastructure and road conditions⁹² remind the visitor more of African refugee camps than of a place that is an hour's drive away from Jerusalem.

The cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, the very same movement that aims to end the peace process, seemed contradictory. Arafat's interest in this cooperation was perhaps purely self-serving. When Arafat's PLO returned to the Occupied Territories in 1993, Hamas was already well established in the Gaza Strip. It was only a matter of time before Hamas challenged the Palestinian Authority in a violent confrontation that took place on 18 November 1994, leaving approximately 200 Palestinians dead.

The subsequent crackdown on Hamas militants pushed Hamas leaders to leave Gaza. The Palestinian Authority claimed that Hamas had broken an internal agreement with the Palestinian Authority in Marj Az-Zuhour and violated the promise not to challenge the Palestinian Authority.⁹³ The military standoff with Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority and its poor

⁹⁰ *Jerusalem Post*, 24 September 1999, p. 2.

⁹¹ For a definition of the term 'retrogression of Arab democratization' see L. Sadiqi, *Progress and Retrogression in Arab Democratization*. Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1992, 9-14.

⁹² Author's visits to Gaza, in particular a visit from 10-17 January 1996. Main roads were flooded due to the absence of drainage installations and Gaza City could only be left by driving across refugee camps, which revealed a high degree of poverty.

⁹³ "Shift in Balance of Power", *Issues*, March 1998 (online edition: <http://www.arabia.com/issues>).

performance in the Palestinian elections of January 1996 had diminished the standing of Hamas. Its hard-line approach toward Israel, Yasser Arafat and the peace negotiations had not succeeded in derailing the peace process.

Americans and Israelis pushed Arafat in the Wye River Memorandum Agreement of 23 October 1998 not to tolerate any further terrorist activities in the territories under his control.⁹⁴ The challenge to curb the Islamic terror movement has now to be met by the Palestinian President. The potential for civil strife should not be neglected; Horowitz writes that some of the most violent ethnic violence has occurred when a certain group attempts to capture the state for itself.⁹⁵

From the point of view of Hamas, the scope of Arafat's power and the implantation of the Palestinian Authority block the road to an Islamic State of Palestine. The movement had already voiced its opposition to Arafat, and the Palestinian President must act now if he does not want to lose the American support. To avoid a deadlock, Arafat has apparently opted for a different strategy. Former Prime Minister Shimon Peres has noted on more than one occasion that Arafat has undergone an enormous change, clearly implying that he has opted for a confrontation with Hamas: "Nobody today denies that he [Arafat] fights Hamas."⁹⁶

The killing spree of the Islamic militants has continued, causing the Palestinian Authority to react in order to preserve vital credibility. Following the most recent killing of a Hamas activist in Ramallah just a few steps away from a Palestinian police station,⁹⁷ Hamas and the Palestinian Authority attacked each other publicly and accused each other and the Israelis with the murder. A subsequent Palestinian Authority-led crackdown on Hamas activists led to the arrest of the suspected killer⁹⁸ and other suspects. Again, the Islamic movement voiced its opposition to the Palestinian leader and will most likely opt for 'exit' - to use Hirschman's terminology. Yet the 'exit' option is not really an alternative for Hamas since it will be confronted by joint security forces of the Palestinian Authority and Israel: When the political power is controlled by a monopoly, the threat to exit is unlikely to work since the protest movement cannot threaten the organization or people in charge of political power. In-

⁹⁴ The Wye River Memorandum, 23 October 1998, page 2 of 8. <http://www.aipac.com/wye.html>.

⁹⁵ D.L. Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, op.cit., p. 189-190.

⁹⁶ S. Peres, WGBH2, *Boston's News Station*, 12 May 1998, 11:50 p.m.

⁹⁷ *New York Times*, 2 April 1998, p. A10.

⁹⁸ *New York Times*, 12 April 1998, p.10.

stead of withdrawing the movement from the political competition, Hamas could be tempted to reaffirm its power by opting for violence.⁹⁹ Hamas might indeed opt for a military confrontation and conduct a campaign of suicide attacks against Israeli civilians in the hope of avoiding losing further ground to Arafat.

The issues at stake are huge, and a further suicide attack could seal the fate of the peace negotiations between Israelis and the Palestinian Authority. A stalemate in the negotiations, erupting civil strife and the regional instability caused by tensions at the Israeli-Egyptian and Israeli-Syrian borders might seal the fate of any democratic development within the territories under the control of the Palestinian Authority.

3.8 The Civil Society in the Center of a Communal Mobilization

Since the declaration of an independent Palestinian State by the Palestinian National Council on 15 November 1988, the PLO has modified its guiding ideology. The appearance of an Islamic competitor during the *Intifada* - which had surprised both¹⁰⁰ the PLO and the Islamic resistance movement - challenged the PLO's capacity to direct the mobilization process of the Palestinian society. Consequently, the PLO had no choice but to gain the upper hand in its fight with Hamas, which had already started to shape many aspects of life in the Occupied Territories, as observed by Arafat's economic advisor during the Oslo negotiations: "When we arrived here, the women, even the Christian ones, had to wear scarves. We tried to change it and it changed. We said, this is not us, because Palestinians are open-minded."¹⁰¹

Hamas was the answer of the Muslim Brotherhood to the Unified National Leadership of the PLO, which tried in the second stage of the *Intifada* to take control of the Palestinian uprising. The continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza had certainly contributed to reinforcing the sense of Palestinian group identity, Israeli-imposed restrictions on freedom of movement and political action having resulted in the emergence amongst Palestinians of a 'them and us' attitude.

⁹⁹ See for a discussion of the concept A. O. Hirschman. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Response to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970, pp. 55-57.

¹⁰⁰ Z. Abu-Amr. *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, op.cit., p.59.

¹⁰¹ Author's meeting with Dr. Abu Koash, economic advisor to President Arafat during the Oslo negotiations, Gaza, 17 January 1996.

External factors such as the events of Black September 1970 in Jordan and the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 proved to the Palestinians that they were alone in the international society. The PLO was facing more difficulties than before in influencing the events in the Middle East from its new headquarters in Tunis and was on the brink of losing touch with the Palestinians in the territories, the lifestyle of the exiled Palestinian leaders being far removed from the living conditions in Gaza.

Despite the catastrophic economic situation,¹⁰² the Palestinian society had developed numerous non-governmental organizations during the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.¹⁰³ The *Intifada* had shown the capacities of the Palestinian population, which had suffered from the ineffective strategy of violence adopted by the PLO.¹⁰⁴ Following its return in 1994, the PLO had difficulties in accepting the idea of a pluralistic and independent Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The PLO had aborted the attempt to set up an independent Higher Council for Education in 1977. Following the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967, Arab newspapers were not published and *Al-Quds* appeared again only in 1969. The journalism of *Al-Quds* was occasionally causing conflicts with the PLO-leadership since the articles did not follow PLO policies. Fateh began only in 1980/81 to establish labor organizations and student associations, opening, for example, *Lijan Ash-Shabiba l'l-Amal Al-Ijtima* in the refugee camps of Tulkarem and Anabta. The increase in the number of students in academic education and attending high school encouraged a common experience of many students when they were confronted by the Israeli army. The numerous student protests created a feeling of solidarity between Palestinian students. In 1967, 17,682 students studied in higher education; by 1969, this figure had increased to 33,487 in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. In Gaza, the numbers were 11,252 and 17,252 respectively. The universities in Birzeit, Bethlehem and Gaza witnessed a steady increase in the number of students, in spite of the fact that after having allowed their creation, Israel frequently closed them down. The Palestinian Authority recognized gradually the impor-

¹⁰² Interview with Walid A. Siam, Deputy Director General, International cooperation, Gaza, 17 January 1996.

¹⁰³ The annual Diary of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Studies of International Affairs (PASSIA) lists numerous Palestinian and foreign NGOs working in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

¹⁰⁴ The 1972 PLO attack on Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic Games did more harm than good as far as the Palestinian cause was concerned, and 'Palestinian' became a synonym for 'terrorist'; G. Shultz refused to permit Yasser Arafat return to the United States in order to speak before the UN.

tance of the yet independent non-governmental Palestinian organizations in the Occupied Territories. The PLO tried to gain more influence in the emerging civil society in the Occupied Territories, and the new policy to try to correct the past decision to ignore local organizations was successful. In 1980, the PLO supported 358 organizations in the West Bank and 78 in Gaza, where Yasser Arafat was now enjoying more influence among Palestinian notables, professional and student organizations. The economic and social conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza strip favored indeed a rebellion. The lack of jobs and the generally difficult living conditions caused protests by young Palestinians. The shock of the Israeli victory in the war of June 1967 paralyzed the Arab leaders for years to come, and it was years before the Palestinians articulated their demands and their grievances in the field of diplomacy. Undoubtedly, the defeat created conditions that were necessary for the Palestinian mobilization. Gurr's criteria such as grievances or political calculation illustrate the long-term social and political process among Palestinians in their mobilization against Israelis. The poor living conditions of numerous Palestinians facilitated the collective mobilization and certainly facilitated the Palestinian uprising in 1987. Observers notice a continued trend towards a militarization of the Palestinian society in Gaza.¹⁰⁵

The affirmation of the group identity of the Palestinians coincided with the emergence of the Islamic factor in the Arab World. Yet, the early rivalry between secular (PLO) and religious movements (Hamas, the Islamic Jihad) did not create synergies but weakened the Palestinian movement as whole. As Gurr notes,¹⁰⁶ effective mobilizations within groups that are composed of different factions often depend on the creation of coalitions among diverse segments and contending leaders. A failure to build and utilize such coalitions has weakened the political impact of the Palestinians. The opponent, in this case Israel, may find it easier to manage the religious and ethnic-political challenge because the State confronts the movements as one single actor.

As a consequence of the violent attacks of Islamic fundamentalists, the Palestinian Authority did not see any other alternative than to seek reinforced cooperation with the Israeli and American security forces to stop such activities. The Wye River Memorandum of 23 October 1998 represents a new milestone in the cooperation between Israelis, Palestinians

¹⁰⁵ S. Roy, "Alienation or Accommodation?" *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIV, no. 4 (Summer 1995), pp. 73-82.

¹⁰⁶ T.R. Gurr, *Minorities at Risk*, op.cit., p. 127.

and American security forces against Islamic activists and the signing of Wye II (or Sharm Esh-Sheikh Agreement) on 5 September 1999 opens the door to the long-awaited final status negotiations. The interim peace process is over.¹⁰⁷

The transnational challenge of the Islamic resistance movement succeeded in slowing down the peace process. Today, the peace process represents not only a revolution in the relations between Palestinians and Americans. Arafat's democratic election as President weakened the role played by the Islamic movement in Palestinian politics. The Fateh movement appears today more in control of the Palestinian institutions than ever and may be strong enough to seek an arrangement with the Islamic Resistance Movement.

The Palestinian Islamists have certainly asserted during the past years their nationalist credentials but the lack of unity among the PLO factions may now be compensated for by external support by the United States. The question remains if the US support of the PLO will effectively promote Palestinian national interests and lead to the creation of an independent Palestinian State - or if it is simply a strategy to advance the Israeli peace negotiations with other Arab states without a clear commitment to the formation of a Palestinian State.¹⁰⁸

The tensions that have in the past ruled the relations between the internal Palestinian elite - notables, mayors, political movements such as the communist party in the territories under Palestinian administration - are likely to persist. The intensive contact between the external elite of the PLO and notables showed to the parties involved that no Palestinian group had the sole solution for successful state-building.

The new Israeli government with Ehud Barak wasted no time in restarting the peace negotiations that had stalled under Binyamin Netanyahu. The Palestinians seem to be on the way to their own independent state but the outcome of the final status talks is still uncertain. Ten years ago, nothing was more unlikely. In 1985, US officials had told UN Delegations that President Ronald Reagan might cancel his participation in the commemo-

¹⁰⁷ For the Wye River Memorandum see the Palestinian National Authority official website at http://www.pna.net/peace/wye_river_memorandum.htm.

¹⁰⁸ Z. Abu-Amr. *Emerging Trends in Palestinian Strategic Political Thinking and Practice*, op.cit., pp. 30-32.

ration of the 40th anniversary of the United Nations if the General Assembly extended an invitation to PLO leader Arafat.

The American threat pushed the General Assembly not to adopt the resolution introduced by India, Kuwait, Nigeria, Senegal and Yemen calling for both Arafat and the leader of the South-West African People's Organization (SWAPO) Iam Nujoma, to be invited to the commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the UN. The American decision was taken after the hijacking of the Achille Lauro, an Italian cruise ship and the subsequent assassination of a handicapped American Jew, Leon Klinghoffer. PLO leader Arafat criticized the American policy:

“We received an official request from the Italian Government to work with the Italians and Egyptians and other Palestinian groups to safeguard the lives of 400 passengers and the crew of the ship. We did that and nobody thanked us for. (...) The Americans (...) built a propaganda campaign around the death of Leon Klinghoffer to discredit the PLO.”¹⁰⁹

Within ten years, the PLO leadership had changed its strategy and shifted from a fight against the hegemony of the United States to ever-closer cooperation with the sole remaining superpower. The Palestinian political thinking was the outcome of a changing geopolitical situation.

The new elite of the Palestinian Authority nevertheless could fail control power structures within the Palestinian society. Several factors could cause such a development.

- the sociological and political changes introduced by the *Intifada*;
- the American and Israeli desire to find a solution to the ever pressing realities in regard to the Islamic challenge in Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon;
- the pressing emergence of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas and the smaller Islamic Jihad: a negotiated settlement only seemed possible with the more pragmatic and weaker PLO leadership in Tunis;
- the Gulf war allowed the United States to reaffirm the American strategic superiority. One consequence of the Gulf War was the weakening of the Palestinian leadership, the result of Arafat's support of Saddam Hussein angering the conservative Gulf monarchies;

¹⁰⁹ “Yasser Arafat.” Interview by A. Gauhar. *Third World Quarterly*, op.cit., p. 404.

- Finally, the failure of the Islamic movements to build up an Islamist alternative to the American model could incite the Palestinian Authority to make strategic errors that might favor the Islamic Resistance Movement. The issue of corruption and insufficient accountability are such issues.

The domination of the United States opened the door to an American-brokered agreement between the Palestinian Authority and the Netanyahu government. The Netanyahu government certainly failed to implement the Wye River Agreement of 27 October 1998. Yet, for the first time, the US Government was not only a mediator but also a participant in the implementation of the agreement.

The US involvement in the peace process helped repeatedly to overcome the stalled peace talks leading up to the Wye II Memorandum that led to the release of 200 Palestinians from Israeli jails.¹¹⁰ These steps are crucial for the Palestinian Authority to preserve the backing of the Palestinian population in order to maintain contact with the bottom level of the society.

¹¹⁰ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 September 1999, p. 8.

IV. Principles of Intra-Communal Conflict and the Potential for Regional Instability

4.1 The Transnational Challenge: Muslim Brotherhood without Borders

Any foreign intervention that is designed to weaken the Israeli Government reinforces the impact of radical Islamic resistance movements such as Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. The change of government following the elections of 29 May 1996 and the ascent to power of Binyamin Netanyahu are examples of ways in which radical Islamic and Jewish terrorism can alter the political situation in the Middle East. Former Prime Minister Peres had accused Iran of ordering Hamas to topple his government, insisting that he had proof that was 100 percent reliable.¹

Militants of the transnational Egyptian terror group Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya received training in Afghanistan. The Muslim Brotherhood has the potential to weaken governments and the stability of entire regions. Well-implanted national branches such as those in Jordan, Egypt and Palestine have established a solidly anchored network of charities that have created strong ties to the local populations. The 1978 Iranian revolution and Ayatollah Khomeini's verbal attacks on Israel pushed the Islamic resistance movement to the forefront of the Palestinian fight against Israel. Hamas used the Islamic ideology - which had caused an uproar across the Middle East following Khomeini's ascent to power - as a tool to control the Palestinian society and to promote the Islamic fight for national liberation. The violent resistance of the Muslim Brotherhood to any peaceful agreements with Israel had already shaken the Egyptian society. The 1981 assassination of the Egyptian President Anwar As-Sadat by the Islamic militants of Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya illustrated the emerging force of radical Islamic fundamentalism. Egypt's second most important terror group, Al-Jihad continued its terror attacks on tourists and continued to challenge the Egyptian State until the movement reached its peak in 1992.

¹ S. Peres, WGBH2, *Boston News Station*, 12 May 1998, 11:50 p.m.

Some authors argue that the Islamic resistance movements across the Muslim World have lost their momentum.² Indeed, they failed to develop an alternative program of government, the Qur'an having been conceived to regulate all aspects of life in the pre-industrial era. Even the Islamic rulers of Iran must learn to accept the fact that the management of an industrial society or an emerging industrial society is no easy task and requires the developing of new policies. Today, an internal fight for power between more fundamentalist groups of clerics and the moderate President Khatami remains a real possibility. Were it to actually occur, it would undoubtedly add to the current instability in the Gulf region.³

The argument that the tide of Islamic fundamentalism has passed is certainly justified as far as the Islamic movement's intention to destabilize well-established states in the region is concerned. Current issues, such as education and the population explosion, are difficult to consider only within the context of Islam. The Islamic State is not a mediator between individuals and citizens; it does not develop a civil society. The Islamic society exists as a reaction to the cooperation of its members.

There is no need for a strong state when the members accept the *Shari'a*. Certainly, Khomeini's economy, more a form of Third World socialism than a specific Islamic model, failed to transform the society. To say it with the words of the French researcher Olivier Roy,

“To build a modern economy that would function only through the virtue of the economic actors is an illusion, a sweet one to be sure in terms of collectivist utopias but for this reason totally nonfunctional, as various attempts have shown.”⁴

The Jewish law student who murdered Prime Minister Rabin in Tel Aviv succeeded, to some extent, in bringing an end to the peace process. Once again, the goals of extremists had joined forces: the radical faction in Iran reached out to radical Israelis by trying to push hard-liners to cancel all peace negotiations. However, due mainly to the intervention of the United States, which offered its services as a mediator, they did not succeed. The newly elected Netanyahu government moved slowly toward a more problematic relationship with the United States since it initially rejected the Oslo process and its guiding principle ‘land for peace’.

² O. Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.

³ S. Peres, WGBH2, *Boston News Station*, 12 May 1998, 11:50 p.m.

⁴ O. Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, op.cit., p. 145.

Three years of Netanyahu's a stop-and-go policy toward the Palestinians came to an end when Israel's May 1999 election brought a change of government. The newly elected Labor leader Ehud Barak benefited from Netanyahu's alienation from his own party and the open confrontation within the Likud between Benny Begin, Dan Meridor and Yitzhak Mordechai. Barak's majority and the failure of the National Union Party that opposed the Oslo Agreement reveal that Israel may be ready to embark on the road of peace negotiations leading to the creation of a Palestinian State. Over the past three years, US President Bill Clinton has tried to advance the peace process despite Netanyahu's opposition.⁵

The renewed peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians were slow to emerge and were marred by serious setbacks. Netanyahu's visit to a radical opponent of President Bill Clinton during his recent visit to the United States complicated the strategic US-Israeli cooperation, while US First Lady Hillary Clinton's verbal approval of the establishment of a Palestinian state, though of no real political value, was seen by the Israelis as an unwelcome signal. The outcome of the stalled peace process might be radically different from what was initially intended by the Netanyahu government; the fact that Netanyahu himself now realizes this, in addition to his recent change of policies, is certainly responsible, at least in part, for the Israeli Government's acceptance of the Wye River Memorandum. It was clear to everyone that local populations - such as Palestinian workers in the West Bank and Gaza who had already been banned from entering Israel following several suicide bombings - would have to pay a very high price should the terror attacks continue.

Despite the intense settlement activity of the Israeli Government, most of the West Bank has remained off limits to Israelis since the *Intifada* began in 1987. Settlements in the West Bank such as Ariel can be reached by special roads that avoid Arab villages in the West Bank. The *Intifada* and the suicide bombings have already succeeded in modifying the relations of Israelis with the West Bank and Gaza. A shooting incident in Jordan in which a Jordanian soldier shot dead several Israeli schoolgirls or the failed attack on Israeli tourists in Egypt both confirmed that Shimon Peres' concept of a New Middle East was still nowhere on the agenda.

The argument can be made that an ongoing campaign of violence by Islamic activists against Israeli civilian and military targets will lead to a

⁵ B. Rubin, ed., "Elections/ Governments in Israel and Turkey." *MERIA News Special Report*, 6 July 1999. (E-mail: besa@mail.biu.ac.il and <http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria.html>).

deterioration in regional security by ensuring that the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations remain frozen. The pressure put on the Israeli Government to prevent attacks and to retaliate did not always bring the results that it hoped to achieve, as proven by the 'Grapes of Wrath' operation. The large military operations launched against Lebanese targets prior to the Israeli elections of May 1996 alienated the 800,000 Arab-Israeli citizens of Israel.⁶ Representing approximately 17 percent of the total population, they clearly identified with their Palestinian brethren in Lebanon and consequently withdrew their support for the Labor government - the very same government that had initiated the Oslo peace agreement.

4.2 The Colonial Legacy

The split that continues to exist between Israelis and Palestinians is certainly largely due to the political legacy left behind by the British administration when it left before the founding of Israel. The Israeli reliance on the United States as the sole mediator has also historic reasons whereas the Palestinians favor also a stronger European involvement.⁷

It is hard if not impossible to apply the colonial concept of 'divide and rule' to the Israeli approach toward Palestinians. The criteria of ethnicity played a critical role in the various immigration policies of colonial powers. It might, however, be going too far to claim that Arab-Israelis act as agents for Israel in a way that is similar to the way in which the Baganda found themselves being used by the British to rule Uganda.⁸ Today, Israel attracts Palestinian Arabs less by a friendly policy than by the opportunities they find in Israel, such as jobs and university training.

The loss of Arab voters who traditionally voted Labor in the past⁹ helped Likud leader Netanyahu to score a victory in the elections. To ignore the demands of the Arab-Israelis remains difficult. A settlement of the historical claims of the Palestinians and respect for the negotiation principle of 'land for peace' will not lead to an exodus of Arab-Israelis to Gaza or Jericho, their professional opportunities having remained better in Israel

⁶ Author's conversation with Palestinian students in Tel Aviv in July 1996.

⁷ Author's conversation with Dr. J. Bremer, foreign correspondent of the German daily, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Jerusalem, July 1997.

⁸ D.L. Horowitz. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, p. 159.

⁹ In 1994, 31 percent of the Arab-Israelis voted for the Labor Party; the percentage fell to 17 percent in the Israeli elections of 1996. In T. R. Gurr. *Minorities at Risk*. Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 1993, p. 234.

than in the territories controlled by the Palestinian Authority.¹⁰ The Palestinian Authority still demands a Palestinian state to demonstrate the independence of the Palestinians and to confirm the rights to their land - by coexisting peacefully with Israel.

Peace in the Middle East cannot be reached without first addressing thoroughly the Palestinian issue. Settling the Palestinian-Israeli conflicts means opening the door to a larger regional peace process since the Palestinian-Israeli disputes lies at the heart of the Middle East crisis. The rejection of Prime Minister Netanyahu's most recent attempt to separate the Palestinian issue from the Arab-Israeli conflict by the Lebanese Foreign Minister, Faris Bouez, reminds the public of this basic wisdom in Middle Eastern politics.¹¹ It can be regarded as one of the major reasons why the Israeli Government was finally convinced to seek further direct contacts with the Palestinian Authority.

Last year's bloody suicide attack on the Jewish Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem showed once more the deep rift between the Palestinian and Jewish populations. The borderlines of the Arab-Israeli conflict are intra-Palestinian and intra-Israeli, and a violent confrontation between secular and religious Palestinian movements is certain to have a spillover effect in regard to Israel. We may ask if the Palestinian society will one day be split totally between the Arab-Israelis who live as 'second-class citizens' within Israeli and the Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, or, if the continued misery of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and the territories under Palestinian self control will bring new violence from within the Israeli society. Six Israeli Palestinians, alleged members of Hamas, were accused recently of being involved in bomb attacks against Israeli civilians in Haifa and Tiberias. An increased radicalization of Israeli Palestinians could indeed exacerbate tension within Israeli society and make the daily life of Palestinians with an Israeli passport more difficult.¹² The radicalization of the Palestinian society oc-

¹⁰ Prime Minister Rabin indicated that he was open to a "land for peace deal with Syria." *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, 10 September 1992, p. 18A.

¹¹ The Lebanese Government formally rejected a proposal of the Israeli Government to withdraw its troops from the occupied zone in Southern Lebanon because Israel attempted to alter UN Security Council resolution 425 by requesting security guarantees. Israel's continued occupation and of Southern Lebanon was qualified by Israeli critics such as Y. Marcus as "Israel's little Vietnam." See article of S. Schneman, "Crash Stirrs Israel Debate on Lebanon Buffer Zone." *New York Times*. February 12, 1997, p. 3.

¹² S. Peres, WGBH2, *Boston News Station*, 12 May 1998, 11:50 p.m.; for information about the attempted attacks in Haifa and Tiberias see *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 September 1999, p. 8. Three out of four alleged members of Hamas were killed when the bombs went off too early.

curred foremost in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and Hamas is based in the Palestinian mainland and abroad - but not within the Israeli borders.

The Islamic movement's prospects of undermining Arafat's authority depend to a large extent on the attitude Arab-Israelis display toward Islamic movements and their aspirations. The Palestinian society is split in its attitude toward the Islamic movement but it has yet to be proven that Hamas would accept a fully secular state if Palestinians ever asked for it. The tensions within the Palestinian society are increased by the numerous Palestinians that live abroad, who have successfully adjusted to the Western way of life and are frequently rejecting a society based on the sole authority of the Qur'an. Their attempt to bring modernization and progress to the Palestinians may conflict with the Islamic project of a society based on the pre-industrial concept of the Qur'an.¹³ The civil war within Algeria confirms that the use of violence by Islamic activists against their fellow citizens remains a possibility if they cannot implement their agenda by other means.

The Islamic Salvation Front and the Armed Islamic Group - both better known under their French acronyms FIS (Front Islamique de Salut) and GIA (Group Islamique Armé) - pursued a full-fledged civil war against their government. The year 1997 saw some of the worst violence against civilians in Algeria since the beginning of the conflict in 1992. In rural areas, armed groups massacred thousands of men, women and children with unspeakable brutality. Killings often went on for several hours in villages close to army barracks, but the army and the security forces failed to intervene to stop the killings and the assailants were allowed to flee undisturbed on each occasion. For their part, armed groups defining themselves as "Islamic groups" continued to kill, torture, abduct and threaten civilians with death.¹⁴

The violent campaigns of Algerian fundamentalists have demonstrated that they cannot overthrow immediately the experienced military junta. The junta used similar terror tactics to those employed by so-called Islamic terrorists to fight the Armed Islamic Group - and committed numerous extra-judicial killings, torture and Chilean-style final 'disappearances', and state-armed militias committed deliberate and arbitrary kill-

¹³ H. Tawil, Arafat's sister-in-law, studied at Harvard's J. F. School of Government in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Author's conversation, Cambridge, 27 October 1997.

¹⁴ Amnesty International. *Annual Report 1998, Middle East and North Africa*. <http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aireport/ar98/mde.htm>.

ings and other abuses against civilians. In other words, ruthless murder campaigns were conducted by the military junta and the Islamic groups in fighting each other.

However, although the military succeeded in preventing an election victory on the part of the radical Islamic movement, FIS, the government was unable to stop the Islamic terror, whereby thousands of Algerians living in rural regions have been massacred. According to the most recent information, the terror campaign of the Algerian fundamentalists has no religious foundations and 150 Algerian policemen and soldiers were arrested for helping the Islamists to massacre civilians. The cause of these massacres seems to some extent to be linked to the ongoing privatization program and land reform.¹⁵ Should the government be involved in promoting the departure of entire village communities from arable land?

The terror campaigns of so-called Islamic activists may partly be the work of the military junta to terrorize a population that was favorable toward an Islamic electoral victory in 1992. Indeed, some of the alleged Islamic terror groups frequently act against farmers and villages that used to be in favor of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). The accusations against the Algerian Government are reinforced by the strange coincidence that the country's important oil installations are hardly a target of the terrorist attacks. The terror attacks of the GIA make it however difficult to deny the reality of Islamic terror in Algeria. Should the reports of the involvement of the Algerian Government in terror squads be confirmed, the Islamic movement, which has lost support over the years, could regain much of the power and support that it enjoyed in the past.

The Algerian and Egyptian examples illustrate that the fight against the influence of Islamic militants can be conducted on both the military and the political level. The involvement of Islamic militants in the Jordanian political system contained initially the Islamic threat to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, but the recent drastic measures taken by King Abdullah to curb the Islamic movement reveal that the strategy did not work. Hamas no longer finds sanctuary under King Abdullah since he assumed control of the throne in February and adopted a strong pro-American policy in the hope of attracting more financial aid. Indeed, the King hopes that the US Congress will approve a US\$200 billion financial package that would make Jordan the second biggest recipient of economic aid per

¹⁵ M.M. Zouari, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman, private luncheon, New York, 9 May 1998.

capita after the State of Israel.¹⁶ The crackdown on Hamas is also an attempt to support Arafat. He suggests that the Palestinian Authority should take at least administrative control of the Muslim holy sites of Jerusalem, which are currently still in the control of Abdullah's family. King Abdullah challenges his father's policy on two levels: first, he does not seem to compete with Yasser Arafat, and second, he adopts a radical anti-Hamas policy that may well seal his reputation as a leader too close to the US and backfire. The Islamic movement is widely popular in Jordan.

In Egypt, meanwhile, the government opted for a different strategy. It took a tougher stand against the radical Islamic movements such as Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya and Al-Jihad, especially in the Minya Governorate in Upper Egypt. The military confrontation between government troops and Islamic activists resulted in dozens of casualties on both sides. Islamist groups were certainly responsible for the arbitrary killings of at least 100 unarmed civilians, most of whom were foreign tourists, in the past year alone. Yet torture and ill-treatment remained systematic in State Security Investigations (SSI in Egypt) buildings, police stations and sometimes in prisons. The fight against Islamic movements worsened also the chances for the emergence of a civil society in Egypt, and the fourth reelection of President Hosni Mubarak confirmed that the stability of the regime is linked closely to the continuation of his reign. The 71-year old Egyptian President has never nominated a vice-president during his 18-year rule.

Mubarak has never left any doubt about his radical opposition to the Islamic movement. Thousands of suspected members or sympathizers of banned Islamist groups, including possible prisoners of conscience, were held without charge or trial after Mubarak's campaigns against the Islamic movement; others Islamic activists served sentences imposed after grossly unfair trials before military courts. At least 55 people were sentenced to death and at least 24 people were executed. So far the Egyptian State has not signaled that the government is willing to change the tough policies in regard to the Islamic movement. The Judicial authorities have rather opted for another field to meet criticism of human rights organizations such as Amnesty International. The Supreme Administrative Court upheld the decree banning female genital mutilation from being carried out in state hospitals.¹⁷

¹⁶ *International Herald Tribune*, 8 October 1999, p. 6.

¹⁷ See for additional information: *Amnesty International Annual Report 1998, Middle East and North Africa*. <http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aireport/ar98/mde.htm>.

Furthermore, by transforming the Islamic Al-Azhar University into a state-run academic institution, the Egyptian Government has been able to manipulate Islamic symbols with great skill in order to gain support from the population. The Sheikh of Al-Azhar remains a civil servant, which means the State is able to secure religious backing of its political decisions.¹⁸ The conflict between the secular and the religious Palestinian movements had a direct impact on the peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. In summary, neighboring Arab countries such as Jordan and Egypt faced similar problems and attempted to weaken the Islamic movement by different means. In Egypt, for example, the government used force against the Islamists, whereas Jordan allowed them to participate in elections in order to expose their inability to manage the society. Whereas the Egyptian crackdown on the Islamic movements did not deprive the Islamists of their legitimacy, the Jordanian policy allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to discredit themselves since their policies did not fundamentally change the society. King Abdullah's repression of Hamas in Jordan has challenged the tacit arrangement King Hussein had made with the movement to contain the Islamic challenge in Jordan. Such a dramatic change of policies risks a backlash against Jordanian stability. US-sponsored cooperation has certainly advanced the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations and pushed Israelis and Palestinians to cooperate with US intelligence. It is not certain yet if US sponsorship will also allow to contain the Islamic challenge in the Middle East. The recent Wye River Memorandum seems to give Israelis and Palestinians the tools to crack down jointly on Hamas.

4.3 The Wye River Memorandum

4.3.1 *An Alliance against Islamic Fundamentalism?*

The Wye River Memorandum of 23 October 1998, which was designed to break the deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, is yet another crucial step on the long road to peace in the Middle East. Confidence-building measures in the fight against Islamic terror should smooth the tense Israeli-Palestinian relationship. However, the agreement will be difficult to implement despite the American effort to advance the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The decisions of the Wye River Memorandum are to be implemented in a coordinated manner but Israelis and Palestini-

¹⁸ F. Vogel, head of the Islamic Legal Studies Program at Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Course "Islamic Legal Studies", taught in Fall 1996, session of 23 November 1998.

ans have preserved the possibility of suspending their implementation in the face of a lack of trust or for other reasons. The issue of a further Israeli redeployment is clearly linked to security guarantees being granted by the Palestinian Authority.

The United States, for its part, will join a high-level committee to participate in the implementation of the agreement. The Trilateral Committee is scheduled to meet at least every two weeks. The Palestinian Authority must inform the Committee about the concrete steps being taken to curb terrorism. Furthermore, the requests for the arrest and transfer of suspects and defendants as mentioned in Article II (7) of Annex IV of the Interim Agreement will be submitted to the Joint Israeli-Palestinian Legal Committee.

Newspapers have speculated that the CIA will for the first time officially monitor the peace process and assume a public assignment in the unstable region. Journalists argued that CIA officers attending biweekly meetings between Israelis and Palestinians would face difficulties in combining the role of mediator between the former foes with their duty to remain the vigilant eyes of Washington in the region.¹⁹ Even if the CIA is not mentioned in the agreement, the American intelligence service may indeed play a significant role in the future. The possible involvement of the CIA in any new peace negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis can be linked to the increased awareness among American decision makers concerning the implications of international Islamic terrorism for the United States. Many of the supporters of the blind Egyptian cleric Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman fought with or actively supported the Afghan *mujaheddin*. Several of his followers were convicted of the bombing of the World Trade Center.

Yet the continuation of the peace-process proved to be the only way to prevent a renewed exacerbation of Israeli-Palestinian tensions. Several steps were agreed upon in the Memorandum between Israelis and Palestinians in order to ease the implementation of the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip of 28 September 1995. Was the peace process truly back on track? Netanyahu's threat to suspend negotiations if an attack by Islamic militants occurred must have sounded like an invitation for the forces hostile of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and made it easy to block the advancement of the negotiations.

¹⁹ D. L. Marcus. "CIA Mid-East Role Raises Questions," *Boston Globe*, 2 November 1998, p. 1.

The negotiation partners have agreed that terror cannot only be contained by the use of force. Parallel to the security component, therefore, the US-brokered Wye River Memorandum deals with the issue of the economic development of the territories under Palestinian control. The immediate construction of the Port of Gaza and the opening of an industrial estate, scheduled to open in the very near future, will improve the infrastructure in Gaza. The Wye River Memorandum could also mean an end to the stalemate in the permanent status negotiations. The agreement confirms under Point IV that the

“two sides will immediately resume permanent status negotiations on an accelerated basis and will make a determined effort to achieve the mutual goal of reaching an agreement by 4 May 1999. The negotiations will be continuous and without interruption.”²⁰

Although the government of Prime Minister Netanyahu had approved the Wye River Memorandum and accepted a further withdrawal from 13 percent of the West Bank, due to the upcoming Israeli elections, scheduled to take place in Spring 1999, Netanyahu decided to suspend the agreement's implementation. The new geo-strategic situation that followed the demise of the Soviet Union will in the end help determine if the Palestinian issue can continue to block any permanent movement towards peace in the Middle East. Certainly, interregional cooperation in respect to the use of rare resources such as water or the preservation of regional stability may provide new opportunities for a state of reconciliation to be reached between former enemies. But the road to such reconciliation is long.

The American-shuttle strategy has, however, created risks for the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. The Mid-East standoff between the newly elected government of Ehud Barak and the Palestinian Authority with President Yasser Arafat could bring American diplomacy to the point where it could no longer deliver what Israelis and Palestinians expect: the role of a biased mediator who can break every dead-lock with ultimatums or rewards. The Clinton administration succeeded only after Netanyahu's electoral loss to bring the new Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority together to implement the steps that were agreed upon in October last year.²¹

²⁰ F. Vogel. Harvard Law School Course "Islamic Legal Studies", op.cit.

²¹ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 September 1999, p. 8.

The concession-hunting strategy of the Clinton administration greatly resembles Henry Kissinger's famous shuttle diplomacy, which for the first time in American history created a coherent foreign policy toward Arab states.²² Kissinger's policy pushed the parties to adopt extreme opening positions so that they were able to maneuver and make more concessions than originally planned. We can draw a parallel to the obstinate Israeli negotiation position regarding the abandoning of the Syrian city Al-Quneitra on the Golan and today's stalled negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian representatives:

"The affair of the city of Al-Quneitra is illustrative. The decision to give it up, all of it, had already been taken by Mrs. Meir and Dayan early in the negotiations. But it was decided to surrender it street by street - a strategy that proved its efficacy. For every street in Al-Quneitra, Asad was forced to pay something."²³

In the end, the strategy blocked the advancement of the negotiations since the Israelis perceived their concessions to Kissinger as being too generous. Madeleine Albright today seems to be pushed more and more into a negotiating strategy in which the participants will only reach an agreement if an ultimatum will limit the early discussion of final details. We may well face a situation whereby Israel will again only make concessions to the United States if the country receives a special benefit in return, as happened during Kissinger's tenure as Secretary of State.²⁴

The final status negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis will remain credible if the negotiation partners work out an acceptable deal that will provide a strong response to issues such as the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for refugees and economic development. Otherwise, Hamas could exploit any arrangement between Israelis and Palestinians and launch a desperate assault on any final agreement that does not take into consideration some of the key concerns of the Islamic fundamentalists. The Algerian Civil War between the government and Islamic militants bears witness to the potential destruction an uncontrolled conflict between a secular and a religious movement can cause.²⁵

²² For an analysis of Kissinger's diplomacy see: Sheehan, E.R.F. "How Kissinger Did It: Step by Step in the Middle East." *Foreign Policy Magazine*, no. 22 (Spring 1976), reprinted in *Dynamics of Third Party Intervention: Kissinger in the Middle East*. New York: Praeger, 1981, pp. 44-93.

²³ M. Golan. *The Secret Conversations of Henry Kissinger*. New York: Quadrangle, 1976, p. 211. In R. Fisher "Playing the Wrong Game?" In *Dynamics of Third Party Intervention: Kissinger in the Middle East*. New York: Praeger, 1981.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

²⁵ *International Herald Tribune*, 25-26 September 1999, p. 1.

The Wye II Agreement that implemented the next Israeli troop redeployment and the commitment of Israeli Prime Minister Barak to stop building settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are first steps on the road to a Palestinian State - by September 2000. The negotiations of how the two states will coexist are under way - the outcome and the shape of a future Palestinian State are far from certain.

Conclusion

The PLO and other secular governments have essentially three different ways of dealing with the challenge that Islamic movements present to their control of power. First, they can attempt to ignore the movement and consider it a purely religious enterprise. Second, they can try to cooperate with it or third, if they feel threatened beyond reason, they may confront it by force. As simple as these strategies may appear, their outcome can be far more complicated.

The Shah of Iran is perhaps the best example of a case in which a ruler ignored the popular demand for Islamic guidance during a period of profound social and economic changes. The result was an awakening of Islamic activism that went far beyond the Iranian revolution and represents the core of today's political Islam, challenging secular regimes from all geographical areas. As for the strategy of cooperation, the second option, the late King Hussein of Jordan seemed to limit successfully the growing influence of the Hamas movement by granting the Islamic activists a degree of freedom no other Arab regime had dared to do in the past. This strategy also failed because Hussein's successor, his son King Abdullah II, decided recently to curb dramatically the freedom of action that Hamas enjoyed in Jordan. The Islamist movement's reaction to this full-scale assault has yet to take shape, and the result of the power struggle may turn in favor of Abdullah - or may not.

If King Abdullah's new strategy fails, the bloody experience of the Algerian regime is a bad omen for the Middle East peace process and the formation of a Palestinian state. Indeed, the Algerian regime, like Jordan, initially granted political rights to the Islamic movement. The Algerian military reversed this strategy, when the secular forces were on the brink of losing the national elections in 1992. Then the military opted for a radical military confrontation with the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), and after seven years of bloody civil war is now trying to bring back peace - in vain so far.

The results in the three cases are indeed well known. Perhaps the most surprising change in the governmental strategy occurred in Jordan. Despite Oliver Roy's claim that Islamic movements failed to offer a credible alternative to secular states, Hamas was suddenly qualified as a serious

threat to Jordanian security by King Hussein's successor. Two years ago, King Hussein protested against the botched assassination attempt by Mossad agents against Hamas leader Khaled Masha'al in Amman. Today, King Abdullah moved suddenly against Hamas and arrested Masha'al and Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghosheh. He also expelled another Hamas leader, Abu Marzouq. Abu Marzouq, too, had found refuge in King Hussein's Jordan and was - ironically - expelled from the US to Jordan. The reasons for the shift in Jordanian policy leave room for wild speculation. Did Hamas, like the PLO allegedly did in 1970, try to take over Jordan, as Jordanian officials said? Or does the new policy of King Abdullah, who was surprisingly appointed by King Hussein shortly before his death on a stop-over from the US, reflect an increased American influence in the Middle East and increased US pressures for a no-tolerance policy toward Hamas? If so, why had the US expelled Abu Marzouq to Jordan and not to Israel, as initially requested by the Jewish state? The international press suggested that Israel had not wanted Abu Marzouq in its prisons because the country feared renewed political violence from Hamas. What happened to such a fear in the Jordanian case? Does such a perspective of civil unrest seem simply more acceptable in today's Jordan?

The price for violent confrontation with Islamic movements can be high. The more than 100,000 people killed in the Algerian civil war from 1992-99 show the consequences of a military confrontation between state power and Islamic militants. Is Jordan today again on the brink of such a dirty civil war - or does the Islamic movement no longer have the resources and will to fight such a policy? If one looks on the political map from Indonesia to Chechnya, Islam seems to reinforce its appeal to the minorities. Political Islam could continue to grow into radical protest movements. Such a scenario contradicts those who argued that political Islam failed to build up alternative modes of government.¹

If such a development continues, King Abdullah's opponent, the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, can truly be a political and military challenge as was the secular PLO in the 1970s. There is, however, an important difference that is a key ingredient for a civil war: The Islamists enjoy a high degree of popularity in Jordan among the population - the PLO did not in 1970.²

¹ See O. Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994, pp. 3-55.

² *International Herald Tribune*, October 8, 1999, p. 6.

In such a scenario, the Iranian regime is unlikely to watch passively the demise of a radical Islamic movement formed with Iranian support. Otherwise, Iran might lose all remaining influence in the Middle East. Abu Marzouq, who sought refuge in Iran after King Abdullah's crackdown on Hamas, could announce a decisive turn in such a dangerous coalition.

There is also a chance that more immediate, religiously-motivated violence in the Middle East will happen as Israelis and Syrians come closer to renewing peace talks. Iran is well aware that any peace arrangements between Syria and Israel will lead to, if not the end, at least to severe limitations of Hizbollah's attacks on Israel. Israel would otherwise never return the Golan Heights to Assad's Syria. Hizbollah remains until today one of Iran's closest followers. How far would the Iranian regime go if Syrian forces decided to crack down on the Hizbollah movement in Southern Lebanon in order to regain control of the currently Israeli-controlled Golan Heights?

Iran, severely shaken by internal political and economic crises might attempt to promote renewed Hamas attacks on targets in Israel and Jordan. The activities of the Islamic militants are likely, as has happened in the past, to slow down the cooperation between Israel and the Arab states even if the Syrian government might be willing to pay a high price in human lives to gain control of lost territories such as the Golan Heights.

Stability in the Middle East will continue to be linked to the Palestinian issue. After years of pro-Palestinian declarations, Arab countries can hardly accept that Palestinians are pushed to the wall and fail to receive an independent and viable state as a result of the final status talks. The Palestinian Authority must certainly provide the necessary material satisfaction to the Palestinians in Gaza and Jericho, push for a link between the West Bank territories under Palestinian administration and Gaza in order to offer the impoverished population an alternative to an Islamic society. Islamic movements may have failed to provide a credible alternative to secular states, especially when, as in the case of Egypt, they are sponsored by the US. Yet Islamic movements have still preserved their capacity to express effectively the profound dissatisfaction of their populations when their material needs are not met.

According to the words of a Palestinian in Gaza City, "Gaza, the biggest prison in the world" might well return to a state of turmoil and chaos

reminiscent of the *Intifada*.³ Possibly, if a new *Intifada* were to erupt, Palestinians inside Israel might increasingly choose to follow the call of Hamas.

New buildings and constructions give the Gaza of 1999 certainly a more encouraging appearance than that of 1996, but the new airport, harbor, and the expanding Eretz checkpoint, will only slowly, if at all, help improve the actual living conditions of the Palestinians in Gaza. External financial aid will remain necessary to meet the challenge for quite some time.

The European Union – while still struggling to find a common foreign policy in the Middle East – has opted to promote economic conditions in the territories under Palestinian administration but seems to be overwhelmed by the sheer extent of material misery. Between 1971 and 1980, the EU paid ECU 132 million to Palestine, but the EU strategy changed after the 1993 Oslo Agreement, when it decided to sponsor the Palestinian Authority directly.⁴ Compared with the \$3 billion that the US provides Israel annually as financial aid, any development project in Palestine still looks small, and the visitor wonders if Gaza can ever catch up.⁵

The genuine US interest in achieving a settlement in the Middle East peace process cannot ignore legitimate Palestinian aspirations for statehood, and the Oslo agreement was a step in this direction. The creation of an independent Palestinian state is therefore not simply an issue of sharing natural resources and land but one of regional stability and security. To ignore the Palestinian aspirations and try to confront the Islamic challenge by force is likely to risk more bloodshed as occurred in Algeria.

Intra-Palestinian relations and the Israeli-Palestinian peace process are not the only risks for the stability in the Middle East. As the recent death of King Hussein showed, Arab leaders that have played a historic role in the

³ Author's visit to Gaza, September 1999.

⁴ Commission of the European Union. Document No. COM (93), 375 final, Document distribution, Brussels.

⁵ In 1999, Israel will receive US\$1.08 civil and US\$1.86 billion military aid. The Israeli government requested at the end of 1998 an additional US\$1.08 billion to finance troop movements and installation changes following the Wye River Memorandum of October 1998. In order to pressure the Netanyahu administration to implement the Wye River Memorandum, the US Administration requested for the financial year 1999-2000 additional billions of dollars to satisfy Israel's demands. It is likely that the US administration attempted to pressure the Netanyahu government to implement the Wye River Memorandum that was suspended by the very same government that had concluded it October 1998. Newly elected Labor Prime Minister Barak is likely to speed up to the implementation of Wye II. See <http://www.US-Israel.org/source/US-Israel/foreign-aid.html>. Information is partly based on the author's visits to Gaza in 1996 and 1999.

Middle East are likely to be replaced sooner than later due to their age. The issues of succession contribute to an increased uncertainty in the Middle East. Recent confrontations in Syria between followers of Rifa'at Assad, the exiled brother of President Assad, and Bashar, Assad's son and apparent successor, cast a shadow over possible negotiations with Israel.⁶ The fourth reelection of President Mubarak in Egypt also does not demonstrate the stability of the Egyptian state. Huntington argues that in a functioning democracy, government stability is different from the stability of the whole system.⁷ In the case of Egypt, nothing is less certain than the continuation of the regime if the 71-year old Mubarak withdraws from politics. The emergence of younger leaders may indeed introduce an additional element of instability in the Middle East.

The Syrian-Israeli negotiations, which are likely to be conducted parallel to the final status talks between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, are not without risk for those involved in the peace process. Israel could be tempted to use the troubled relationship between Arafat and Assad to put pressure on the Palestinians. In 1996, Israel attempted such a strategy successfully in regard to Syria: an Israeli-Syrian military cooperation agreement offered Syria the perspectives of a war on two fronts. Shortly afterwards, the Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan, a long-time resident in Damascus, was asked to leave the country. Subsequently Turkish secret agents arrested the rebel leader in Africa after he failed to gain political asylum in Italy. The new balance of power and the Israeli-Turkish agreement was criticized in harsh words by the Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa.⁸

For Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority, new arrangements between Israel and Syria are therefore not without risk. Indeed, for the US, the temptation is great to confirm its political leadership in the Middle East by spectacular acts that occur, for example, simultaneously with the arrival of a new administration. An early transfer of the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in order to support the Israeli claims on Jerusalem as the unified capital of Israel could be such an act. The American decision would be certain to stir up a strong protest in the Middle East. A recent incident involving the Walt Disney Company in Florida illustrates the political turmoil such a decision might provoke. Disney's attempt to designate Jerusalem as the Israeli capital at a theme park

⁶ *Jerusalem Post*, 24 September 1999, p. 1.

⁷ *Ibid.*; Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, pp. 5-25.

⁸ *New York Times*, 21 February 1999, p. 17.

prompted strong protest from Arab foreign ministers and brought a confirmation by Disney that Jerusalem will not be designated as Israel's capital - but to some extent, Disney's move may have announced the agenda of Washington.⁹

For the Palestinian Authority, a transfer of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem could be a critical step in the peace process and might increase the confrontation with Hamas. The initial belief among Palestinians that vast economic cooperation projects might promote pockets of prosperity in the region have gradually vanished. If they lose the hope of recovering the third most important place in Islam, Jerusalem, the political consequences could be dramatic.

The Middle East peace process has indeed remained extremely volatile. It remains unclear where the Oslo and subsequent agreements signed between Israelis and Palestinians are heading to? US Secretary of State Albright explained the impact the Netanyahu administration had on relations between Israel, the Palestinians, and neighboring Arab countries in the following words:

"In only two years we have gone from a situation where Israel had some form of peace negotiation, relationship or promising contact with every Arab state except Iraq and Libya to a stalemate which has eroded regional cooperation on issues such as water, economic integration, the environment and refugees."¹⁰

The new Labor government of Ehud Barak seems decided to follow again the way traced by Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin in 1993.

The recent public meeting between Israeli Foreign Minister Levy with 11 Arab countries confirms that the stalemate is now three years later at a new turning point since even Arab countries without diplomatic relations with Israel sent delegates.¹¹ However, there have been so many turning points in the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab relations, and it seems difficult for the negotiation partners to keep faith in a process marked by agreements that were violated, postponed, or ignored. It will make it easier for protest movements to capitalize on negotiation failures.¹²

⁹ S. Shamir. "Disney assures Arabs on exhibit." *Ha'aretz*, 26 September 1999, p. 1.

¹⁰ *New York Times*, 13 May 1998, p. A8.

¹¹ *Ha'aretz*, 26 September 1999, p. 2.

¹² *Ibid.*; author's meeting with Yair Hirschfeld, Tel Aviv, July 1997.

The continued normalization of relations between Israel and the Arab countries, and civil peace in Palestinian society, will depend on successful final status talks between Israelis and Palestinians. The relations between the latter two depend largely on the Palestinian Authority's ability to contain the activities of the Islamic activists and to prevent renewed attacks on Israeli civilian targets. This explains Arafat's request for support from King Abdullah. Even initiators of the Oslo peace talks reproached the Palestinian Authority for having failed to prevent the attacks of Islamic activists in 1994-6 and for not living up to their side of the bargain.¹³ The pressure is great on Palestinians and Israelis to live up to the promises made in the Wye River Memorandum and the recent update, the so-called Wye II, that already brought the release of 200 Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails.

One further crucial element will make the containment of the Islamic movement more difficult for the Palestinian Authority: the necessary economic conditions to facilitate the life of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are far from achieved. The contrast between the Palestinian refugee camps such as Deir Al-Balah, Jabalya, Shati, Khan Younis in Gaza and the numerous Israeli settlements nearby could not be bigger. Such huge disparities, combined with the limited movement of freedom of Palestinians in Gaza, can only attract more Palestinians to the Islamic Resistance Movement. The recent introduction of a safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank is a first step to improving significantly the living conditions in Gaza. A seemingly vicious circle can be broken, if the Israelis and Palestinians are addressed with mutual respect and trust, a postulate that is difficult to achieve in the current circumstances. The full withdrawal of Israeli settlements from Gaza and Hebron will be a decisive step in breaking the mutual distrust and will strengthen the position of the Palestinian Authority in the confrontation with the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the intra-Palestinian conflict between secular and religious movements can well be resolved at the beginning of the 21st Century. It is also urgent to settle the issue of Palestinian statehood in order to restore peace within Palestinian society, a peace that is necessary for any stable Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab cooperation.

¹³ Ibid.

IV. Bibliography

Abu-Amr, Z. *Emerging Trends in Palestinian Strategic Political Thinking and Practice*. Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), 1992.

_____. *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Anderson, B. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 1991.

Anderson, B.S. and J.P. Zinsser. *History of Their Own: Women in Europe*, New York: Harper, 1988.

Anti-Defamation League. *Anti-Semitism in the Egyptian Media*. Report. New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1997.

Antonius, G. *The Arab Awakening*. Beirut: Lebanon Bookshop, 1969.

Antonius, G. *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement*. New York: Gordon Press, 1981.

Armstrong, T. *Breaking the Ice*. Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace, 1993.

Art, R.J. and R. Jervis. *International Politics*. London: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1996.

Art, R.J. and K.N. Waltz, eds. *The Use of Force*. Boston: University Press of America, 4th ed., 1994.

Aruri, N. *The Obstruction of Peace*. Monroe: Common Courage Press, 1995.

Badie, B. *Les deux Etats*. Paris: Fayard, 1986.

Banuazizi, A. and M. Weiner, eds. *The State, Religion and Ethnic Politics*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1988.

Bercovitch, J. and J.Z. Rubin, eds. *Mediation in International Relations*. New York: St. Martins Press, 1992.

Bollen, K. "Political Democracy: Conceptual and Measurement Traps." In Alex Inkeles, ed. *On Measuring Democracy*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1991, pp. 3-20.

Boutros-Ghali, B. *Building Peace and Development*. Annual Report of the Work of the Organization. New York: United Nations, 1994.

Breslin, J.W. and J.Z. Rubin, eds. *Negotiation Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Program on Negotiation Books, 1995.

Brzezinski, Z. *The Grand Chessboard*. New York: Harper Collins, 1997.

Bulliet, R.W. *Islam*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

- Burton, J.W. "Conflict Resolution as a Function of Human Needs." In Coate, R.A. & Rosati J.A., eds., *The Power of Human Needs in World Society*. Boulder, Co. & London: Lynne Rienner, 1988.
- _____. *Global Conflict: The Domestic Sources of International Crisis*. Brighton, Sussex: Wheatsheaf, 1994.
- _____. *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unsolved Social and Political Problems*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979.
- Christensen, J. "Bureaucratic Autonomy as a Political Asset." Paper presented at the Workshop 'Politicians, Bureaucrats and Institutional Reform', ECPR Joint Sessions Workshops, Mannheim, 26-31, March 1999.
- Chubb, J.E. and P.E. Peterson. "American Political Institutions and the Problem of Governance." In John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson, eds. *Can the Government Govern?* Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1989.
- Chubin, S., ed. *Germany and The Middle East*. London: Pinter Publisher, 1992.
- Coulson, N.J. *A History of Islamic Law*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997.
- Cox, A. *Freedom of Expression*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Craig, G.A. and A.L. George. *Force and Statecraft*. New York: Oxford University Press, 3rd ed., 1995.
- Critique of the Press Law 1995 Issued by the Palestinian Authority*. Series Study (1). Gaza: Palestinian Center for Human Rights, 1995.
- Crozier, M. *La société bloquée*. Paris: Editions Seuil, 1970.
- Dahl, R. *Polyarchy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971.
- Damrosch, L.F., ed. *Enforcing Restraint*. New York: Council of Foreign Relations, 1993.
- De Rueck, A. "Controlled Communication: Rationale and Dynamics." *The Human Context*. London: Group Analytical Society, 1974.
- Doyle, M.W. and C.W. Kegley. In *Controversies in International Relations Theory*. Kegley, C.W Jr., New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.
- Ehteshami, A. *After Khomeini*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Eposito, J.L. *Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- _____. *Islam and Politics*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1991.
- _____. *The Islamic Threat*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Finer, S.E. *The Changing British Party System 1945-1979*. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1980.
- Finkelstein, N.G. *The Rise and Fall of Palestine*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
- Frisch, H. *Countdown to Statehood: Palestinian State Formation in the West Bank and Gaza*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988.

- Fukuyama, F. *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press, 1992.
- Gardet, L. *Les Hommes de l'Islam*. Paris: Hachette, 1977
- _____. *La Cité musulmane, vie sociale et politique*, Paris: Vrin, 4th ed., 1976.
- Gazit, S. Gen. (Ret). "Israeli Political Understanding of the DOP." In *Challenges Facing Palestinian Society in the Interim Period*. Jerusalem: Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC), 1994, pp. 35-44.
- Geddes, B. *Politician's Dilemma. Building State Capacity in Latin America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Gellner, E. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- Gibb, H.A.R. *Islam*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd ed., 1975.
- Golan, M. *The Secret Conversations of Henry Kissinger*. New York: Quadrangle, 1976, 211, quoted in R. Fisher "Playing the Wrong Game?" In *Dynamics of Third Party Intervention: Kissinger in the Middle East*. Rubin, J.Z., ed. New York: Praeger, 1981.
- Goldstone, J.A., Gurr, T.R. and Moshiri, eds. *Revolution of the Late Twentieth Century*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991.
- Government of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Relations. "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area." Cairo, May 4, 1995, Jerusalem.
- Gurr, T.R. *Minorities at Risk*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1993.
- Halliday, F. *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation*. New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1996.
- Halloun, M. *Cours d'Arabe Parlé Palestinien*. Paris: L'Asiathèque, 1995.
- Heiberg, M. and G. Ovensen. *Palestinian Society - in Gaza, West Bank and Arab Jerusalem*. Oslo: FAFO Report 151, 3rd ed., 1993.
- Heikal, M. *Secret Channels*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1996.
- Herdstveit, D. *Arab and Israeli Elite Perceptions*. Oslo: Universitatforlaget, 1974.
- Hirsch, J.L. and R.B. Oakley. *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1995.
- Hirschman, A.O. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Response to Decline in Firms, Organization, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Hodgson, M.G.S. *The Venture of Islam*. 3 Vols. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1974.
- Hoodbhoy, P. *Islam and Science*. London: Zed Books Ltd., 1991.
- Horowitz, D.L. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- Hourani, A. *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

- Howard, R.E. and J. Donnelly. "Human Rights in World Politics." In R.J. Art and R. Jervis. *International Politics*. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996, pp. 30-48.
- Hunter, S.T. *Iran After Khomeini*. Washington: Praeger, 1992.
- Huntington, S.P. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.
- _____. *The Clash of Civilizations*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
- _____. "Why International Primacy Matters." In R. J. Art and R. Jervis. *International Politics*. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1996, pp. 376-385.
- Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC). *Israeli Obstacles to Economic Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*. With a foreword by G. Al-Khatib. Jerusalem: JMCC, 2nd ed., April 1994.
- Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC). *Challenges Facing Palestinian Society in the Interim Period*. Jerusalem: JMCC, December 1994.
- Jervis, R. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976.
- Karsh, E., ed. *Peace in the Middle East: The Challenge for Israel*. Ilford: Frank Cass, 1994.
- Kelman, H. C. "Patterns of Personal Involvement in the National System: A Social-Psychological Analysis of Political Legitimacy." In J. R. Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory*. New York: Free Press, rev. ed., 1969, pp. 276-288.
- Kelvin, H.C. "Social-Psychological Dimensions of International Conflict." In I.W. Zartman and J.L. Rasmussen, eds. *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*. Washington, DC: US Institute for Peace, 1997.
- Kennedy, H. *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*. London: Longman, 1986.
- Kennedy, P. *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.
- Kenneth, B. "Political Democracy: Conceptual and Measurement Traps." In Alex Inkeles, ed. *On Measuring Democracy*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1991, pp. 3-20
- Kepel, G. *Muslim Extremism in Egypt*. Trans. from the French by Ron Rothschild. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- _____. *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*. Trans. by A. Braley. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.
- _____. *Allah in the West: Islamic Movements in America and Europe*, trans. from the French by Susan Milner. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- King, G., R.O. Keohane and S. Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Kriegel, A., *Communistes Français*. Trans. by Elaine P. Halperk Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.

Laoust, H. *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Taki-d-Din Ahmad b. Taimiya*. Cairo: IFAO, 1939.

Lapidus, I.M. *Contemporary Islamic Movements in Historical Perspective*. Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of Berkeley, 1983.

_____. *A History of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Le Gac, D., *La Syrie du Général Assad*. Paris: Editions Complexe, 1991.

Lewis, B. *Cultures in Conflict*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Lindholm Schulz, H. *One Year into Self-Government*. Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), 1995.

Lowi, M. *Water and Power*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Maalouf, A. *Les croisades vues par les Arabes*. Paris: JCLattès/FMA, 1983.

Machiavelli, N. *The Prince*. Trans. By Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.

Makovsky, D., *Making Peace with the PLO*. Washington: Westview Press, 1996.

Ma'oz, M. *Syria and Israel*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

Meisler, S. "Kofi Annan: The Soft-Spoken Economist Who Runs UN Peacekeeping Forces." *Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 1994, cited in J. L. Hirsch and R.B. Oakley. *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope*. Washington, United States Institute of Peace, 1996.

Mishal, S., *The PLO under Arafat - Between Gun and Olive Branch*. New Haven: Yale University, 1986.

Moe, T.M. "The Positive Theory of Public Bureaucracy." In Dennis C. Mueller, ed. *Perspectives on Public Choice: A Handbook*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Moore, B. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of Modern World*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1966.

Niskanen, W. A. *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*. Chicago: Aldine Press, 1971.

Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), *Annual Report 1994*. Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1995.

Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), *Diary 1996*. Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1995.

Parry, N. *Making Education Illegal*. Trans. into Arabic by Sa'adeh, Special Report for the Human Rights Action Project. Ramallah: Birzeit University, April 1995.

Patterns of Global Terrorism, 1994. US Department of State, April 1995.

Picaudou, N. *La Déchirure Libanaise*. Paris: Editions complexes, 1989.

- Piecyk, W. *Report of the Committee Foreign Affairs and Security on the Political Aspects of the Economic Boycott Imposed on Israel by the Arab States*. European Parliament. 4 November 1993, Doc_EN\PR\238\238459.
- Al-Qasem, A. (Chair of the Palestinian National Covenant Legal Committee). *Draft Basic Law*. Jerusalem: JMCC, Occasional Document Series No. 5, February 1996.
- Rahman, F. *Islam*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2nd ed., 1979.
- Rosenau, J. N., *Turbulence in World Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Rousseau, J. J. *El Contrato Social*. Madrid: Biblioteca EDAF, 1982.
- Roy, O. *The Failure of Political Islam*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- _____. *The Failure of Political Islam*. Trans. by Carol Volk. Cambridge: Harvard Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- _____. *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed., 1990.
- Rubin, B. *Revolution until Victory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Rubin, J.Z., ed. *Dynamics of Third Party Intervention: Kissinger in the Middle East*. New York: Praeger, 1981.
- Rubin, J.Z., Pruitt, D.G., and S.H. Kim, *Social Conflict*. New York: Times Books, 2nd ed., 1991.
- Ruggie, J. G. *Winning the Peace*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
- Sadiki, L. *Progress and Retrogression in Arab Democratization*. Jerusalem: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), 1992.
- Said, E. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- _____. *The Question of Palestine*. New York: Vintage Books Edition, 1992.
- Sartori, G. *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1987.
- _____. *Democratic Theory*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1965.
- Schiff, Z. and E. Ya'ari. *Intifada*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989.
- Seale, P. *Asad*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1988.
- _____. *Asad - The Struggle for The Middle East*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
- Shalev, A. *The Israel-Syria Armistice Regime, 1949-1955*. JCSS Study, no. 21. Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies (JCSS), 1993.
- Sick, G.S. and L.G. Potter, eds. *The Persian Gulf at the Millennium*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.
- Skocpol, T. *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- Smith, A.D., *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995.
- Syngé, R. *Mozambique*. Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 1997.

- Tamari, S. *Palestinian Refugee Negotiations*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1996.
- Tessler, M. *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Tibi, B., *The Challenge of Fundamentalism*. Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1997.
- Tilly, C. *From Mobilization to Revolution*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978.
- United Nations. *Les Enfants Palestiniens En Territoire Palestinien Occupé*. Prepared for the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. New York: United Nations, 1990.
- _____. *Water Resources of the Occupied Palestinian Territory*. Report prepared for and under the guidance of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. New York: United Nations, 1992.
- _____. *Palestine Question: A Selected Bibliography, 1976-1993*. New York: United Nations, 1993.
- _____. Documents of the General Assembly A/51/75 and of the Security Council S/1996/166. New York: UN, General Distribution, 5 March 1996.
- _____. *The Status of Jerusalem*. New York: United Nations, 1997.
- United Nations Department of Public Information. *Blue Helmets*, 3rd ed. New York: Publication Services, 1996.
- UNWRA, Department of Education. *Statistical Yearbook, 1993-94*. No. 30, Amman.
- _____. *Statistical Yearbook, 1995-96*. No. 32, Amman.
- Vines, A., *RENAMO: From Terrorism to Democracy in Mozambique?* London: James Currey, 2nd ed., 1996.
- Vogel, F. Harvard Law School course materials: *Comparative Law: Islamic Legal System*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Law School, Fall 1998.
- Walzer, M. *Just and Unjust Wars*. New York: Basic Books, 1977.
- Weiss, T.G. *The United Nations and Civil Wars*. Boulder, Co., 1995.
- Wing, A.K.. *Democracy, Constitutionalism and the Future State of Palestine*. Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1994.
- Yapp, M. E. *The Making of the Modern Near East, 1792-1923*. London: Longman, 1987.
- Zartman I.W. and J.L. Rasmussen, eds. *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*. Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace, 1997.
- Zehra, A. *Democracy and Human Rights in Developing Countries*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Pubs., 1991.
- Zureik, E.. *Palestinian Refugees and the Peace Process*. Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1996.

Journals

- Abu-Amr, Z. " Hamas: A Historical and Political Background." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4 (Summer 1993), pp. 5-19.
- _____. "Palestine's Islamic Alternative." *Middle East Insight*, (January-February 1995), pp. 12-14.
- Andoni, L. "The PLO at the Crossroads." *Journal of Palestine Studies*. XXI, no. 1 (Autumn 1991), pp. 54-56.
- _____. "Jordan's First Party Vote Pits Tribes Against Leftists." *Christian Science Monitor*, 8 November 1993, p.2.
- "Arafat, Y." Interview by A. Gauhar. *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 2 (April 1986), pp. 399-410.
- Aruri, N. "The PLO and the Jordan Option." *Third World Quarterly*, 7.4. (October 1985), pp. 882-906.
- Aya, R. "La révolution en échec: des situations révolutionnaires sans dénouements révolutionnaires." *Revue Française de Sociologie*, XXX (1989), pp. 559-586.
- Backmann, R. "Le Forcing d'Arafat," in: *L'Événement de Jeudi*, no. 1643, p.28
- Bar-Joseph, U. "A Bull in a China Shop: Netanyahu and Israel's Intelligence Community." *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, vol. 11, no. 2 (Summer 1998), pp. 154-174.
- Bollen, K. "Issues in the Comparative Measurement of Political Democracy." *American Sociological Review*, vol. 45, no. 2 (June 1980), pp. 370-390.
- Bonham, G.M., Shapiro, M. and Trumble, T. "The October War: Changes in Cognitive Orientation Toward the Middle East Conflict." *International Studies Quarterly*, 23, pp.33-44.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. "The Mirror-Image in Soviet-American Relations: A Social Psychologist's Report." *Journal of Social Issues* 16, no. 3 (1989), pp. 45-56.
- "Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) of Palestine." Trans. By M. Maqdsi for the Islamic Association for Palestine. Dallas, Texas, in 1990. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 4 (Summer 1993), pp. 122-134.
- Cheysson, C. "The Right to Self-Determination." Interview by E. Sanbar. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXI, no. 1 (Autumn 1986), pp. 3-12.
- Commission of the European Communities. "Communication from the Commission: Future Relations and cooperation between the Community and the Middle East." COM (93) 375 final. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1993.
- D'Alançon, F. "The EC Looks to a New Middle East." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIII, no. 2 (Winter 1992), pp. 41-51.
- Dowty, A. "Sanctioning Iraq: The Limits of the New World Order." *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 3. (Summer 1994), pp. 179-198.
- Dunn, M.C. "Revivalist Islam and Democracy: Thinking about the Algerian Quandary." *Middle East Policy*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1992), pp. 16-22.

- Elon, A. "Dîner chez Arafat." *Jeune Afrique*, no. 1705 (9 to 15 September 1993), pp. 37-41.
- Finkelstein, N. "Myths, Old and New." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXI, no. 1 (Autumn 1991), pp. 66-89.
- Frisch, H. "From Armed Struggle over State Borders to Political Mobilization and Intifada Within it: The Transformation of the PLO Strategy in the Territories." *Plural Societies*, XIX, nos. 2 and 3 (March 1990), pp. 92-115.
- Fukuyama, F. "The End of History." *National Interest*, 16 (Summer 1989), pp. 4-18.
- Goldstone, J.A. "Theories of Revolution: the Third Generation." *World Politics*, no. 32 (April 1980), pp. 425-453.
- Gurr, T.R., "Persistence and Change in Political Systems, 1800-1971." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 68, no. 4 (December 1974), pp. 1482-1504.
- Gurr, T.R., K. Jagers and W. Moore, "The Transformation of the Western State: The Growth of Democracy, Autocracy and State Power Since 1800." *Studies in Comparative International Development*, vol. 25, no. 1 (Spring 1990), pp. 73-108.
- Hall, M. "Mozambique - Resistance and Freedom: A Case for Reassessment." *African Affairs*, July 1995, vol. 94, no. 376, p. 445.
- Hammami, R. "L'Intifada a-t-elle émancipé les femmes?" *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, no 51 (Summer 1994), pp. 59-65.
- "Haydar Abdul Shafi." Interview. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 1. (Autumn 1992), pp. 57-69.
- _____. Interview. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXV, no. 1 (Autumn 1995), pp. 76-85.
- Hicker, F. "La culture de la génération révolutionnaire." *Revue Française de Sociologie*, XXX (1989), pp. 445-468.
- Holt, R.R. & B. Silverstein. "On the Psychology of Enemy Images: Introduction and Overview." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 45, no. 2, (1989), pp. 1-11.
- _____. "Research on Enemy Images: Present Status and Future Prospects." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 45, no. 2 (1989), pp. 159-175.
- Huntington, S. P. "How Countries Democratize." *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 106, no. 4 (1991-92), pp. 579-616.
- _____. "The Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 3 (Summer 1983), pp. 22-49.
- _____. "The Lonely Superpower." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 78, no. 2 (March-April 1999), pp. 35-49.
- Inbar, M. and E. Yuchtman-Yaar. "The People's Image of Conflict Resolution." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 33, no. 1 (March 1989), pp. 37-66.
- Jagers, K. and T.R. Gurr. "Tracking Democracy's Third Wave with the Polity III Data." *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 32, no. 4 (1995), pp. 469-482.
- "Kaddoumi, F." Interview by A. Gauhar. *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 2 (April 1986), pp. 411-424.

- Kelman, H.C. "An International Approach to Conflict Resolution." *International Interactions* 6, no. 2 (1979), pp. 99-122.
- _____. "Overcoming the Barriers to Negotiation of the Israeli Palestinian Conflict." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XVI, no. 1 (Autumn 1986), pp. 13-28.
- _____. "The Political Psychology of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: How Can We Overcome the Barriers To a Negotiated Solution?" *Political Psychology*, vol. 8, no. 3 (1987), pp. 347-363.
- _____. "Acknowledging the Other's Nationhood: How to Create a Momentum for the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 1 (Autumn 1992), pp. 18-36.
- _____. "Contributions of an Unofficial Conflict Resolution Effort to the Israeli-Palestinian Breakthrough." *Negotiation Journal*, (January 1995), pp. 19-26.
- Kenneth, B. "Issues in the Comparative Measurement of Political Democracy." *American Sociological Review*, vol. 45, no. 2 (June 1980), pp. 370-390.
- Kurzman, C. "Liberal Islam: Prospects and Challenges." *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA)*, vol. 3, no. 3 (September 1999), pp. 1-8. [Source: Rubin, B. MERIA via E-mail (Internet edition) : besa@mail.biu.ac.il].
- Kuttab, E., "Libération des Femmes, Libération Nationale." *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, no. 51 (Spring 1994), pp. 67-72.
- "Lebanon Report." Published by *The Daily Star*, no 1 (Spring 1998). Beirut.
- Lingenthal, R. "Der Staat is Gott". *Wochenpost*, no. 4 (18 January 1996), pp. 4-6.
- Lipset, S. M. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economics Development and Political Legitimacy." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 53, no. 1 (March 1959), pp. 69-105.
- Mansour, C. "Le mouvement palestinien après la 18e session du CNP." *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes* (Autumn 1987), pp. 3-11.
- Marcus, D. L. "CIA Mid-East Role Raises Questions." *Boston Globe*, 2 November 1998, p. 1
- Marshall, M. "Rethinking the Palestine Question: The Apartheid Paradigm." *Journal of Palestine Studies*. XXV, no. 1 (Autumn 1995), pp. 15-22.
- Monshipouri, M. and C.G. Kukla. "Islam, Democracy and Human Rights: The Continuing Debate in the West." *Middle East Policy*, vol. 3, no. 2 (1992), 22-46.
- Morris, B. "Response to Finkelstein and Masalha." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXI, no. 1 (Autumn 1991), pp. 98-114.
- Mufti, M. "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy." *Middle East Journal*, vol. 52, no. 1 (Winter 1998), pp. 32-50.
- Musallam, S. F. "Les structures de l'OLP." *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, no. 21 (Spring 1986), pp. 79-115.
- Neff, D. "Clinton Places US Policy at Israel's Bidding." *Middle East International*, (31 March 1995), pp. 15-16.
- Newsletter. "Perspectives on the PNGO Network." Vol. 1, no. IV (September 1995).

- Niskanen, W.A. "Bureaucrats and Politicians." *Journal of Law and Economics*, 18 (1975), pp. 617-644.
- Peretz, D. "The Impact of the Gulf War on Israeli and Palestinian Political Attitudes." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXI, no. 1 (Autumn 1991), pp. 17-35.
- Roy, S. "Alienation or Accommodation." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIV, no. 4 (Summer 1995), pp. 72-82.
- Said, E. "The Burden of Interpretation and the Question of Palestine." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XVI, no. 1 (Autumn 1986), pp. 29-37.
- . "Orientalism and After" (Interview). *Radical Philosophy*, 63 (Spring 1993).
- Sande, G.N., Goethals, G.R., Ferrari L. and L. Worth. "Value-Guided Attributions: Maintaining the Moral Self-Image and the Diabolical Enemy-Image." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 45, no. 2 (1989), pp. 91-118.
- Sayigh, Y. "Redefining the Basics: Sovereignty and Security of the Palestinian State." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIV, no. 4 (Summer 1995), pp.5-19.
- Schlemm, A. "The Oslo Accord." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIII, no. 3 (Spring 1994), pp. 24-40.
- Sederberg, P.C. "Conciliation as Counter-Terrorist Strategy." *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 32, no. 3 (1995), pp. 295-312.
- "Shaath, N." Interview. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXII, no. 1 (Autumn 1992), pp. 70-77.
- "Shaath, N." Interview. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIII, no. 1 (Autumn 1993), pp. 5-13.
- Sheehan, E.R.F. "How Kissinger Did It: Step by Step in the Middle East." *Foreign Policy Magazine*, no. 22 (Spring 1976), reprinted In *Dynamics of Third Party Intervention: Kissinger in the Middle East*. New York: Praeger, 1981, pp. 44-93.
- Shlaim, A. "The Oslo Accord." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXIII, no. 3 (Spring 1994), pp. 24-40.
- Skocpol, Th. "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution." *Theory and Society*, no. 11 (May 1979), pp. 265-283.
- Steinberg, M. "The PLO and Palestinian Islamic Fundamentalism." *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 52 (Fall 1989), pp. 37-54.
- Wills, G. "Bully of the Free World." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 78, no. 2 (March-April 1999), pp. 50-59.
- Wright, R., "Islam, Democracy and the West." In *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 71, no. 3, (Summer 1992), pp. 131-145.
- "Zahhar, M." Interview by Hijazi, Husayn. Translated Elias Sanbar from *Majallat Al-Dirāsât al-Filistiniyya*, no. 20, 1994. *Revue d'Etudes Palestiniennes*, vol. 3. (Autumn 1994), pp. 12-18.

Newspapers, magazines and television

- Agence France Press, Paris.
 Al-Ahram, Cairo.
 Al-Ahram Hebdo, Cairo.
 Al-Falistin, Jerusalem.
 Al-Hayyat, London.
 Al-Majalla.
 Al-Quds, Jerusalem.
 CNN, Atlanta.
 Der Spiegel, Hamburg.
 Die Zeit, Hamburg.
 Christian Science Monitor, Boston.
 Financial Times, London.
 Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurt.
 Evenement du Jeudi, Paris.
 Le Figaro, Paris.
 International Herald Tribune, Paris.
 Jerusalem Post, Jerusalem.
- Jerusalem Times, Jerusalem.
 La Presse, Montreal.
 Le Monde, Paris.
 Le Monde Diplomatique, Paris.
 Libération, Paris.
 Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles.
 Majallat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyya.
 New York Times, New York.
 Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zürich.
 Palestine Report, Jerusalem.
 Reuters News Agency.
 St. Louis Post Dispatch.
 Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich.
 United Press International (UPI).
 Welt, Berlin.
 WGBH2, Boston TV Station.
 Wochenpost, Zürich.

Internet sources

- Birzeit University, Ramallah: <http://www.birzeit.edu/news/26elect.html>.
 European Commission: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/welcome.ht> .
 Israeli Foreign Ministry: <http://www.pmo.gov.il/english/policy/wye-1.html>.
 Jamaa 't Al-Islami movement: <http://www.muslims.net/jib/4point.html>.
 Jerusalem Post, Press Review, 14/4/1998. <http://www.jpost.co.il/Colums/Article-1.html>.
 Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA): E-mail: besa@mail.biu.ac.il or <http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria.html>.
 Qatari government WebSite. Arabia on Line: <http://www.arabia.com/issues>.
 Palestinian National Authority: http://www.pna.net/peace/wye_river_memorandum.htm.
 US Government, The State Department gopher: <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/dosfan.html>